



# Issues Affecting Today's Youth and How We Can Help

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**SAFE**



**How do we keep children and teens safe?**



## Mental Health Issues

**Stress**

**Depression**

**Suicide**





## Stressors

- School demands
- Too much on their plate
- Changes in body
- Parents/family problems
  - Separation/divorce
  - Family financial problems
  - Unsafe home life
- Abuse/neglect
- Chronic illness
- Friends / peers
- Breakups
- Teen dating violence
- Social media
- Victim of bullying
- Death of a loved one
- Recent move/changing schools
- Graduating
- Trouble with the law



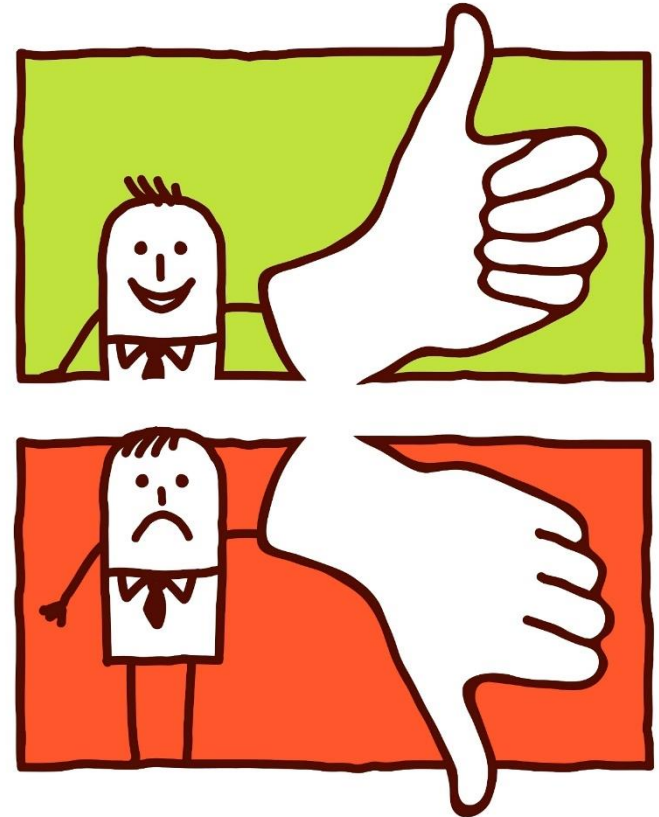
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## How Do You Deal With Stress?

- Positive Stress Relievers
- Negative Stress Relievers







## Negative Stress Relievers

- Anger/rage toward self or others
- Substance abuse
- Bullying/cyberbullying
- Self injury
- Risky behavior



An attempt to relieve extreme tension

Can become an addiction, hard to stop



## Negative Stress Relievers

**A behavior that starts as an attempt  
to feel more in control  
can end up  
controlling the person.**



## Positive Stress Relievers

**Encourage teens to:**

- **Calm down and think**
- **Journal...write down their thoughts**
- **Listen to music and relax**
- **Talk to someone they trust**
- **Get physical exercise**



