

How to reduce the odds your child will harm themselves:

General principles:

- 24/7 monitoring by a responsible adult, including sleeping hours; consider door alarm to alert if child tries to leave room or home
- Serious consideration of hospitalization (for the purpose of safety, further evaluation, and treatment)
- Treatment of associated mental health problems
- Reminders of how important the child is to you and others and how you or anyone else would NOT be better off if they were dead

“Means restriction”:

Many suicide attempts are impulsive, with little to no planning. Because of this, reducing access to items or substances that can be lethal is of critical importance.

Do not let your child have access to guns in your home or any home your child may visit.

But if guns are present (such as the case of a parent who utilizes them at work), they must be securely locked and locked separately from ammunitions

- Remember that your child probably knows all your “secret” hiding spots and may be able to guess passwords. When locking up items, ensure your child does not have knowledge of their location, the location of the key, or combination to any lock used to secure them. Periodically change codes and passwords.

Your child’s room should be searched for possible lethal ways they might harm themselves, and for alcohol and drugs, which can significantly increase the chance of self-harm (including possibly hidden) on a regular and random basis.

All medications, including over-the-counter, should be locked in a secure manner:

- Tylenol (acetaminophen), lithium, heart and pain medicines are especially dangerous.

All alcohol, cannabis, and mind-altering drugs should be removed from the home.

All cleaning supplies should be locked in a secure manner (to prevent drinking of caustic materials)


All sharp implements (knives, razors, etc.) should be locked in a secure manner.

All belts, ropes, cords, sheets, etc. should be locked in a secure manner (to prevent hanging)

Secure or lock car keys.

SENDAN CENTER

*excellence in child & adolescent
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Resources:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255; <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Crisis Text Line: www.crisistextline.org; text HOME to 741741

Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide: www.sptsusa.org/teens

The Trevor Project: www.thetrevorproject.org; text START to 678678; call 866-488-7386