

# WHEN A TEEN'S FRIEND IS IN CRISIS

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**We never want teenagers to regret seeking help for a friend in crisis. To respond effectively while respecting teens' loyalty to their peers, follow the steps below.**

**1) Offer reassurance:** "You were right to let me know. This is what good friends do."

**2) Empathize:** "This is heavy. How long have you been carrying it? Are you okay?"

**3) Move forward together. Barring an immediate safety concern, make a plan for alerting the friend's parents or caregivers:**

- "Do you want to tell them, or should I?"
- "Do you want to give your friend the option of telling her folks herself, then having them let us know that she did?"
- "Is there an anonymous way to do this?"

If the friend's parents ignore the problem, or are the problem, suggest the same options for involving a school counselor or administrator.

**Remind your teenager that adults need to know if a friend engages in any of the following:**

- Self-harm
- Very risky behavior
- Eating disordered behavior
- Depression or suicidality
- Dangerous relationships

