

SOS Signs of Suicide teaches STUDENTS TO ACT

SOS is an evidence-based suicide prevention program that educates students about the relationship between suicide and depression, and teaches them how to get help for themselves or a friend. SOS uses the ACT message to equip teens with knowledge and encourage help-seeking so students get the support they need before they reach a potential crisis.

Acknowledge that you are seeing signs of depression or suicide in yourself or a friend. **Care:** let your friend know you care about them.

Tell a trusted adult - take your friend with you or go alone if you need to./

Talking to your child

Talking about these issues can be tough for families. In our society, mental health isn't discussed openly like physical health. Feelings of depression are often hidden because youth are confused, embarrassed, or ashamed and this secrecy can have dire consequences. You can help protect your child and their friends by starting a conversation about mental health.

- Ask open-minded questions. Let your child steer the conversation to what they want to talk about.
- Don't rush to solve their problems. Instead, ask what they think would help a situation.
- Be available and make sure your child knows it. A simple, "I'm around if you want to talk later," may help.
- Try talking in the car. The relaxed atmosphere makes it easier for some kids to open up.

WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE

A warning sign is an indication that someone might be having thoughts of suicide. Most people give clues or signals of their intentions. If you see/hear a warning sign seek immediate help.

- **Listen:** 'I wish I were dead' and 'I won't be around to deal with this much longer' are warnings of serious suicidal thoughts.
- **Watch** for big changes, such as:
 - Significant differences in appearance or mood
 - Extreme withdrawal
 - Increase in risky behavior (including alcohol/drug use)
 - Decreased interest in things they once enjoyed.

