

HOPE SQUAD



A Monthly Insight of Practical Tools to Help Your Family

Wellness Today

For Parents & Families

National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone. The stigma surrounding suicide can make it difficult for people who are struggling to speak up. This month especially is a time to raise awareness and help people find the resources they need. Here are a few ideas on what you can do to participate:

- Learn or teach others the [warning signs and risk factors](#) of suicide.
- [Learn or share the facts of suicide](#) to dispel the stigma surrounding suicide.
- Know what to do during a [mental health crisis](#).
- [Raise awareness](#) on social media platforms.



How to Talk to Suicidal Children

Because suicide is the second-leading cause of death among teenagers, threatening phrases from your children (such as "I should just go kill myself") should be taken seriously, even if you think your children are saying it just to get attention. Here are some general ideas for how to talk to suicidal children.

- If you notice your children exhibiting some of the [warning signs of suicide](#) or hear them talk about killing themselves, talk with them immediately.
 - » Be direct and specific. Talking about suicide will not put the idea in their head.
 - » Ask questions to help you understand how they're feeling.
 - » Validate their feelings.
 - » Accept them instead of judge them.
 - » Assure them that you'll be there for them.
- Keep your children safe. Remove all harmful substances or objects from the immediate area. If your children are in immediate danger, don't leave them alone. Call 911 or the

[Suicide Prevention Lifeline.](#)

Once the immediate danger has passed, find ongoing help for your children, such as a mental health professional.

A more specific method for coping with suicidal children is an approach based on nonviolent resistance. Its purpose is to reduce the potential risk and the collective distress in a suicide threat situation. Some main points of the approach include the following:

- Parents simultaneously support the child and resist the threat.
- Parents initiate a "containment phase" that states they will be present in their child's life and do anything they can to avoid their child's suicide.
- Parents create connectedness by sharing, not hiding, the suicide crisis with individuals who have positive relationships with their child.
- Parents take steps to reduce negative feelings and power struggles during the crisis.

For a more in-depth look into how to cope with suicide threats with nonviolent resistance, [read this article](#).