being a teen can be very difficult

YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS HAVE A LOT TO DEAL WITH.

School, friends, family, and work can stress you out more than people realize.

But even when things get really tough, remember there are answers to your problems and people who care and understand.

If you’re worried that a friend may be thinking about suicide, know what to look for and how to help.

CONCERNED?

about a friend or having thoughts of suicide yourself?

Help is out there, 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK.

CALL: (273-8255)

1-800-273-TALK

WHAT ARE FRIENDS FOR?

GET INVOLVED

with suicide prevention in Virginia.

For the latest information, training opportunities, publications, and more, contact the Center for Injury and Violence Prevention:

www.preventsuicideva.org

1-800-732-8333

ADDITIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION:

Office of Student Services
804-225-2818

Safe and Drug-Free Schools Coordinator
804-225-2871

Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services
804-786-9143

There are ANSWERS to your PROBLEMS

Suicide is not the answer.
If you notice that your friend’s behavior has changed recently or that your friend has bad moods that just don’t go away, your friend may be **depressed**. Know what to look for:

**FEELS SAD**, hopeless, or unloved, in a way that last a long time.

**IS ANGRY**, annoyed, or irritable.

**LOSES INTEREST** in things he or she used to enjoy.

**WITHDRAWS** from friends, family, and regular activities.

**SLEEPS** too little or too much.

**EATS** much more or less than usual.

**TALKS** or writes a lot about death or suicide.

Any teen may show some of these signs sometimes. But the more signs you see, the longer they last, and the more often you see them, the more you need to pay attention, check it out, and help your friend get help.

**TEENS GO THROUGH A LOT OF CHANGES…**

But depression isn’t just a bad mood or a phase. It’s more than just the blues—it’s a physical illness. There are different kinds of treatment for depression, and the right one can make a big difference.

When a friend is depressed, stress can make things worse. Stress can come from situations like:

- Breaking up with a girlfriend or boyfriend
- Failure in school or sports
- Having a friend or family member die

A friend who is thinking about suicide may:

- Say things like, “I won’t be a problem for you much longer,” “Nothing matters,” “It’s no use,” and “I’m going to kill myself.”
- Give away important possessions

**REACH OUT TO YOUR FRIEND**

- Let your friend know that you’re worried, that you care, and that you are there for him or her.
- **Encourage your friend to get professional help.** Offer to go with your friend to talk with a school counselor or mental health professional.

**NEVER KEEP A SUICIDE SECRET**

- If you are worried about a friend, go to an adult you trust and ask for help, even if the friend asked you not to. Don’t be alone in helping your friend. Even if the friend gets angry, getting help is the best way to keep your friend safe.

**DEPRESSION isn’t just a BAD MOOD or a PHASE**

**DEPRESSION can lead to SUICIDE**

In an **EMERGENCY**, call **911** or your local **MEDICAL EMERGENCY NUMBER**