

Resource: Warning Signs

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Mental health challenges may be invisible, which is why it can be helpful to know as many warning signs as possible that someone is thinking about self-harm or suicide.

Emotional:

- Significant changes in mood
- Feeling trapped with no way out ("I just have to get out of here, I can't stand it anymore...")
- Severe guilt and shame
- Talking or writing about death, ruminating
- Feeling like a failure at work, school, life
- Having no reason to live
- Feeling like a burden to others
- Experiencing unbearable pain
- Feeling hopeless
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Having delusions or hallucinations
- Fatigue
- Loss of interest
- Humiliation/shame
- Anger/agitation
- Sudden relief

Behavioral:

- Talking or writing about death/suicide ("I just wish I were dead")
- Talking less obviously about death but with finality ("I can't take this anymore, I'll never recover")
- Increasing drug and alcohol use
- Giving away personal possessions
- Doing risky, life-threatening things
- Getting into fights, dangerous stunts, etc.
- Regularly self-harming
- "Rehearsing"
- Searching online for methods, obtaining and preparing methods

Behavioral, continued:

- Withdrawing from family, friends and the community
- Withdrawing from activities they normally enjoy
- Dramatic sleep changes, sleeping too much or too little
- Visiting or calling friends to say goodbye
- Aggression
- Sudden and dramatic improvement in mood without obvious cause
- Dramatic changes in eating/sleeping habits

Triggering Events and Other Risk Factors:

- Recent “Triggering Events,” like
 - Loss of an important person due to a death, moving away, breakup, incarceration, etc.
 - Loss of someone important to suicide
 - Physical or sexual assault
 - Bullying (victimization or perpetration)
 - Rejection/relationship conflict as a result of coming out as LGBTQ
 - Diagnosis of a serious health problem
 - Painful anniversary
 - Legal troubles
 - Witnessing violence
- Dissociated parental relationships
- Alcohol/substance use/dependence
- History of physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual abuse
- History of childhood neglect
- Legal troubles of self or family
- History of family or friend deaths from suicide
- Social isolation
- Relationship issues with friends or siblings
- Suicide death in school/community
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Medications with side effects that may increase the risk of suicide
- Firearms in the home

If you notice these warning signs or risk factors, don't wait - call or share these resources with anyone who needs them:

- **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**

Call or text 24/7 for support during a crisis or immediate risk of harm to self

- **MHPHope.org/chatline** - Mental Health Partnerships Chatline

Access for non-life-threatening crisis care, 9:00am to 7:00pm, Monday through Friday