

# Youth Suicide Prevention

Helping Your Friends



IDAHO  
LIVES  
PROJECT



## Don't Be Ashamed or Embarrassed

Everyone has problems they cannot solve on their own. Finding the courage to get help is often the first step toward solving your problems and becoming a happier person.

Focus on your strengths:

- Family Support
- Positive Friends
- Mentors
- Healthy Activities
- Generosity
- Spirituality
- Physical Health
- Mental Health

## **Don't Be Afraid of Being Wrong**

It can often be hard to tell if someone is really thinking about killing or hurting themselves. Some of the suicide warning signs may also be signs of drug use, serious family problems or depression. People with these problems still need help - and you can help.

## **Helping Yourself**

If you are having problems and thinking of hurting or killing yourself, tell a trusted adult who can help. If you cannot talk to your parents, find someone else: a relative, an adult friend, a teacher, a coach, the school nurse or guidance counselor, or a friend's parents. Or, call the Idaho Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or text (208) 398-HELP (4357).

## **Learn the Warning Signs**

Knowing the warning signals for suicide can save a life. Most suicidal people give some of the clues and warning signs listed here. By learning the warning signs, paying attention and trusting your own judgment, you can make a difference between life and death.

- Talking about, planning or threatening suicide
- Previous suicide attempts
- Agitation, especially combined with sleeplessness
- Withdrawal or isolation from friends, family or activities
- Nightmares

## **Talking Can Make a Big Difference**

Teens will often share secrets and feelings with other teens they will not share with adults. However, you may need to be persistent before they are willing to talk. Ask them if they are thinking about killing themselves. Talking about suicidal thoughts will not push someone to kill themselves. It is also not true that people who talk about killing themselves will not actually try it. If a friend says they are thinking about killing themselves, take your friend seriously and tell a trusted adult.

Never promise to keep someone's intention to kill or hurt themselves a secret. Let the person know you would never tell this secret to just anyone, but you will tell a trusted adult if you think the person needs help.

If your friend tells you they have a way to kill themselves or a plan to do so, stay with them until they are willing to go with you and talk to a trusted adult or contact:

**Idaho Suicide Prevention Hotline**

**Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

**Text (208) 398-HELP (4357)**



## Helping Your Friends and Other Peers

If you think any of your friends or classmates may be thinking of killing themselves, have made a suicide attempt or have serious problems they have not told anyone about - tell a responsible adult; someone who is concerned with and understands young people and can help. This may be a teacher, guidance counselor, other school staff, your parents, the parents of a friend, a member of clergy or someone who works at a local youth center. If the first adult you approach does not help, find another trusted adult. Be brave and do something heroic, you could save a life.



# Youth Suicide Prevention Program

Idaho State Department of Education

Idaho Lives Project

(208) 332-6816

[idaholives.org](http://idaholives.org)



**If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health or suicide crisis, contact the Idaho Suicide Prevention Hotline: Call (800) 273-8255 or Text (208) 398-4357**

Much of the information here is courtesy of the Suicide Prevention Resource Center. Visit their website for more information on suicide prevention for schools at [www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org)

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