**Adults: model positive stress relief!**



# Mental Health Issues

## Stress

The #1 trigger for depression

## Depression

## Suicide

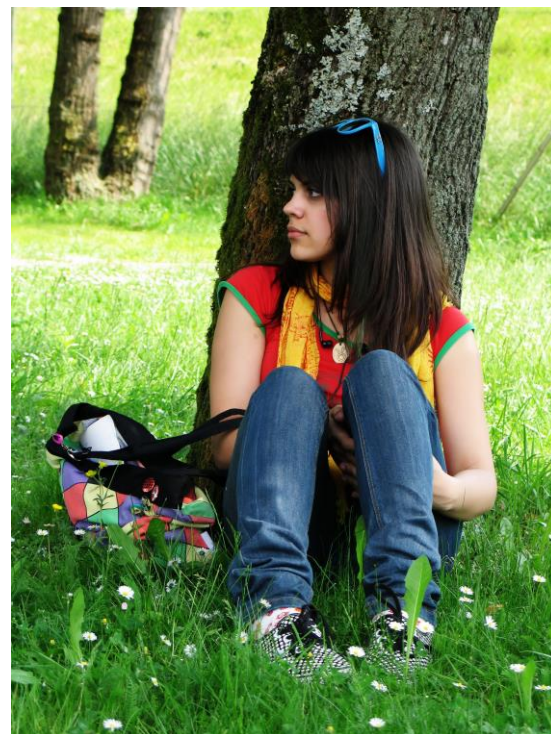




## Who Has Depression?

**1 in 5** teens has a  
diagnosable mental disorder

**1 in 4** shows symptoms of  
depression





## Symptoms of Depression

- Depressed irritable mood or feeling nothing
- Loss of interest in things formerly enjoyed
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feeling restless or anxious
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Sleeping more or less than usual
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- Feeling hopeless or helpless
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide



Remember

3 ■ 2 ■ 1



## What can cause depression?

- **Stress - #1**  
Recent setbacks, loss, life events
- **Runs in the family**
- **Alcohol/drug use**
- **Chemicals in the brain**

**Remember:  
Depression is a treatable  
medical condition.**





## What Helps Depression?

- Adequate and regular sleep
- Physical activity
- Healthy eating habits
- Avoiding alcohol, drugs, destructive behaviors
- Distracting activities (books, time with friends, movies)
- Regular daily schedule
- Therapy
- Taking medication regularly (if required)





## Why Is It Important To Treat Depression?

**Depression can lead to other problems.**

**Depression can lead to a higher risk for suicide.**





## Mental Health Issues

### Stress

The #1 trigger for depression

### Depression

Underlying risk factor for suicide

### Suicide





## Suicide: Do We Have A Problem?

**10<sup>th</sup>** leading cause of death  
among all ages

**2<sup>nd</sup>** leading cause of death  
among ages **10 to 24**





# What puts a person at risk for suicide?

## Environment

- Exposure to another person's suicide
- Prolonged stress
  - Bullying, toxic relationships, etc.
- Family
  - Conflict,
  - Separation/divorce
  - Loss of parent
  - Availability of parent in home
  - Expectations
  - Communication issues

