

What to do if Your Child is Suicidal

If a parent suspects that their child is having suicidal thoughts or is in immediate risk of attempting suicide, an immediate response is needed.

If you have a high school student

Parents should be alert and aware of the warning signs to be an effective advocate for their child. It's also important that they offer a calm, measured response that doesn't overwhelm the child further.

At Immediate Risk

- Call 911 or the [Suicide Prevention Lifeline \(1-800-273-8255\)](tel:1-800-273-8255), which is available 24/7
- Take your child to the nearest emergency room
- If you or anyone in your household owns a gun, knife or other dangerous weapon, place these items in a safe, securable location
- Remove any other objects that could be harmful
- Make sure your child isn't left alone
- Remove any medications that a child could use to overdose

Having Suicidal Thoughts

- Take any and all statements related to suicide seriously
- Talk to your child to figure out exactly what's causing these thoughts
- Approach the situation calmly and make sure your child knows you are there to provide understanding, love and support
- Find a therapist that can provide professional support to your child, and possibly a psychiatrist or psychologist if a medical course of treatment is deemed necessary
- Work together to create a plan that avoids people or situations that trigger these thoughts
- Keep track of their social media activity; consider monitoring their phones to watch for bullying or other harmful behavior
- Consider an in-patient rehabilitation program
- Get him or her involved in some sort of physical activity to increase endorphins