



Use the Friend magazine to help your family understand a different sensitive topic each month.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Some might think that the topic of suicide prevention is too heavy for our children, but the sad reality is that in some places, suicide is currently the leading cause of death for youth and children as young as 10. We can't afford to ignore the topic just because it's hard to talk about! Contrary to popular belief, talking about suicide does *not* make things worse—honest, open communication can do just the opposite.

To support suicide prevention month and World Suicide Prevention Day on September 10, all the Church magazines are running content about suicide prevention, with the hope that you can use it to have meaningful, age-appropriate conversations with your children. For young children, this could mean talking about related topics such as bullying, feelings, and the blessing of having a body. Here are articles from the *Friend* you could use to talk to the children you love.

“Feelings First-Aid Kit” (Sept. 2018, page 24)

We teach children how to help their bodies heal—do we also help them understand how to heal emotionally?

Use this object-lesson activity to talk about feelings and healing.

“Practically Popular” (Mar. 2018, page 32)

When a girl starts making popular friends, she starts ignoring a longtime friend. Use this story to teach the importance of including instead of excluding others.

“Forgiving Demi” (Jan. 2018, page 36)

A classmate makes fun of Demi for being so tall. Demi prays and is able to forgive the classmate and feel good about herself. Use this story to talk about bullying, kindness, and how our bodies are beautiful gifts from God.

“A Butterfly for Courtney” (Sept. 2016, page 34)

Elena knows that her friend struggles with depression. She buys her a butterfly necklace to remind her that she is loved.



TALK ABOUT IT

- Help your children create a plan for when they feel sad or upset. An example could be to (1) put words to their feelings by saying, “I am feeling . . .”; (2) pray to Heavenly Father for help; (3) do something active they enjoy; and (4) if the feelings do not go away, tell an adult about how they feel.
- Are you worried about your child? Listen to them. Don't correct them when they tell you how they feel. If you are worried that your older children or teenagers are in danger of suicide, experts suggest asking directly, such as, “Are you thinking of hurting yourself?” If the answer is yes, your bishop can help your family connect with mental health services.

RELATED RESOURCES

- Did you know the Church has a suicide prevention website? Check it out at suicide.lds.org. The site also has resources for those who have lost someone to suicide.
- Many countries have national suicide prevention resources. To find resources in your area, visit iasp.info/resources/Crisis_Centres.
- Jeffrey R. Holland, “Like a Broken Vessel,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 40–42.

Find stories, activities, and media related to this topic and others at lessonhelps.lds.org. For past *Friend* Connection articles, visit FriendConnection.lds.org.