

Is my loved one safe? Addressing suicidal ideation and self harm.

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What do we know about Self-harm and ED?



Be aware of things that increase risk





What increases risk of suicide?

- Loss of a loved one to death, divorce, deployment, deportation or incarceration
- Bullying (in person or online)
- Discrimination, rejection or hostility due to gender identity or sexual orientation
- Racism, discrimination and related inequities and stressors
- Family history of suicide or mental health difficulties
- Stigma (the belief that it's wrong or shameful to talk about mental health or suicide)
- Easy access to firearms or other life-threatening tools and substances
- Witnessing or suffering violence or domestic abuse
- Financial instability that causes worry and insecurity
- Suicide in their school or friend group

2. ASK about it!



ask the suicide question



Be

Be direct. Ask them.

Use

Use specific words like “commit suicide,” “kill yourself,” “take your life”

Listen

Listen for hesitation, reluctance to answer

Do

Don’t necessarily accept the first “No” response (put it in context)



Ask about suicide/self-harm: Tips

- Don't wait for them to come to you
- Remain calm, alert and focused
- Start the conversation when you are both calm
 - Can be as simple as "are you ok?" or "It sounds like you've been dealing with a lot lately. Does it ever get so tough that you think about ending your life?"
 - Use open-ended questions (can't be answered by a simple yes or no)
 - Try "tell me more about that"
 - Help me understand what is going on
 - Resist the urge to offer a "quick fix".
- Pay attention to their words AND their behaviors
- Consider while doing an activity, driving in a car.
- DO NOT start the conversation during a meal

What happens if they say yes



1. Take a deep breath
 2. Try not to panic
- Don't **invalidate** the experience
 - "That's a ridiculous thing to say."
 - "You have a great life – why would you end it?"
 - "You don't mean that."
 - "I can't believe what I'm hearing!"
 - No "shoulding"

What happens if they say no but you are not sure you can trust the response



1. Remove means

- Firearms **Half of youth suicides occur with firearms—and suicide attempts with firearms are almost always fatal.**
- **- remove weapons from the home is best : if not, lock them up**
- Medications: Prescription or over the counter (limit amount / lock up)
- Alcohol or Illicit drugs
- Household cleaners and other poisonous products
- Canned dusting products or Inhalants
- Antifreeze
- Knives, razors, or other weapons
- Ropes, belts, or plastic bags

1. Keep them close

2. Get professional help
3. 988
4. Continue the dialogue

Increase hope



1. Get the right treatment
2. Encourage social encounters with family and friends
3. Decrease isolation
4. Physical activity?
5. Remember and remind- this will take time



Is there a treatment that can
manage the ED and SI
simultaneously?



DBT

How to find a DBT therapist



1. Linehan Board of Certification www.dbt-lbc.org
2. Behavioral Technology Transfer Group: www.behavioraltech.org
3. What to expect in DBT therapy
 1. Individual
 2. Skills group
 3. Phone coaching
 4. Therapist consultation team



American
Foundation
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Prevention

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Teens and suicide: What parents should know

As a parent, you can approach suicide prevention in the same way you do other safety or health issues for your children. By educating yourself, you can learn what puts kids at greatest risk for suicide – and what protects them most strongly.

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Thank You for Your Attention

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