

## A Couple Reminders

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- Don't be afraid to talk to a friend in need
- Know the signs and be aware
- Don't be judgmental or act shocked— this can make the person reluctant to talk
- Don't promise secrecy— GET HELP.
- Be direct, talk matter of factly about suicide
- If you can, don't leave the person alone
- You can always take them to the hospital if they are an immediate danger to themselves
- Be patient, thoughts about suicide are often accompanied by mental illness. Your friend needs support and may be resistant to believe s/he can be helped.

## Resources

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<http://www.ulifeline.org/>

<http://www.afsp.org/>

<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

GetHelp/  
WhatIfSomeoneIKnowNeedsHelp.aspx

## Preventing Suicide

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Signs, symptoms, and  
how to help

Special Populations  
Student Health Concerns  
Committee

# Preventing Suicide in your Community: Take Signs Seriously and Offer Help- it might save a life.

## Signs that Someone May Need Help

Purchase of instruments of suicide .

Writing a personal will

A sudden and significant decline in mood and health.

Out of the blue visits to family members.

Alcohol or drug abuse

Insomnia

Severe agitation and anxiety

Loss of pleasure

Withdrawing from friends and family

Dangerous behavior

Feelings of hopelessness/Depression

Sudden changes in personality, lifestyle, and attire. These can be sudden positive changes after a long period of depression- like a weight has been lifted from their shoulders.

## Verbal Statements: Signs of Suicide

*"I can't take this anymore"*

*" I want to just fall asleep forever"*

*"I just want to disappear"*

*"No one cares about me"*

*"I'm just a burden to others. Everyone would be better off without me around"*

## Helping Someone to Get Help

If a friend has a problem, it's easy to feel helpless and confused. Don't try to deal with the situation alone, even if your friend wants to swear you to secrecy. Helping them is much easier if you have a little help from other friends, family or professionals.

You can also make things easier by just being a good friend. Be direct and honest. Encourage getting help without sitting in judgment, acting shocked or suggesting that you have all the answers. Don't be skeptical or dismissive. And - above all - be available and listen.

## Things to Say

ASK:

**Ask** the person directly if he or she (1) is having suicidal thoughts/ideas, (2)

has a plan to do so, and (3) has access to

lethal means:

▫ "Are you thinking about killing yourself?"

▫ "Have you ever tried to hurt yourself before?"

▫ "Do you think you might try to hurt yourself today?"

▫ "Have you thought of ways that you might hurt yourself?"

▫ "Do you have pills/weapons in the house?"

▫ This *won't* increase the person's suicidal thoughts. It *will* give you information that indicates how strongly the person has thought about killing him- or herself.

If you feel they need help, tell them you're going to help them and call any of the numbers on the back of this brochure. You can also take them to the emergency room.