

# Happy students. Healthy living.

September 2023

## Suicide Awareness Month

Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender, or background. Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in the United States, so it's important to be aware of risk factors, warning signs, and what you can do to help someone who needs it.

### Risk Factors

Some risk factors include alcoholism and drug use, history of physical or sexual abuse, mental illness, recent life events, such as the loss of a loved one or ending of a relationship, previous suicide attempts, or a family history of suicide.

### Recognizing Warning Signs

There are many reasons for someone's suicidal ideations. Some people give clues that they are thinking of taking their own life while others might suffer in silence. Some warning signs that could suggest someone is at immediate risk include:

- Talking about ending their life or causing harm
- Feeling hopeless about the future
- Acting out or extreme mood swings
- Isolating from others or saying goodbye
- Increased use of drugs or alcohol
- Irregular eating or sleeping habits

### What You Can Do

If you suspect someone is suicidal or they tell you directly, try to remain calm and stay with the person until someone else can intervene, such as a family member, professional counselor, or suicide hotline. Help them establish ongoing support so they have a list of contacts available in times of crisis. This could include community resources and a counselor.

Although it might be difficult to understand why someone feels the way they do and wants to end their life, try to be empathetic toward their feelings and show compassion. Check in with the person periodically to show your continued support.

### Crisis Resources

If you are experiencing suicidal thoughts or suspect someone else is, there are crisis support resources available. Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by dialing 988 or use their online Lifeline Crisis Chat. Both of these services are free and confidential. Check out their website for more ways to get involved: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>. Call 911 for emergency services.



For additional tips and resources,  
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