

Helping Your Child Save a Life

Parent Training



Suicide can be a challenging topic for everyone.

Please take a break if needed.

Remember, help is always available >

The Crisis Text Line and National Suicide Prevention Lifeline are available 24/7.



CRISIS TEXT LINE |

Text **ACT** to 741741.

Agenda

Helping Your Child Save a Life

Youth suicide prevention basics

ACT (Acknowledge, Care, Tell)

What to do when your child ACTs

Building coping skills

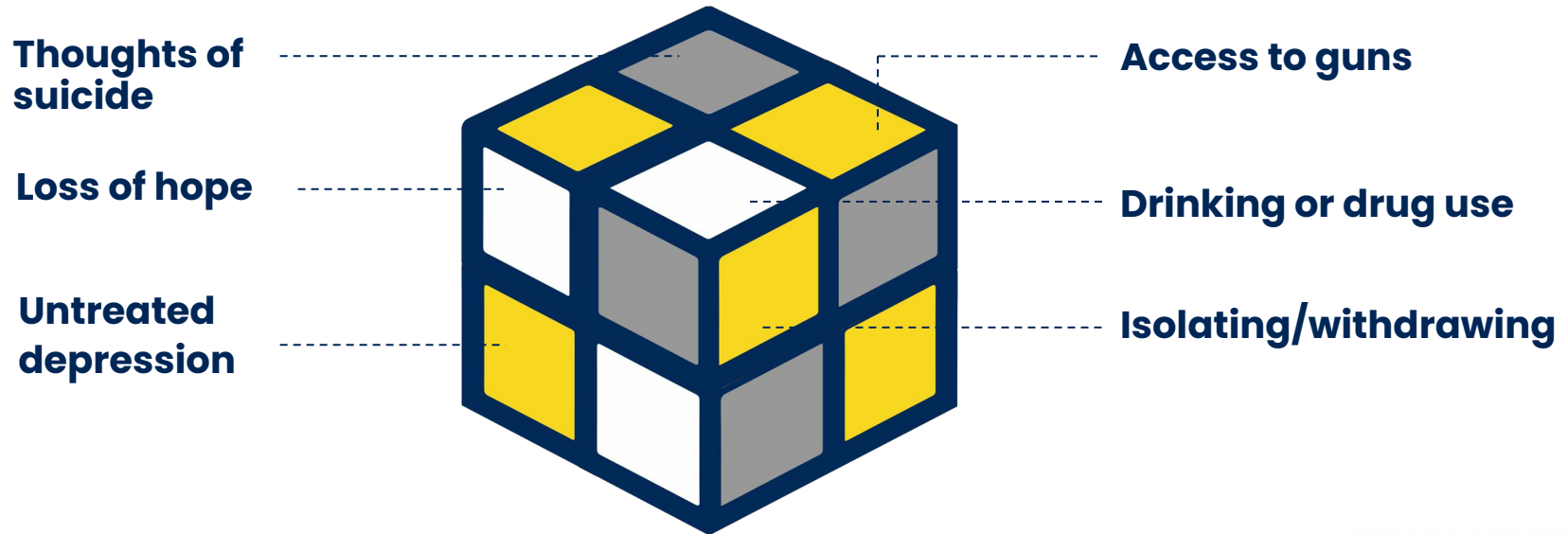
Resources





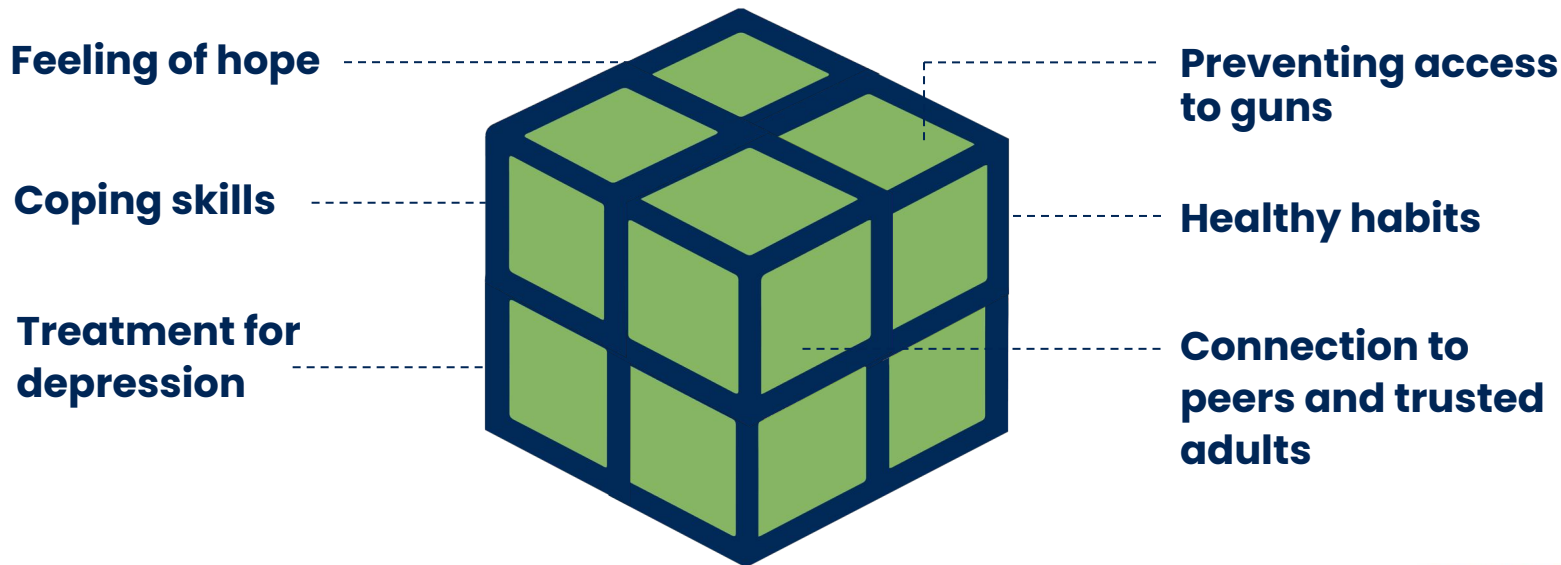
Why does suicide happen?

Trying to stop intense emotional pain.



How can we prevent suicide?

You play an important part in keeping young people safe.



Your child also has an important role



If your child sees Signs of Suicide, they are learning to ACT



Acknowledge signs of depression or suicide in a friend



Care: Show their friend they care



Tell a trusted adult

Acknowledge warning signs

Most people give clues they are thinking about suicide...



Anger



**Big
changes in
behavior**
+ withdrawal from
family or friends



Hopelessness



Sleeping
more or less



Drinking or
drug use



Overwhelming
Pain



Talking
about
suicide

Show you Care



It's **okay** to feel that way

Tell me **more** about it

I'm **here** for you

Tell a trusted adult



If you are worried your friend is thinking about suicide, you **NEED** to tell a trusted adult.



Do not promise to keep a secret.



It's worth making a friend mad at you if you are trying to save their life.

Mom/Dad, I need to tell you something. I'm getting worried about....

If your child is worried about a friend

- Listen to your child's concerns and encourage them to seek help
- Contact their friend's parents directly and share your child's concerns
- Contact school mental health staff/administrator so they can support the child/family
- If you are concerned about a child's immediate safety, call 911
- Reassure your child they did the right thing telling you. Work together to help save a life.

Remember, help is always available:

- Their pediatrician
- Their school counselor
- For immediate safety, call 911



Text **ACT** to 741741.

Managing reactions

You don't need to be an expert or have all the answers.



Give yourself permission to be human.

It's common to feel uncomfortable with this topic.



Talk to a supportive person beforehand and debrief after.



