

## Warning Signs of Suicide

Suicide is a complicated yet preventable issue and we all need to play our part in addressing it. Improving your overall understanding of suicide leads to increased awareness of when someone needs help, and can contribute to saving lives.

**A warning sign is an indication that someone might be having thoughts of suicide.** Most people give clues or signals of their suicidal intentions. If you see/hear a warning sign, seek help. Regardless of the intensity of one's suffering, suicide is never an inevitable outcome.

Talk of death is cause for concern, as people who mention wanting to kill themselves face an increased risk of attempting suicide. Statements such as, "I wish I were dead" and "I won't be around to deal with this much longer" are warnings of serious suicidal thoughts.

### Watch for big changes:

- Significant differences in appearance or mood
- Extreme withdrawal
- Increase in risky behavior (including alcohol or drug use)
- Decreased interest in activities they once enjoyed

## Risk Factors to Remember

**Mental Health:** Mental health conditions such as depression can impact anyone, including children and teens. When depression goes untreated, an individual may feel so hopeless they consider suicide.

**Substance Use:** Many teenagers struggle with alcohol and/or drug use. Talk to your child about the dangers of using alcohol or drugs to cope with negative emotions.

**Non-suicidal Self-injury:** This occurs when someone hurts themselves on purpose without the intention of dying. Seek professional help for self-injury immediately.

**Access to Guns:** Suicide crises are often temporary but access to a gun makes it easier to follow through in an instant. To reduce suicide risk, don't store a gun at home. If you do, ensure its locked and unloaded. Lock and store ammunition separately.

**Populations at Elevated Risk:** Though no one is immune from feeling depressed or suicidal, certain communities face increased risk including LGBTQ+ youth, suicide loss survivors, people experiencing homelessness, and individuals with disabilities.

If you are concerned about yourself or someone else,  
call or text the **Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988.**