

Youth Suicide Prevention: How parents make a difference

Teen suicide is a growing health concern & the second-leading cause of death for young people ages 15 to 24, surpassed only by accidents (CDC.gov)

Any teen can be at risk for suicide but risk increases if:

- teen has history of depression
- is close to someone who died by suicide
- has had a prior attempt or a recent significant trauma
- LGBTQ teens attempt and complete suicide at a higher rate.
- *Access to lethal means puts teens at higher risk. Guns and prescription medications should always be locked and not accessible, especially to a teen with any of the above risk factors.*



What to Do if You're Worried About Suicide, Child Mind Institute

- Ask directly about thoughts of suicide: asking does not "put the idea" in a teen's head or increase suicide risk" Are you thinking of hurting/killing yourself?" is a difficult but critical question: if you don't ask, you won't know.
- If the answer is yes, the more concrete and accessible the plan, the higher the risk.
- Validate the feeling: "You are feeling so down right now you can't see a way out," without approving the plan or minimizing the seriousness of the situation.
- Reassure your teen that you are there with them and you will stay to keep them safe.

Finally, if you think your child is in danger of attempting suicide now or soon, call 911 or 211 in CT for youth mental health response. It's very important to take threats of suicide seriously

Help in a crisis for parents:

- Outreach to your teen's therapist or professional mental health supports you have
- In CT call 211 for emergency youth psychiatric mobile crisis
- In an immediate emergency call 911.
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI CT): Support groups, warplane: namict.org 1-800-950626.,
- Talk it out line for parents: talkitoutct.gov 1-833-258-5011

Crisis lines for Teens: (make sure your teen knows these crisis resources:

- Crisis Textline: Text HELP to 741741
- Kids in Crisis Helpline: 203-661-1911 (CT)
- Trevor Project: for LGBTQ youth: 866-488-7386 or Text START to 678678
- National Suicide prevention lifeline: 800-273-8255