## Health

- Physical or mental health problems
- Substance abuse disorder

## History

- Family history of suicide
- Prior suicide attempt

## Access to firearms





## The facts about firearms and suicide

Firearms are the leading method of suicide, more than all other methods combined

2 of every 3 firearm deaths are suicides

**SAFE!**

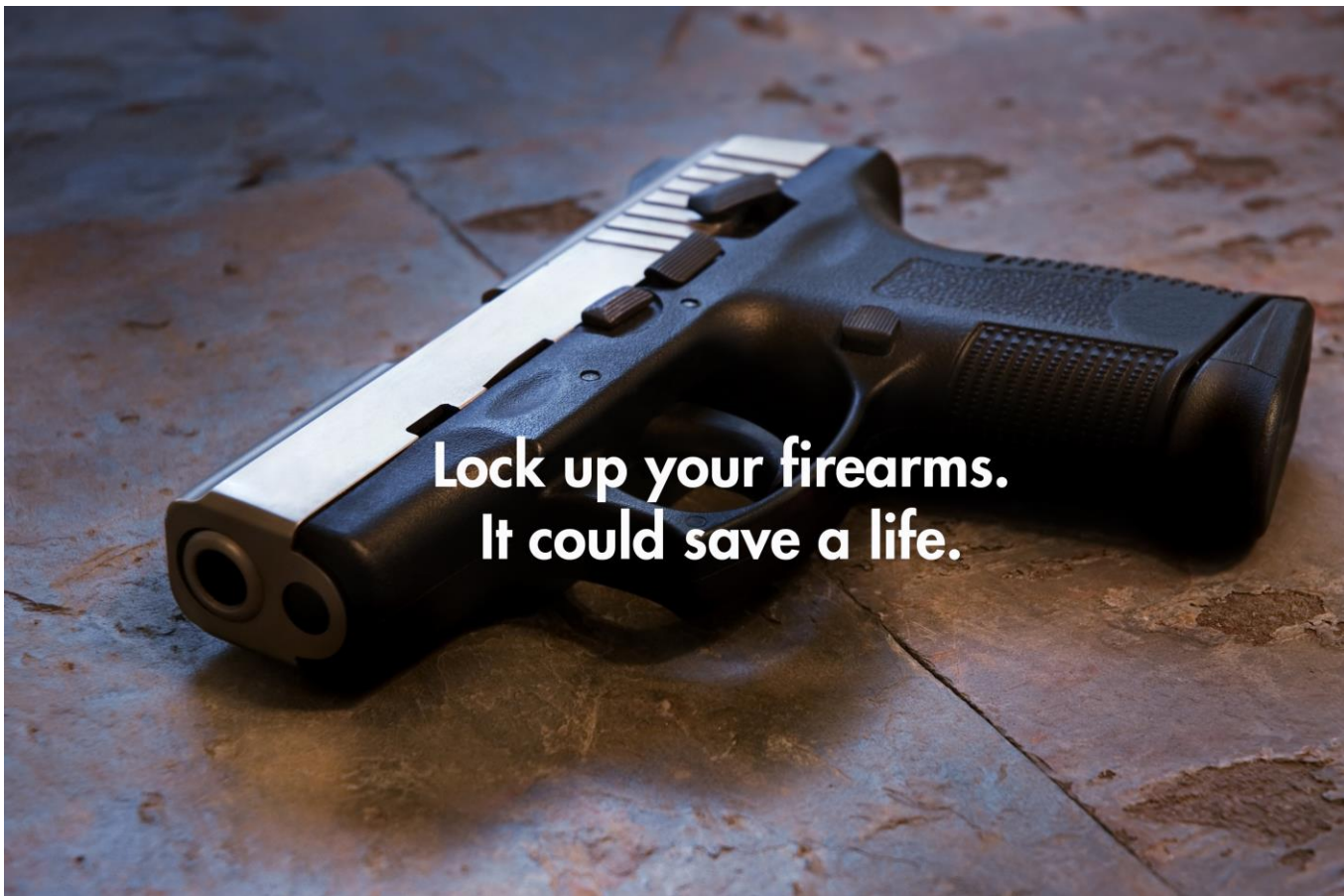


## The facts about firearms and suicide

**85%** of youth who die by firearm suicide use a family member's gun

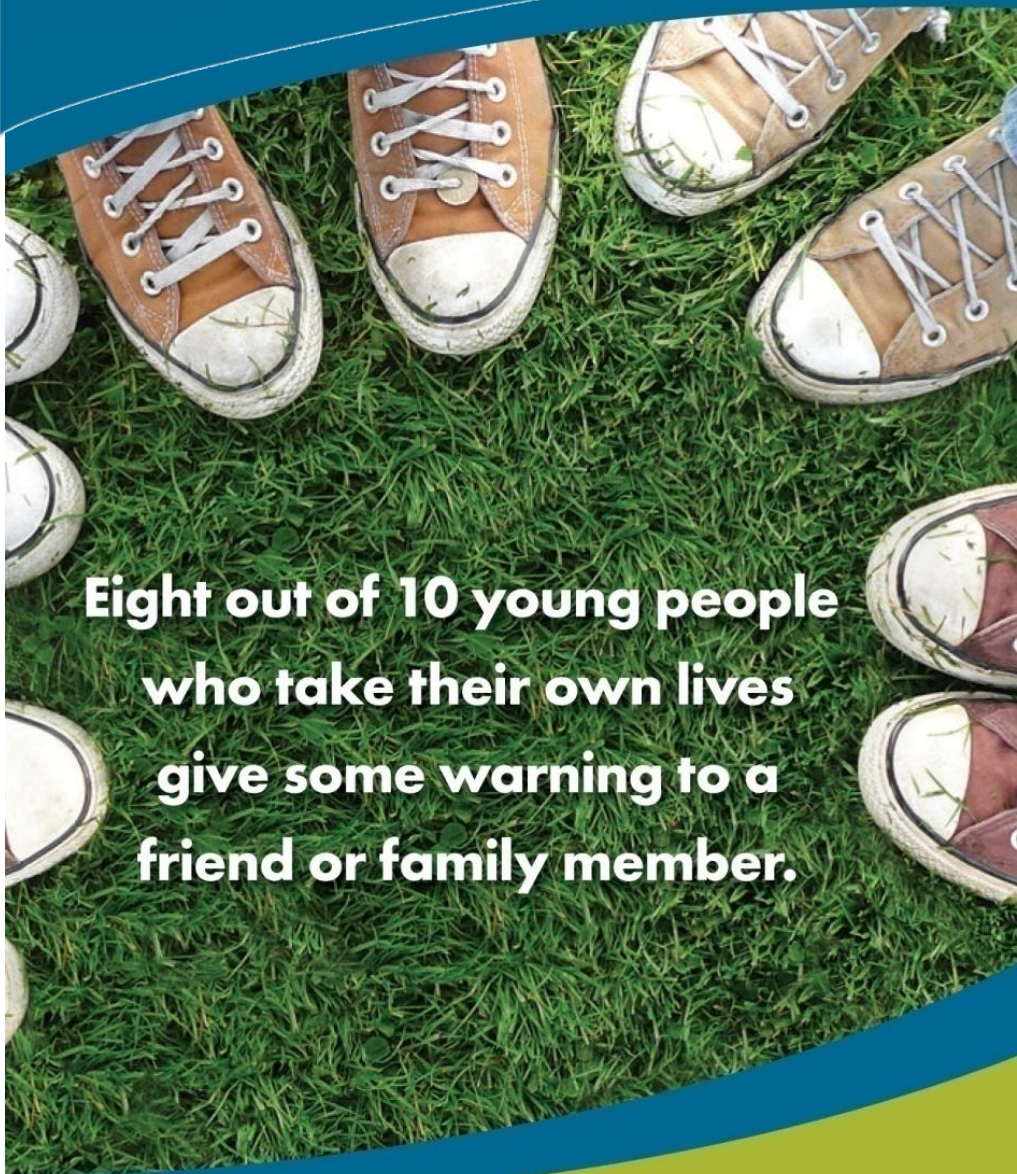


**SAFE!**



**Lock up your firearms.  
It could save a life.**

**SAFE!**



**Eight out of 10 young people  
who take their own lives  
give some warning to a  
friend or family member.**

**Know the warning signs.  
Know what to do.**





## 12 Warning Signs of Suicide

- **Change in personality and mood**
- **Impulsive or reckless behavior**
- **Aggressive or hostile behavior**
- **Extreme anxiety or agitation**
- **Loss of interest in things**
- **Withdrawal from friends, family**





