

Risk Factors, Protective Factors, and Warning Signs

WARNING SIGNS

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself
- Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or obtaining a gun
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings

RISK FACTORS

- Prior suicide attempt
- Misuse/abuse alcohol/other drugs
- Mental disorders (depression, etc.)
- Access to lethal means
- Knowing someone who died from suicide
- Social isolation
- Chronic disease/disability
- Lack of access to BH care
- End of relationship or marriage
- Death of a loved one or pet
- An arrest
- Serious financial problems

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Effective BH care
- Close connections to individuals, family, community & social institutions
- Life skills (coping, problem-solving)
- Self-esteem/sense of purpose or meaning
- Cultural, religious, or personal beliefs discouraging suicide