ask  listen  refer

Learn more at asklistenrefer.org
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?
- You will be better off without me.
- I wish I were dead.
- Soon you won't have to worry about me.
- It would be better if I wasn't here.
- Maybe I won't be around.
- I can't go on.
- Who cares if I'm dead, anyway?
- I'm going to end it all.
- Nothing matters any more.
- I wish I were dead.
- It would be better if I wasn't here.
- You will be better off without me.
- Who cares if I'm dead, anyway?
- I can't go on.
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.