

# Talk to your children about suicide. It could save their life.



You talk to your children about important topics like sex, bullying, drugs and more. But have you talked to them about suicide and their mental health? If not, it's critical that you do. Because suicide is the second leading cause of death for children ages 10–19 in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

We know talking about suicide can be hard. But it might be one of the most important conversations you ever have.




## HOW TO START THE CONVERSATION.

- Pick a good time and location when you have their attention.
- Some questions you can ask include:
  - › Have you felt down or depressed lately?
  - › Do you ever feel like hurting yourself?
  - › Are you okay? How can I help you?
- Make sure whatever your children have to say, you listen and acknowledge them in a supportive way.

**You love your children. That's why it's so important to make sure they know they can talk to you. Especially if they've been thinking about suicide.**

## SO, WHAT IF THEY HAVE CONSIDERED SUICIDE?

Don't brush it off or think that it's just a phase. Get them help immediately. Your Life Iowa can help connect you to mental health resources near you. If you're worried they're in a state of emergency, call 911.

 **CALL: (855) 581-8111**  
 **TEXT: (855) 895-8398**  
 **CHAT: [YourLifelowa.org](https://www.yourlifelowa.org)**

## DO YOU KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE?

**If you've noticed your child showing any of these behaviors, talk to them as soon as possible.**

- Feeling down or hopeless
- Withdrawing from you, friends or other family members
- Having major changes in their sleep, eating or activity levels
- Withdrawing from activities they used to like (sports, band, etc.)
- Suddenly giving away possessions
- Making comments about wishing they were dead or being a burden to others
- Being preoccupied with suicide or dying in writing, drawing or online activity

## IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW.

Talking about suicide **does not make someone suicidal**. In fact, it may be the opportunity they need to open up about their feelings.

LGBTQ youth are **more than four times as likely** to attempt suicide than their peers.<sup>2</sup>

## WE'RE HERE FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY 24/7.

If you need help talking to your children about suicide or finding mental health resources near you, Your Life Iowa is always here. You're not alone.

**SAY SOMETHING ABOUT SUICIDE.**

<sup>1</sup>Hedegaard, Curtin, & Warner, 2018 <sup>2</sup>Johns et al., 2019; Johns et al., 2020

# Say something about suicide. It could save someone's life.



You might not know what to say to someone in your life who you think may be considering suicide. We get it. Talking about suicide can be hard. But it might be one of the most important conversations you ever have.

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- Some questions you can ask include:
  - › Have you felt down or depressed lately?
  - › Do you ever feel like hurting yourself?
  - › Are you okay? How can I help you?
- Make sure whatever they have to say, you listen and acknowledge them in a supportive way.

You care about the people in your life. That's why it's so important to make sure they know they can talk to you. Especially if they've been thinking about suicide.

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