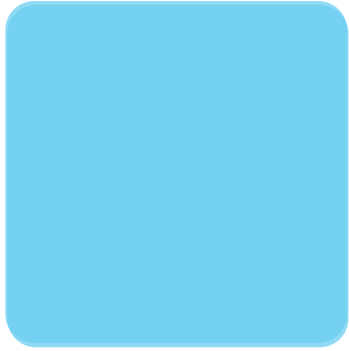
## 12 Warning Signs of Suicide

- Giving things away
- Neglecting appearance or hygiene
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs



- ★ Talking, writing, drawing about **wanting to die**
- ★ Feeling **hopeless, helpless or worthless**
- ★ Having a **plan**

*\*Signs of immediate risk for suicide*



YOU'RE IT!



TAKE IT SERIOUSLY



ASK QUESTIONS



GET HELP

# T TAKE IT SERIOUSLY

- **Listen.** Don't interrupt.
- **Don't judge.** Don't act shocked or angry.
- **Accept** the reality of their pain.

Talking openly about it is the first step to getting help.

# ASK QUESTIONS

**Express concerns.**

**Be specific.**

**Do not be afraid to ask:**

**“Do you sometimes feel so bad that you think about suicide?”**

**Talking openly about it is the first step to getting help.**



# ASK QUESTIONS

If the answer is “Yes”

“Have you thought about how you’d do it?” ✨

“Have you decided when?” ✨

“Have you made a plan?” ✨

✨ *Yes = very high risk for suicide*

Talking openly about it is the first step to getting help.

