

# When Your Teen has a Friend in Crisis

It's important to support teens who are dealing with a friend's crisis. Coaching them to make good choices in responding to their friend's issues will not only help the friend, it will model for your teen how to handle difficult situations.

Whether your teen openly tells you that he is worried about a friend or you just have a "sixth sense" that something is wrong, the first step is to encourage your teen to speak to someone if he is worried about a friend. It may not be you, but as a parent, you should follow up with your child about his having shared his concerns. Let him know that talking to someone is the right thing to do, even if the friend has asked for secrecy. You know that your teen is still a child—and needs your guidance— even if he thinks that he and his friends are "grown-up."

Supporting friends is hard work and emotionally draining. Your job to parent your teen. Show empathy, ask "Are you okay? I'm here to for you if you want to talk."

Help your teen make a plan. How is he going to act on his concern? Guide him to make good choices, especially about sharing concerns with his friend's parents. Prepare him for his friend's reaction, which may be anger at your teen. Remind your teen that he acted out of concern and that he may just have to weather his friend's anger or hurt.

Dealing with a friend in crisis may be the first time your teen has to wrestle with big emotional issues and the challenges that life throws us all. Remember that how you support your teen models how you want him to support the people that are important to him.

## Resources for Parents:

### [How to Talk to Your Teen About A Suicide](https://med.nyu.edu/child-adolescent-psychiatry/news/csc-news/2016/parenting-teenagers-how-talk-your-teen-about-suicide)

<https://med.nyu.edu/child-adolescent-psychiatry/news/csc-news/2016/parenting-teenagers-how-talk-your-teen-about-suicide>

### [When A Child's Friend Attempts Suicide](http://www.sptsusa.org/parents/when-a-childs-friend-attempts-suicide/)

<http://www.sptsusa.org/parents/when-a-childs-friend-attempts-suicide/>

### [How to Help Someone In Crisis](#)

<https://www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/September-2017/How-to-Help-Someone-in-Crisis>

Supporting a Teen with a Friend in Need

<https://parenting.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/01/20/supporting-a-teen-with-a-friend-in-need/>

Consider reviewing this webpage together with your teen, as it contains disturbing content.

Taking Action: How to Intervene During an Overdose

<https://drugabuse.com/taking-action-how-to-intervene-during-an-overdose/>

### **Resources for Teens:**

Save a Friend: Tips for Teens to Prevent Suicide

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/preventing-youth-suicide/save-a-friend-tips-for-teens-to-prevent-suicide>

Four Key Things That Can Help You Support A Friend

<https://www.youthbeyondblue.com/help-someone-you-know/supporting-a-friend>