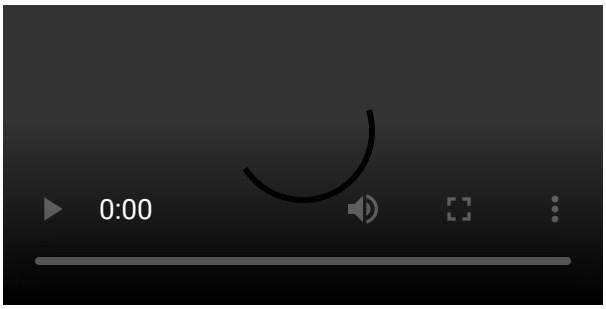
Signs a Child Might Be Suicidal

childmind.org/article/signs-a-child-might-be-suicidal

What to watch out for and how to help

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Some young people who are thinking about suicide let people close to them know that they are in pain and are open about needing help. Others hide their feelings from family and friends. If you are wondering if your child is suicidal, experts say that asking them is the best way to find out.

Parents sometimes worry that asking about suicide may make it more likely, but that isn't the case, and asking is very important. For children who have a hard time admitting they need help, it sends the message that a parent cares very much about them, and that struggling and asking for help is okay. That conversation can be lifesaving.

While asking is the best way to find out, there are also some warning signs to watch out for if you are worried about suicide, including the following:

- Isolation from friends and family
- Problems eating or sleeping
- Mood swings
- Reckless behavior
- Dropping grades
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Giving away belongings
- Talking about feeling hopeless or trapped
- Talking about being a burden to others or not belonging
- Talking about suicide or wanting to die
- Writing or drawing about suicide or acting it out in play

There are also some risk factors that may make some people more vulnerable to suicide, like a family history of suicide, bullying, and access to things like firearms and pills. Struggling with a mental health disorder or alcohol and*substance abuse*

can also be factors. Learn more about risk factors and protective factors here.

If your child has any of the warning signs above, ask them if they are thinking about suicide. If you are worried that they may attempt suicide, call 911. Experts agree that suicidal thoughts should always be taken seriously.

Learn about a form ofOCD

in which people obsess over the idea of suicide, but are not actually suicidal.

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