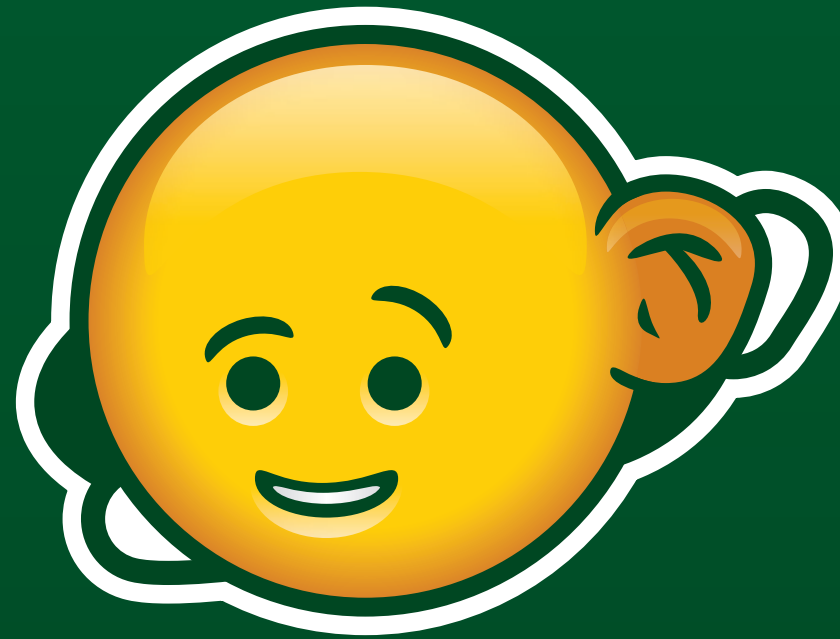




ask



listen



refer

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# Risk Factors and **Warning Signs**

## Thoughts

**Trouble concentrating / Having suicidal thoughts / Planning a suicide / Rigid thinking**

## Emotions

**Unusual interest in how others are feeling / Hopelessness / Excessive sadness or crying  
Loneliness or feelings of isolation**

## Behaviors

**Messy appearance / Pulling away from friends, family, social groups  
Starting or increasing use of alcohol or drugs / Aggressive, impulsive, and disruptive behavior  
Talking about death and dying / Giving away belongings, tying up loose ends  
Trouble sleeping**

# If Your Friend Says Things Like These...

## Start Asking Questions

*What's the point of living?*

*Maybe I won't be around.*

*I can't go on.*

*I wish I were dead.*

*You will be better off without me.*

*Who cares if I'm dead, anyway?*

*Soon you won't have to worry about me.*

*I'm going to end it all.*

*It would be better if I wasn't here.*

*Nothing matters any more.*

# Why College Students **are at Risk**

## College students face unique pressures

**Leaving home for college** is a major life transition.

**Family and friends**, a student's primary support system, are often far away.

**High academic standards** of parents, professors, and peers can add additional stress.

**Economic pressure** to finish a degree early to enter the job market.

## College students may also be dealing with:

**Recent, severe stressful, shameful, or humiliating life events**

Trouble with authorities / Poor grades / Dropping out of school

**Interpersonal and identity issues**

Relationship problems / A breakup or rejection / Sexual identity issues

**Conflict with family members or family dysfunction**

An argument or abuse

**Exposure to suicidal behavior of others**

Seeing it as a solution or way to seek help

# Protective Factors **that Can Help**

**Having a support system** (family, friends, and school)

**Good self-care** and positive thinking

**Communication, planning, and problem-solving skills**

**An ability to manage strong emotions**

**Access to mental health care** and willingness to accept help

**A school environment that encourages help-seeking** and promotes health

**Other environmental protections**, such as reducing access to firearms and other lethal weapons.

# Don't be Afraid **to Help**

**When you are concerned about a person at risk,  
it is important to ask about suicide.**

**Be straightforward: Are you thinking about killing yourself?**

You seem very unhappy, are you wishing you were dead?

Has the idea of suicide been on your mind?

**Ask about any suicide plans** (the more detailed the plan, the greater the risk):

Have you thought of ways you might take your life?

**Ask about current resources:**

Is there anyone in your life who is a real support to you right now?

Who do you really trust?

**You asking about suicide will most likely not be the cause of someone considering it,  
but it is the best way you can save their life.**