

# SOS for School Staff Handout

As school staff, our top priority is always the health and safety of the children we serve. Trusted adults at school are uniquely positioned to notice warning signs and reach out to students in need.

Teachers and staff can serve as a lifeline for students struggling with depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts. As you connect with your students, remember: **ACT**.

## How to **ACT**

**Acknowledge:** signs of depression or suicide in a student.

**Care:** reach out to the student with a listening ear.

**Tell:** school mental health staff, administrators, and/or local authorities immediately.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### When should I start to be concerned about a student?

Look for big changes or warning signs. Reach out to any student who:

- shows significant changes in mood or behavior
- sounds overwhelmed or hopeless
- seems disconnected from school
- writes/talks about death or suicide

### What if I say the wrong thing and make it worse?

Talking to a student about suicide will not make things worse, it's the best thing you can do. Listen and reassure them help is available.

"Tell me more about it."

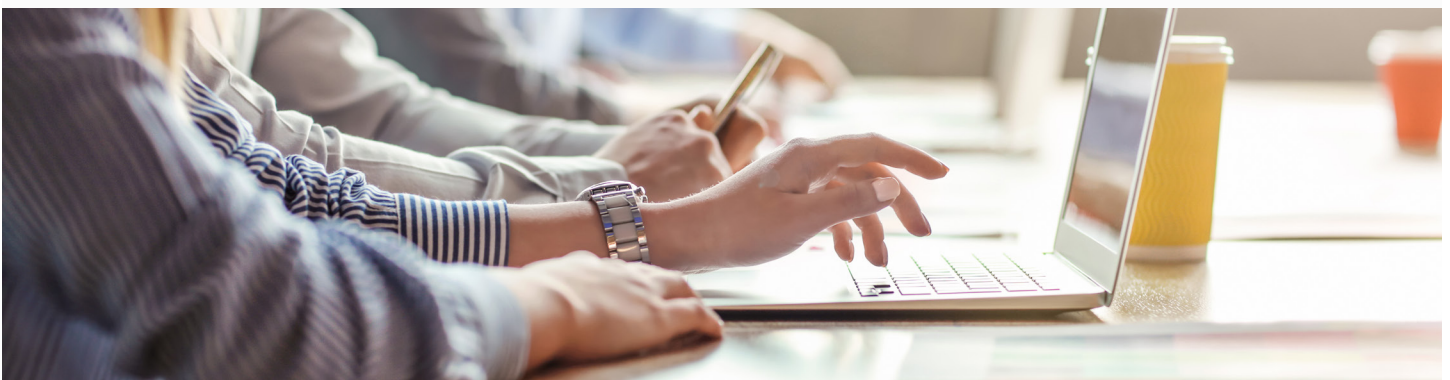
"It's ok to feel this way."

"I'm here for you."

### How do I find help for my student?

Never try to handle the situation alone. Your role is to get your student connected to your school's mental health staff or trained administrator.

"There are people at our school who know how to help. Let's walk down to the office and we can talk to them together."



**Help is always available.**

If you are concerned for yourself or someone else, call or text the **Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988** or text the **Crisis Text Line at 741741** for free, 24/7 crisis support.