

# Prevent Suicide Today

Suicide is a major public health problem and a leading cause of death in the U.S. The effects of suicide go beyond the person who acts to take his or her life: it can have a lasting effect on family, friends, and communities.

## WHAT IS SUICIDE?



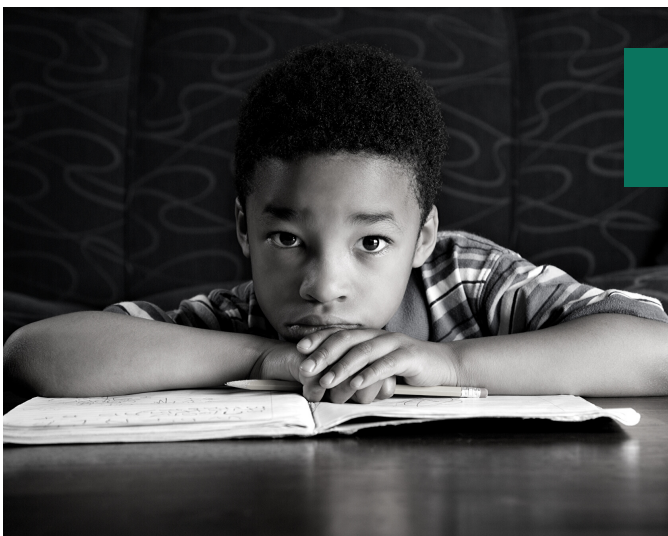
**Suicide** is when people direct violence at themselves with the intent to end their lives, and they die because of their actions. It's best to avoid the use of terms like "committing suicide" or a "successful suicide" when referring to a death by suicide as these terms often carry negative connotations. **A suicide attempt** is when people harm themselves with the intent to end their lives, but they do not die because of their actions.

## WHO IS AT RISK FOR SUICIDE?

**Suicide does not discriminate.** People of all genders, ages, and ethnicities can be at risk. Some main risk factors for suicide are: a prior suicide attempt, depression and other mental health disorders, substance use disorder, family history of suicide, adverse childhood experiences, access to firearms, being in prison or jail, and medical illness.



## ARE ANY GROUPS AT HIGHER RISK?



Men are more likely to die by suicide than women, but women are more likely to attempt suicide. There has been a significant rise in the suicide rate among **youth ages 10 to 14** with suicide ranking as the second leading cause of death for this age group. African American children under the age of 12 have a higher rate of suicide than White children.

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## WHAT ARE THE SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS?



**Talk:** wanting to die or wanting to kill themselves; feeling empty, hopeless, trapped, ashamed or having no reason to live; feeling unbearable pain, both physical or emotional; being a burden to others.

**Behavior:** withdrawing from activities, increased use of alcohol or drugs, sleeping too much or too little, saying goodbye to people, acting recklessly, aggression.

**Mood:** depression, loss of interest, anxiety, humiliation, irritability, rage.

## SHOULD I ASK ABOUT SUICIDE?

Asking someone about suicide will **NOT** put the idea into their head. Studies have shown that asking people about suicidal thoughts and behavior does not induce or increase such thoughts and experiences. In fact, asking someone directly, **“Are you thinking about suicide?”** can be the best way to identify someone at risk for suicide.



## HOW CAN I HELP SOMEONE AT RISK?



If you or someone you know has warning signs or symptoms of suicide, **get help as soon as possible**. Contact the toll-free National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**, or text the Crisis Text Line (text **HELP** to 741741) available 24/7, or call 911. Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals can contact the Lifeline via TTY at 1-800-799-4889.