# GET HELP

## **If the situation is life-threatening:**

- **Go to the nearest emergency room**
  - **Call 911 (mental health crisis intervention)**
  - **Call a crisis help line**
- 
- ▶ **Do not leave the person alone until help is available.**
  - ▶ **Take away anything that could be harmful.**



**If the situation is not life-threatening:**

**Seek professional help for evaluation and treatment.**

**The goal is:**

- Assessment**
- Treatment**
- Early intervention is best**

## National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

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

- Save this number in your cell phone
- Call for yourself or someone else
- Free, confidential, available 24/7



**G**ET HELP

**CRISIS TEXT LINE |**

**Text HELLO to 741741**

**A free, nationwide, 24/7 text line  
for people in crisis**



**T | A | G**  
YOU'RE IT!



TAKE IT SERIOUSLY



ASK QUESTIONS



GET HELP



## Suicide Protective Factors

### Resilience

Strong coping and  
problem-solving skills

### Connectedness

- Family
- School
- Peers
- Community





# Start the Conversation



## Start the Conversation: How to Talk to Teens About Mental Health

Talking about mental health with teens can be challenging. By using open-ended questions, you allow teens to answer in their own words. Here are some questions to get the conversation going, along with questions that can open up the conversation about mental health. The key is to keep the lines of communication open with teens.



### BREAK THE ICE

Sometimes, you just need a way to engage a teenager and start a conversation. Questions like these can help.

1. If you could have anyone do the voice-over for your reflections on life, who would it be?
2. What is one of the most adventurous things you've ever done?
3. What is some place that you would really like to visit?
4. If you could be a contestant on any game show, which one would you choose?
5. If you could have any one superpower, which one would you choose and why?
6. If you had \$1,000 to spend, how would you spend it?
7. What is your favorite thing to do with friends?
8. What is your dream car?
9. If you could go on a trip anywhere with three other people, where would you go and what three people would you take?
10. What was your favorite movie when you were younger?

### STEER THE CONVERSATION TOWARD MENTAL HEALTH

Incorporate these questions into your conversations to help teens identify and talk about their feelings and experiences on a deeper level.

1. When do you get discouraged?
2. When do you feel most vulnerable?
3. What is something you like about yourself?



## How do I talk to my teen about emotional and mental health?

### **What Hurts:**

It's all in your head.

### **What Helps:**

**I know you have a real illness and that's what causes these thoughts and feelings.**



## How do I talk to my teen about emotional and mental health?

### **What Hurts:**

We all go through times like this.

### **What Helps:**

I may not be able to understand exactly how you feel, but I care about you and want to help.





## How do I talk to my teen about emotional and mental health?

### What Hurts:

You have so much to live for—why do you want to die?

### What Helps:

You are important to me.  
Your life is important to me.



## The Facts

### Stress

The #1 trigger for depression

### Depression

Risk factor for suicide

### Suicide

The 2nd leading cause of death among youth ages 10 to 24





## The Facts

**Stress is manageable.**

The #1 trigger for depression

**Depression is treatable.**

Risk factor for suicide

**Suicide is preventable.**

The 2nd leading cause of death among  
youth ages 10 to 24





**QUESTIONS?**



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**F O U N D A T I O N**

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### STEER THE CONVERSATION TOWARD MENTAL HEALTH

Incorporate these questions into your conversations to help teens identify and talk about their feelings and experiences on a deeper level.

1. **When do you get discouraged?**
2. **When do you feel most vulnerable?**
3. **What is something you like about yourself?**
4. **What is something you are looking forward to doing within the next six months?**
5. **What is one regret you have from last week?**
6. **What was the highlight of your week?**
7. **What is the biggest struggle you are facing in life right now?**
8. **What is one personal tragedy you have overcome?**
9. **Name one weakness and one strength you have.**
10. **Name one short-term goal and one long-term goal you have.**

Find more information and resources at [www.GrantHalliburton.org](http://www.GrantHalliburton.org)

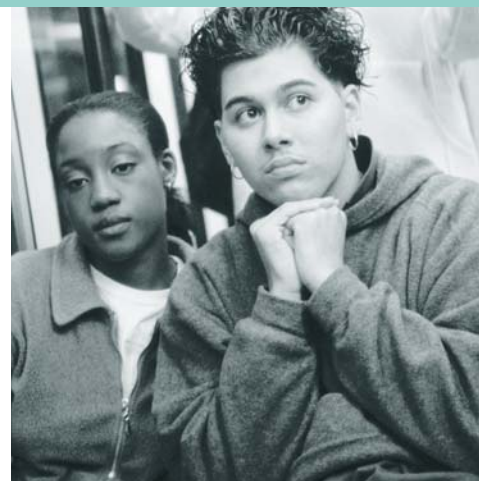
## What Helps and What Hurts

### When someone you care about has depression or bipolar disorder

People living with depression or bipolar disorder (manic depression) often cope with symptoms like feelings of hopelessness, emptiness or worthlessness. You probably want to say something to help the person feel better. But what can you say? Why does it seem like many well-meant comments hurt more than they help?

