

Warning signs of suicide in children and teens

Common warning signs for suicide include:

- Making suicidal statements.
- Being preoccupied with death in conversation, writing, or drawing.
- Giving away belongings.
- Withdrawing from friends and family.
- Having aggressive or hostile behavior.

It is extremely important that you **take all threats of suicide seriously** and seek immediate treatment for your child or teenager. If you are a child or teen and have these feelings, talk with your parents, an adult friend, or your doctor right away to get some help.

Other warning signs can include:

- Neglecting personal appearance.
- Running away from home.
- Risk-taking behavior, such as reckless driving or being sexually promiscuous.
- A change in personality (such as from upbeat to quiet).

Suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts

Certain problems increase the chances of suicidal thoughts in children and teens. Other problems may trigger a suicide attempt.

- Problems that increase the chances of **suicidal thoughts** include having:
 - Depression or another mental health problem, such as bipolar disorder (manic-depressive illness) or schizophrenia.

- A parent with depression or substance abuse problems.
- Tried suicide before.
- A friend, peer, family member, or hero (such as a sports figure or musician) who recently attempted or died by suicide.
- A disruptive or abusive family life.
- A history of sexual abuse.
- A history of being bullied.
- Problems that may trigger a **suicide attempt** in children and teens include:
 - Possession or purchase of a weapon, pills, or other means of inflicting self-harm.
 - Drug or alcohol use problems.
 - Witnessing the suicide of a family member.
 - Problems at school, such as falling grades, disruptive behavior, or frequent absences.
 - Loss of a parent or close family member through death or divorce.
 - Legal or discipline problems.
 - Stress caused by physical changes related to puberty, chronic illness, and/or sexually transmitted infections.
 - Withdrawing from others and keeping thoughts to themselves.
 - Uncertainty surrounding sexual orientation.

Help is available. For additional information, visit [MagellanHealth.com/MYMH](https://www.MagellanHealth.com/MYMH)

Source: Healthwise