

TEENS IN CRISIS

What does it mean to be in crisis?

- **Feeling overwhelmed and out of control:** A crisis can make a teenager feel like they have lost control of their life and are unable to cope with the challenges they are facing.
- **Experiencing intense emotions:** A crisis can bring up intense emotions, such as fear, sadness, anger, or hopelessness.
- **Struggling with harmful behaviors:** A teenager in crisis may engage in behaviors that are harmful to themselves or others, such as substance abuse or self-harm.
- **Having destructive thoughts:** A crisis can also bring up destructive thoughts, such as suicidal thoughts, that can be very distressing for the teenager and their family.

Signs & symptoms of crisis

Physical signs

- Changes in appetite—rapid weight loss or gain
- Extreme disregard for personal health and hygiene
- Dramatic changes in sleep patterns either sleeping all the time or being unable to sleep (i.e. insomnia)
- Ongoing physical complaints without apparent causes (i.e. somatic symptoms)
- Escalating self-destructive behaviors

Mental signs

- Disengagement from school, or poor school performance
- Confused thinking or irrational thoughts, memory loss
- Increased or unnecessary risk-taking, particularly in activities that could lead to death
- Lost interest in passions and hobbies

Emotional signs

- Frequent thoughts about suicide / preoccupied with death
- Frequent or persistent feelings of worthlessness, feeling empty, or hopelessness about the future
- Frequently or persistently feels trapped or feels that there are no solutions
- Lack of a sense of purpose and meaning in life
- Poor emotional regulation:
- Verbal, emotional, or physical abuse within your household
- Low distress tolerance
- Self-harm
- A technology addiction
- Habitual substance use/abuse
- Increased need for accommodations
- Inability to cope with daily problems or stress

Social signs

- A sudden change of friends/peer groups - A sudden shift in a teenager's social circle, such as distancing themselves from previous positive friends and associating with negative individuals who have a detrimental influence and encourage negative behaviors
- Lack of a social support network
- Promiscuity
- Isolating
- Avoiding
- The recent death of a friend or close relative
- Divorce and family issue