Here is a basic list to use as guidelines when you talk to someone who has symptoms of depression or bipolar disorder. Put the statements into your own words. What's most important is that the person you care about understands your support. You didn't cause your loved one's illness and you can't control the person's feelings. You can only do your best to offer help.

*If the person is actively threatening suicide, don't try to handle the situation on your own. Call a mental health professional or take your friend to the nearest emergency room for treatment.*



### What helps

I know you have a real illness and that's what causes these thoughts and feelings.

I may not be able to understand exactly how you feel but I care about you and want to help.

You are important to me. Your life is important to me.

Tell me what I can do now to help you.

You might not believe it now, but the way you're feeling will change.

You are not alone in this. I'm here for you.

Talk to me. I'm listening.

### What hurts

It's all in your head.

We all go through times like this.

You have so much to live for – why do you want to die?

What do you want me to do?  
I can't change your situation.

Just snap out of it.  
Look on the bright side.

You'll be fine. Stop worrying.

Here's my advice...

### When you have depression or bipolar disorder

## What can I do to help others understand what helps and what hurts?

- Set aside some time to sit down with family members or friends and talk about something important. Choose a time that is relatively calm and free of distractions.
- Begin your statements with yourself: "I feel," or "I need." Avoid "you" statements like "You always criticize me," which may be more likely to lead to arguments.
- Tell them what they **can** say or do that will help you. This includes practical things like helping with housework or taking you somewhere.
- Ask for help when you need it. If you feel better, thank the people who helped you.
- Look for more than one person to support you. Different people offer different perspectives.



## Learn to recognize the warning signs of suicide

- Feeling hopeless
- Drastic changes in behavior
- Impulsiveness, recklessness, risk-taking
- Aggressive behavior, rage, uncontrolled anger
- Preoccupation with death or suicide
- Giving away possessions
- Loss of interest in appearance
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Extreme anxiety or agitation
- Recent stress like loss of a relationship, unplanned pregnancy, victim of bullying or family conflict
- Previous suicide attempt or exposure to another's suicidal behavior
- Comments like "I don't think I can take it anymore" or "People would be better off without me."

**A person who is thinking of taking his own life usually gives clues to a friend. Would you know what to do if you were face-to-face with a person in suicidal crisis?**

**Remember TAG, You're It!**

**Take it seriously. Ask questions. Get help.**

**You might just save a life.**



## Know what to do. Start with TAG.

### Take it seriously.

- Listen. Don't judge. Don't act shocked or angry.
- Let the person know that you care and they are not alone.
- Explain that no matter how awful their problems seem, they can be worked out.
- Never agree to keep a person's suicidal thoughts or plans a secret.

### Ask questions.

- Express concerns. Be specific.
- Do not be afraid to ask if a person is considering suicide. Be direct. Ask if they have a specific plan or method in mind.
- Talking openly about it is the first step to getting help.

### Get help.

#### **If the situation is life-threatening:**

- Call 911 or a crisis help line.
- Go with the person to the nearest emergency room.
- Take away anything that could be harmful.
- Do not leave the person alone until help is available.

#### **If the situation is not life-threatening:**

- Try to get the person to agree to talk to someone.
- Call a parent or other trusted adult who can help.
- For children/teens, offer to go with them to talk to a parent, school counselor or other trusted adult.
- Stay in touch. Keep checking in on how they're doing.

## Know where to find help.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

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

Crisis Text Line

**Text HELP to 741741**  
**Crisistextline.org**

The Trevor Project  
helpline for LGBT youth

**(866) 488-7386**  
**TheTrevorProject.org**

Here For Texas

**HereForTexas.com**

Grant Halliburton Foundation

**GrantHalliburton.org**

Reach Out

**ReachOut.com**

Half of Us

**HalfofUs.com**

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