

SAFETY PLAN



Ask About Suicide

Providers and parents should directly ask regularly about thoughts of suicide and self harm. Asking does NOT promote the idea of self harm! Asking does decrease the risk of completed suicidal acts.

Make Your Home Safe

In teens aged 10 to 19 years old, the most common method of suicide is by suffocation (mostly hanging), followed by guns/ firearms then poisonings (often of over the counter medications). All drugs/medications/supplements, alcohol, ropes, cables, guns, sharp objects (knives), and other weapons should be secured in a locked location or removed from the home. If not removed from the home, guns should be stored unloaded in a locked location separate from ammunition. Children and teens should not have free access nor be allowed to self administer any medications.

Watch for suicidal behaviors

Behaviors to monitor in children and teens include:

- Drawing morbid or death related pictures
- Using death as the theme during play in young children
- Listening to music that centers around death
- Playing video games that have a self destructive theme
- Reading books or other publications that focus on death
- Watching television shows that focus on death
- Visiting internet sites that contain death related content
- Giving away possessions
- Not wanting to participate in “fun” or extracurricular activities or interact with friends that they used to enjoy
- Watch for signs of drinking alcohol. If a child has depression, feels suicidal, and drinks alcohol, they are more likely to take his or her life. Parents are usually unaware that their child is drinking. If a child is drinking, the parent will need to discuss this with the child and their provider.

What resources are available if your child is having thoughts of suicide or self harm:

- Can text 74141 for a counselor to help 24hrs a day, 7 days a week.
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800-273-8255, <https://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>
- Have a list of people in advance that your child feels comfortable talking with (with one person being an adult outside of your home) such as:
 - Parent
 - Adult Family member (aunt, uncle, grandparent)
 - Parent of one of your child’s friends
 - Pastor or an adult Youth Leader
 - School Counselor
- Have coping tools available that makes your child feel happy and helps him or her relax when upset:
 - Interaction with a pet
 - Listening to soothing music
 - Taking a shower or bath
 - Taking a walk outside
 - Meditation/Relaxation phone applications such as:
 - Headspace: <https://www.headspace.com>
 - MindShift: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/mindshift-cbt-anxiety-relief/id634684825>
- 911 (request an officer that is Crisis Intervention Trained-CIT) if you need help getting your child to the Emergency Room or you are concerned about your child’s immediate safety.
- Know which hospital in our area that is best equip to help your child in a crisis

Children’s Medical Center of Plano Emergency Room
7601 Preston Road, Plano Texas 75024
469-202-7000