

# Suicide Warning Signs

Listen and look for these warning signs for suicidal behavior. Warning signs are the earliest detectable signs that indicate heightened risk for suicide *in the near-term* (i.e., within minutes, hours, or days), as opposed to risk factors which suggest longer-term risk (i.e., a year to a lifetime). NOTE that aside from direct statements or behaviors threatening suicide, it is often a constellation of signs that raises concern, rather than one or two symptoms alone. These are presented in a hierarchical manner, organized by degree of risk, and were developed by an expert working group convened by the American Association of Suicidology.

## Warning Signs for Suicide and Corresponding Actions

**Call 911 or seek immediate help** from a mental health provider when you hear, or see any of these behaviors

- Someone threatening to hurt or kill him/herself, or talking of wanting to hurt or kill him/herself
- Someone looking for ways to kill him/herself by seeking access to firearms, available pills, or other means
- Someone talking or writing about death, dying or suicide, when these actions are out of the ordinary for the person

Seek help by contacting a mental health professional or calling the crisis hotline at 1-888-568-1112 for a referral should you witness, hear, or see anyone exhibiting any one of more of these behaviors

- Hopelessness
- Rage, uncontrolled anger, seeking revenge
- Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities, seemingly without thinking
- Feeling trapped – like there's no way out
- Withdrawing from friends, family and society
- Anxiety, agitation, unable to sleep or sleeping all the time
- Dramatic mood changes
- No reason for living; no sense of purpose in life

Adapted by the Maine Youth Suicide Prevention Program from a Suicide Prevention Resource Center document accessed at [www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org).