

A Guide for Teachers & Staff

How to Handle a Student's Disclosure of Suicidal Thoughts



1

If you hear, "I want to die" or "I want to kill myself," remain calm and supportive

- Stay composed: your reaction can impact how the student feels about sharing more.
- Stay calm, listen, and avoid showing shock.
- Use active listening: show empathy by listening without interrupting.

Say "I'm here for you."
or
"Thank you for telling me."

2 Acknowledge Feelings

- Avoid dismissive statements: never say things like, "you don't mean that," or "it's just a phase." Instead, say something like, "it sounds like you're really struggling and I want to help."
- Reassure them: make the student feel heard and assure them that support is available.

Say "I'm so sorry you're feeling this way,
but I'm glad you told me."

3 Seek Help from your School Counsellor

- Inform the school counselor and Admin. as soon as possible.
- Do not promise confidentiality: Make sure the student knows you will have to share this with someone who can help, but reassure them that it's for their safety.

Say "thank you for trusting me with something so important. I want you to know that I can't keep this a secret because my priority is making sure you're safe. I'll need to share this with _____ who will help, but I'll be with you every step of the way."



Maintain confidentiality: only share the information with those directly involved in handling the situation.

Remember, supporting students through difficult disclosures can be emotionally challenging, so be sure to prioritize your own well-being by seeking guidance and support for yourself.