



Teens + A Personal Safety Plan

Everyone has days that are tough to get through. And everyone has days when they need more help. The key is to have a plan to guide you through those tough days — so you're ready when you need to take action.

Having a personal safety plan helps you...

- ✓ Be more aware of how you're feeling throughout the day.
- ✓ Be ready to take care of yourself when you begin to feel down.
- ✓ Know exactly what to do and who will help you.

When you're feeling low, it's easy to forget all of the good things in life.

And it's easy to forget the all of the positive efforts you've made to get through tough times in the past. The fact is that you know a lot — you already have strengths and skills that you can use to help you get to another good day.



Use this plan as your go-to guide for the days that begin to get tough.

What's important to you?

Here are examples of positive things teens do to add meaning and value to their lives. Check the options that apply to you, and add your own ideas.

What makes you happy or feeds your interests?

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hanging out with friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spending time with family | <input type="checkbox"/> Music |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing with a pets | <input type="checkbox"/> Dance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A job | <input type="checkbox"/> School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hobbies | |

What else? _____

What do you do most days to take care of yourself?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take my medication | <input type="checkbox"/> Drink healthy beverages more often, like water and milk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Get enough sleep | <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in group activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise | <input type="checkbox"/> Socialize with family or friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eat healthy foods | <input type="checkbox"/> Relax |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to school | |

What else? _____

Sometimes it's easy to reach out to people who you know will help you feel better. But for the question below, think about the things you can do *to help yourself*.

What has worked well in the past when you were having a tough day?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distracted myself, in a good way | <input type="checkbox"/> Figured out what I needed to do (used problem-solving skills); took action |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exercised/did an activity | <input type="checkbox"/> Focused on eating/drinking healthy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Practiced relaxation | <input type="checkbox"/> Focused on school/job |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Took my medicine/got back on my meds | <input type="checkbox"/> Got back into social activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Got some extra sleep | |

What else? _____

How well do you know yourself?

Some people go through a whole day feeling lousy or in “sort of a bad mood.” They never stop to think about how it began or how they could turn things around.

Take a quick moment a few times a day to think about how you’re doing. That short “self-check” can help you figure out faster when you need help.

What do you notice when you’re struggling?

- ☐ I feel low for a couple of days in a row.
- ☐ I feel stressed all the time. I wonder if my stress level is getting worse.
- ☐ I feel hopeless and helpless, like being trapped with no way out.

- ☐ I don’t sleep well (too much/too little).
- ☐ I don’t eat well (too much/too little).
- ☐ My grades suffer.

- ☐ I can’t sit still — I’m restless or agitated. I can’t stop moving my feet or hands.
- ☐ I stop doing my work, homework or other things I know I’m supposed to do.
- ☐ I pull away from friends and family — don’t answer texts, IMs, calls, or emails at all.

- ☐ I act reckless — take chances on risky activities.
- ☐ I get really active and talk too much.
- ☐ I’m moody and cranky.
- ☐ I think about hurting myself or someone else; sometimes I think about dying or committing suicide.

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Making your own safety plan

When you realize that you feel down, what could you do to avoid having your thoughts, feelings or behaviors get worse? **If you don't act fast, a low mood could get a lot worse really quickly.**

When I start to feel bad, I'll...

- ☐ Be aware of my mood and take steps so it doesn't get worse.
- ☐ Do what worked well in the past when I needed to take care of myself.
- ☐ Connect with a therapist, school counselor or other people who would support me.
- ☐ Take other steps as needed. (Fill-in the list below.)

I'll go here to be safe...

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

These people will help me... (Also note what each person will do for you.)

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

I'll contact those people this way...

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

If I ever feel like I want to hurt myself, I'll...

- ☐ Tell a responsible adult or health care provider immediately.
- ☐ Go to an emergency care center (at school, at a hospital, etc.).
- ☐ Call 9-1-1 or call 1-800-273-TALK (8255), the **Suicide Prevention Lifeline**.

**Use this plan to get
through the tough times
and get to better days!**



This material is for your education and information only. This content does not replace medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. New medical research may change this information. If you have questions about a medical condition, always talk with your health care provider.