



[KidsHealth.org/classroom](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom)

## Teacher's Guide

This guide includes:

- Standards
- Related Links
- Discussion Questions
- Activities for Students
- Reproducible Materials

## Standards

This guide correlates with the following National Health Education Standards:

Students will:

- Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
- Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.
- Demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

National Health Education Standards: [www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/sher/standards/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/sher/standards/index.htm)

Suicide is the third leading cause of death for teens, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. These activities will help your students understand the warning signs of suicide and learn how to get help for themselves or others.

## Related KidsHealth Links

### Articles for Teens:

#### Suicide

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/suicide.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/suicide.html)

#### My Friend Is Talking About Suicide. What Should I Do?

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/talking-about-suicide.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/talking-about-suicide.html)

#### I'm Thinking of Suicide. How Can I Stop?

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/stop-suicide.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/stop-suicide.html)

#### When Depression Is Severe

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/severe-depression.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/severe-depression.html)

#### Getting Help for Intense Grief

[TeensHealth.org/teen/en/teens/intense-grief.html](http://TeensHealth.org/teen/en/teens/intense-grief.html)

#### School Counselors

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/school-counselors.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/school-counselors.html)

#### Is It OK to Talk to a Teacher About Personal Problems?

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/teacher-talk.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/teacher-talk.html)

#### Going to a Therapist

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/therapist.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/therapist.html)

## Discussion Questions

*Note: The following questions are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.*

1. Some people feel that because it can be so uncomfortable or difficult to discuss suicide, it's better not to discuss it at all. Do you agree?  
What can people do to make the subject less taboo?
2. Some teens are more likely than others to consider suicide - for example, those who are severely depressed. What other factors that could increase a teen's risk?
3. What are some warning signs that someone might be thinking about suicide?  
What might he or she do or say?
4. If you thought that a friend was considering suicide, what should you do?



## Activities for Students

*Note: The following activities are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.*

### Sharing the Facts

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- Research facts about teen suicide
- Create infographics or posters to share the information with peers

#### Materials:

- Computer with graphic design software to create infographics or art supplies to create posters for school hallways or other areas

#### Class Time:

- 30 minutes to research; 1 to 2 hours to design (can be done over a few days)

#### Activity:

Infographics or posters can be a great way to share eye-catching information. They use images to tell a story so your audience can better understand your message.

Today, we're going to start designing infographics or posters about teen suicide. First we're going to break into small groups and gather information on these topics:

- Teen suicide statistics
- Who is most at risk?
- What are the warning signs?
- How to get help

[Your students can review "5 Ways to Make Online Research Easier," [TeensHealth.org/en/teens/online-research.html](https://www.teenshealth.org/en/teens/online-research.html), before starting their research.]

Use the TeensHealth.org articles, as well as other credible suicide prevention sources, to research your topic. After you collect your information, as a group, choose the information you want to present in your infographic or poster. Then start designing your infographic or poster.

#### Extension:

Have students share their infographics via social media or hang their posters in appropriate areas around the school.



## Positive Ripples

### Objective:

Students will:

- Learn how to speak up when concerned about a depressed or suicidal friend

### Materials:

- “Positive Ripples” handout
- Pen or pencil

### Class Time:

- 20 minutes

### Activity:

When suicide happens, it’s like a pebble thrown into a pond. The tragic effects of that person’s death ripple outward and hurt family members, relatives, friends, classmates, teachers, neighbors, even entire towns.

Now imagine how that ripple effect might work in reverse - how a person thinking about suicide can be positively affected by someone else’s care and concern. Just because the person considering suicide might not specifically ask for help doesn’t mean he or she isn’t open to receiving help.

On “Positive Ripples” handout, read the story about Ryan and Chris. Think about any warning signs Ryan is showing and what might be putting him at higher risk of suicide. Then write some things Chris could say to help Ryan.

### Extension:

Ask for volunteers to role-play a scene with Ryan and Chris for the class.

## Reproducible Materials

### Handout: Positive Ripples

[TeensHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/suicide\\_prevention\\_handout1.pdf](https://www.TeensHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/suicide_prevention_handout1.pdf)

### Quiz: Suicide Prevention

[TeensHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/suicide\\_prevention\\_quiz.pdf](https://www.TeensHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/suicide_prevention_quiz.pdf)

### Answer Key: Suicide Prevention

[TeensHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/suicide\\_prevention\\_quiz\\_answers.pdf](https://www.TeensHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/suicide_prevention_quiz_answers.pdf)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Positive Ripples

Instructions: Using the TeensHealth.org articles to guide you, write what Chris could say to Ryan to help him.

Ryan used to be a happy, athletic teen with lots of friends. But after his dad died a year ago, that all changed. Ryan became depressed. His grades suffered and he quit soccer. He started hanging out with the wrong crowd. He even got in trouble for drinking beer and shoplifting.

Ryan and his mom always had problems getting along, but lately it's been much worse. Every conversation seems to end in an argument - over Ryan's friends and grades, chores at home, and how he was sleeping all the time. Ryan's mom said his dad would be disappointed to know his son was turning out this way. All Ryan could think was that he'd rather be with his dad.

He started to think about how he could make that happen. He had access to his dad's gun, so that would be an easy choice. He settled on a time - tomorrow night, while his mom was at work. He was in so much pain already, whatever he did couldn't make it any worse.

Before Ryan went to sleep, he wrote a note to his grandma telling her how much he loved her. He texted his best friend, Chris, saying that tomorrow would be his last day of school. He also said Chris could have his autographed baseball card collection.

The next morning, Chris was waiting for Ryan at his locker so they could talk. Chris knew that Ryan had been depressed for a while; Chris just hoped Ryan would snap out of it. But when Chris got that text last night, he knew something had changed for the worse.

Chris: “ \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_”



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question.

1. True or false: Most people who commit suicide are depressed.
2. True or false: Suicide rates increase during the teen years.
3. True or false: People who talk about killing themselves don't go through with it. They're just looking for attention.
4. True or false: It's not a good idea to ask whether someone is thinking about suicide because it plants the idea in the person's head.
5. True or false: If you think a friend is in immediate danger of harming himself or herself, you shouldn't leave him or her alone.
6. True or false: If your friend tells you she's considering suicide and swears you to secrecy, you have to keep your promise.
7. True or false: The best way to help someone who's thinking about suicide is to get him or her to talk with a trusted adult or counselor, or call a suicide crisis line (like 1-800-SUICIDE).
8. True or false: If your friend is talking about suicide, it's best to wait a few weeks before talking about it to see if he or she starts to feel better.
9. True or false: Once a person is suicidal, he or she is suicidal forever.
10. True or false: Most suicides occur without warning signs.



## Quiz Answer Key

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