Most importantly, never keep what you learn a secret.

Building protective factors



Encourage: connection to school, participation in activities, and strong connections to friends.



Let your child know you are always ready to listen – whether they are concerned about a friend or struggling themselves; they do not need to worry alone.



Building coping skills

A coping skill helps people deal with unpleasant feelings and hard times.



Exercise



**Writing down
what you are
grateful for**



**Talk to friends
and family**



**Listen to
music**



**What are your
teen's favorite
coping skills?**

Talking to your kid

Take some time to start a conversation about mental health.

This can be tough since we don't usually talk about mental health like physical health. Feelings of depression or anxiety are often hidden because youth are confused, embarrassed, or ashamed. **Make sure your child knows they can talk to you about mental health.**

- **Ask open-ended questions.** Let your child steer the conversation to what they want to talk about.
- **Don't rush to solve their problems.** Instead, ask what they think would help a situation.
- **Be available and make sure your child knows it.** "I'm around if you want to talk later" may help.

Asking about suicide

**It's okay to ask about
suicide.**

Asking about suicide will not put the idea into someone's head.

Instead, it lets them know you see their pain and you are not afraid to help.

Indirect Questions

T

Do you wish you would go to sleep and not wake up?

T

Do you wish you were dead?

Direct Questions

Have you thought about killing yourself?

T

Have you had thoughts about suicide?

T

Tips for getting kids to talk

1. **Kid-led family meetings**; let your kid set the agenda
2. **Playing a game**; this makes kids more comfortable talking about a difficult topic
3. **If the subject comes up in a movie or TV show**, have a discussion about it
4. **Out for a walk**; the relaxed atmosphere can make it easier for some kids to open up
5. **Taking a drive**; sometimes it's easier to talk about difficult topics without eye contact
6. **Continuing the conversation or have multiple mini conversations** on a regular basis instead of one big talk
7. **Enlist other trusted adults**; sometimes a grandparent or trusted aunt/uncle can break through when parents have been shut out

Action steps



1

Look out for
warning signs and
seek help
immediately

2

Help build coping
skills and positive
supports for your
child

3

Talk to your child
about suicide and
be ready to listen
when your child

ACTs

Together we can make a difference

Deaths per 100,000; Population Ages 15-19

Accidents

33.3

17.7

Suicides

8.0

8.7

15 years →

**Suicide is the
Second-Leading
Cause of Death
for Teenagers in
the US**

Source: Population Reference Bureau analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, "Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2014," CDC WONDER Online Database, accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html>, on May 27, 2016.

SOS SIGNS OF SUICIDE

SOS Parent Page

sossignsofsuicide.org/parent

View clips of the program videos
to learn more about the program
your child is receiving



BSAD Adolescent Depression

In the last four weeks, has it seemed like nothing was fun for your child
and your child just wasn't interested in anything?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Concerned about your child?

Take an anonymous screening
indicating whether it's likely
your child is struggling with
depression

SOS SIGNS OF SUICIDE

ACT for Parents

It's important to ACT if your child is showing any concerning signs.

Acknowledge that you're seeing signs of suicide in your child.

A



Major changes in behavior



Sounding really down or helpless



Talking about suicide



Sleeping more or less



Increased anger or agitation



Withdrawal from family or friends

Show your child that you Care.

You can show your care by being a good listener and asking questions.

Tell me more about it.

C

I'm here for you.

It's OK to feel this way.

There is help available.

Tell a professional.



If you're having concerns about your child **reach out** to their pediatrician or school counselor. Most people thinking about suicide are struggling with a mental health condition like depression. With professional help, people begin to feel much better. You can also call the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-237-TALK (8255)** or **Text 'ACT' to the Crisis Text Line: 741741** for free, 24/7 support. If you are worried about your child's safety right now, call 911.

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Thank you!

Together we can ensure that every student has a trusted adult to turn to.

We appreciate your support of youth suicide prevention in our school and community.

Questions?
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