

COVID, Suicide and Black Youth

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for young people between 10 to 24. Sometimes your struggle can be underestimated because of your age. But we hear you, and help is available.

How To Take Care Of Yourself

Ask for help: Don't be afraid to let your friends, family, or teachers know what you need when they ask; they want to help. You can also call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline any time — calls are confidential.

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Make a safety plan: A safety plan can help guide you through difficult moments and keep you safe.

Remember that this feeling can be overcome: Family conflict, relationships, grades, sexual identity, and the loss of important people can seem impossible to deal with. But with support from others, you can.

Evaluate the relationships in your life: Love and friendship are all about respect. Toxic or unhealthy relationships can negatively affect you. Whether you're dating or building new friendships. If you're being bullied, **HELP IS AVAILABLE.**

CALL THE LIFELINE anytime

1-800-273-8255

How To Help

Take your loved one seriously: Some people feel that kids who say they are going to hurt or kill themselves are “just doing it for attention.” But if your child, friend, or family member confides thoughts of suicide, believe them and get help.

Listen with empathy and provide support: A fight or breakup might not seem like a big deal, but for a young person it can feel immense. Sympathize and listen. Minimizing what your child or friend is going through can increase his or her sense of hopelessness.

Know the Risk Factors

Risk factors are characteristics that make it more likely that someone will consider, attempt, or die by suicide. They can't cause or predict a suicide attempt, but they're important to be aware of.

- Mental disorders, particularly mood disorders, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, and certain personality disorders
- Alcohol and other substance use disorders
- Hopelessness
- Impulsive and/or aggressive tendencies
- History of trauma or abuse
- Major physical illnesses
- Previous suicide attempt(s)
- Family history of suicide

EVERYBODY hurts . . .

SOMETIME.

HOLD

- Job or financial loss
- Loss of relationship(s)
- Easy access to lethal means
- Local clusters of suicide
- Lack of social support and sense of isolation
- Stigma associated with asking for help
- Lack of healthcare, especially mental health and substance abuse treatment
- Cultural and religious beliefs, such as the belief that suicide is a noble resolution of a personal dilemma
- Exposure to others who have died by suicide (in real life or via the media and Internet)

Know the Warning Signs

Some warning signs may help you determine if a loved one is at risk for suicide, especially if the behavior is new, has increased, or seems related to a painful event, loss, or change. If you or someone you know exhibits any of these, seek help by calling the Lifeline.

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill themselves
- Looking for a way to kill themselves, like searching online or buying a gun
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or isolating themselves

- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Extreme mood swings

Friends sometimes let friends know if they are thinking about suicide or dying. Other times, changes in behavior may show that someone is struggling.

Don't keep suicide a secret: If your friend is considering suicide, don't promise to keep it a secret. Tell him or her you can help, but you need to involve other people, like a trusted adult. Neither of you have to face this alone.

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