

How Friends Help Friends

Notice Signs of Suicidal Behavior Such as:

- **Feelings**- hopeless, helpless, very sad, agitated, anxious
- **Actions/Events**-drug or alcohol use, recent loss or break-up, talk of death, a major fight or argument, isolation from usual friends and/or activities, aggression
- **Changes**-in personality, behaviors, sleeping and eating patterns, interests and hobbies, appearance; sudden improvement in mood after being down or withdrawn
- **Threats**-statements about death and dying, threat to kill self if something doesn't go right, a plan for suicide, making a will or giving away favorite things, self-injury or any suicidal gesture or attempt

What to Do:

1. SHOW YOU CARE

- Listen...without judging or giving advice
- Take all talk of suicide seriously
- Stay calm, stay with your friend

2. ASK ABOUT SUICIDE

- Ask about suicide-very directly-"are you thinking about suicide?"
- Are you wishing you were dead?
- Are you planning how you will kill yourself?

2. GET HELP

- Take action sooner rather than later
- Have your friend identify a trusted adult -offer to go with him/her.
- Call a crisis line (in Maine, 1-888-568-1118)
- Offer help/hope in any way you can
- Know your own limits
- Ask a trusted adult for help, even if your friend resists

What to Avoid:

- Do not argue with a suicidal person
- Do not offer simple solutions
- Do not promise secrecy. Keeping it secret is a form of assuming responsibility.
- Do not treat the situation lightly, even if your friend begins to joke about it
- Do not challenge your friend...or suggest drugs or alcohol as a solution
- Do not leave your friend alone unless you sense personal danger
- Do not try to be the only person to rescue your friend. **DO GET HELP!**
- Do not try to forcefully remove a gun from anyone. **CALL for HELP.**