

## START THE CONVERSATION

"I've noticed that you haven't been acting like yourself lately. Is something going on?"

"I've noticed you're [sleeping more, eating less, etc.], is everything ok today?"

"It worries me to hear you talking like this. Let's talk to someone about it."



## GET ADVICE

You may want to reach out to someone to talk to about how you're feeling or to get advice on how to help your friend.

Consider talking to a:

FAMILY MEMBER



TRUSTED FRIEND



SCHOOL COUNSELOR  
OR ADVISOR



TEACHER OR COACH



FAITH LEADER



# Want to know how to help a friend?

## STUDENT GUIDE TO MENTAL HEALTH



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Coastal Virginia

[namicoastalvirginia.org](http://namicoastalvirginia.org)

(757) 499-2041



NAMICoastalVirginia

## KNOW THE 10 COMMON WARNING SIGNS

1. Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than 2 weeks
2. Seriously trying to harm or kill oneself or making plans to do so
3. Severe out-of-control, risk-taking behaviors
4. Sudden, overwhelming fear for no reason
5. Not eating, throwing up or using laxatives to lose weight; significant weight loss or gain.
6. Seeing, hearing, or believing things that are not real
7. Repeatedly using drugs or alcohol
8. Drastic changes in mood, behavior, personality or sleeping habits
9. Extreme difficulty in concentrating or staying still
10. Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities

## OFFER SUPPORT

Would you like me to go with you to a support group or a meeting? Do you need a ride to any of your appointments?

I really want to help, what can I do to help you right now?

Let's sit down together and look for places to get help. I can go with you too.



BE PATIENT,  
UNDERSTANDING, AND  
PROVIDE HOPE

## BE A FRIEND



Your friend may feel alone; check in regularly and include your friend in your plans



Learn more about mental health conditions. A great place to start is [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)



Avoid saying things like "you'll get over it," "toughen up" or "you're fine"



Tell your friend it gets better; help and support are out there - and you are part of their support system!



Tell your friend that having a mental health condition does not change the way you feel about them



Your mental wellness is important! Practice self-care and give yourself grace. Check-in with yourself to make sure you aren't depleting all of your energy - you need it, too!