

Five Tips For Helping Your Self-Harming Teen

Try these tips, have fun, be creative, and be amazed at the possibilities surrounding your new perspective and relationship with your child/student. More Resources: WisdomWithinCt.com

Safety Checks: Even if it seems intrusive, daily bedroom and full house safety checks are a must. Immediately and entirely remove the following dangerous items from your whole house: Razor blades, extra light bulbs, lighters, sharp objects, belts, extra shoelaces, medicine bottles, other family member's medication, extra pills of any kind, even over-the-counter medicine, alcohol bottles (in the fridge and storage), household cleaners and chemicals, locking kitchen knives (checking for any missing knives daily). As your cell phone company for a copy of text messages your teen has sent and received. If your teen is on medication, provide them with the pill, and do a mouth check to make sure they have swallowed it. Use a lock box to hold the rest of the bottle until the next dose.

Regular Therapy: Intensive, regular therapy sessions are very important to teach new coping skills and provide a safe place when your teen belongs, via providing outside, professional support. Teach your teen that therapy is not a punishment or something to be ashamed of, and discourage others from teasing your teen about going to therapy. Remind your teen, celebrities and movie stars have therapists too, so they can be the best they can be. Also, teens need individual therapy, so get them their own therapist. In addition to regular counseling, help your teen gain support from other professionals via weekly appointments: massage therapy, acupuncture, nutritionist, naturopath, art therapy, animal therapy, yoga therapist, teen groups, personal fitness trainer, book clubs, ect.

Create a Plan: Together with your teen, make a list of trusted family members or friends with phone numbers to call in a crisis. Connect these family members to let them know they are on this list and may receive a call. Encourage your teen to save the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) in their cell phone and call anytime.

Ask Directly: Ask your teen, "Are you thinking of suicide? Have you been self-harming?" Remember, talking directly and openly about suicide does not increase suicide risk. Even if they say, "I'm good." Provide constant supervision. Do not leave your teen alone or drive a car alone. Continue to take threats/thoughts seriously. Follow through is important even after the child calms down and says, "I didn't mean it." A threat is a cry for help: "I am not coping and I need your help."

Read Nonverbal Cues: It can "talk" much louder than words. Your teen is really saying, "I need your love and attention because I'm in tremendous pain emotionally, and I can't seem to stop it on my own. I need you to take care of me again." Just because your teen may be distant/angry, they may also be feeling worried, grieving loss, shame, have experienced trauma, or another significant event they have been holding inside. The team at Wisdom Within Counseling is here to help.

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Specialized Therapy Helping Anxious Children, Teens, and Young Adults Using Creative, Holistic Art, Yoga, Music, and Outdoor Therapies Alongside Talking

To Get Your Child or Teen Started In Holistic Counseling, Call/Text (860)-451-9364 or visit WisdomWithinCt.com to read more about creative therapies for positive coping skills for mind, body, and spirit wellness and self-confidence.