



Selected resources for responses to the Parents' Lifeline of Eastern Ontario (PLEO) survey

This is a document of annotated resources that can be used to answer the queries of parents and caregivers of a suicidal child/youth or of a child lost to suicide. The questions are, by and large, very specific and subjective, an understandable and expected outcome given the nature of the survey's invitation: *Are you a parent of caregiver with questions about how to keep your suicidal youth safe?*

Most of the peer-reviewed research in suicide prevention cannot adequately answer the questions received in the survey. For this, grey literature (information which can include reports, working papers, newsletters, government documents, speeches, white papers, urban plans, and so on) had to be relied upon. This information is often produced by organizations to accumulate and record information and report on activities, either for internal use or wider dissemination, but without the delays and restrictions of commercial and academic publishing. For that reason, grey literature can be more current and more encompassing than literature in scholarly journals (McKenzie, 2019).

We have presented the categories in the same manner they were recorded in the spreadsheet. Each section will begin with a few examples of the questions received, followed by resources from the grey literature with occasional supported evidence from academic research. Each resource will have a brief description. Much of the content overlaps from category to category. In cases where an item has been entered more than once, the second entry will have an asterisk and the title without annotations and a note to cross-reference the initial entry in another section. The final two sections consist of the last six categories combined, as there was a diminishing amount of questions and a growing overlap of content.

McKenzie, J. (2019). *Grey literature: What it is and how to find it*. Retrieved from <https://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/research-assistance/format-type/grey-literature>

Accessing Services

Sample of Responses:

- *What resources, other than admitting to hospital and a group home, are available?*
- *As a worried parent of a child who maybe suicidal there are no instructions. It is beyond scary wondering if your child will kill them self over night. How or where does a parent get help in the beginning?*
- *What help is available in Renfrew country for my child?*
- *Why isn't child suicide taken more seriously in the ER?*

Centre for Addictions and Mental Health. (2019). *Partners in Care: Supporting families in patient recovery*: Retrieved from <https://www.camh.ca/en/your-care/planning-your-care/families>

This is a webpage from Centre for Addictions and Mental Health(CAMH) to assist parents to navigate resources for their children in mental health recovery. It is produced by CAMH's Office of Family Engagement.

ChamplainHealthline.(2019). *Mental health for children and youth in Renfrew County*. Retrieved from <https://www.champlainhealthline.ca/listServices.aspx?id=10230®ion=Renfrew>

A webpage listing of available mental health services for children and youth in Renfrew County and surrounding areas.

Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario. (2019). *Resources and supports*. Retrieved from <https://www.cheo.on.ca/en/resources-and-support/resources-and-support.aspx>

A listing of supports and resources in Eastern Ontario including sections on *Community resources and Family and Caregiver supports*.

Kelty Mental Health Centre.(n.d.). *Parents and Caregivers*. Retrieved from <https://keltymentalhealth.ca/parents-caregivers>

Information for parents/caregivers of what to look for when there is concern about a child's mental health. Also, some tips of how to navigate the (British Columbia but is applicable to other jurisdictions) health care system.



Attaway, J. (2018). Taking a child to the emergency room: An open letter about what the ER can (and can't) do for your child in a psychiatric emergency. *Child Mind Institute*. Retrieved from <https://childmind.org/article/taking-a-child-to-the-emergency-room/>

A blog in the form of a letter to parents describing experiences with children in an emergency room situation and what parents can expect. It also depicts scenarios they may encounter when taking their children into ER.

Burstein, B. & Agostino, H. & Greenfield, B. (2019). Suicide attempts and ideation among children and adolescents in US emergency departments, 2007-2015. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 173(6), 598-600. Retrieved from [https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2730063?guestAccessKey=eb570f5d-0295-4a92-9f83-6f647c555b51&utm_source=For The Media&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=ftm_links&utm_content=tfi&utm_term=04089%20](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2730063?guestAccessKey=eb570f5d-0295-4a92-9f83-6f647c555b51&utm_source=For%20The%20Media&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=ftm_links&utm_content=tfi&utm_term=04089%20)

A CDC(&P) study noting that “a large, nationwide sample demonstrated that ED visits for SA/SI doubled among youth between 2007 and 2015. These findings parallel a 2-fold increase in SA/SI visits to US tertiary children’s hospitals over the same period. An earlier analysis reported a doubling in ED visits for suicidal behavior in all age categories between 1993 and 2008, reflecting an apparent acceleration of pediatric suicide-associated visits to US emergency visits. Findings suggest a critical need to augment community mental health resources, ED physician preparedness, and post-emergency department risk reduction initiatives to decrease the burden of suicide among children”.

Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2015). *Care for children and youth with mental disorders*. Retrieved from https://secure.cihi.ca/free_products/CIHI%20CYMH%20Final%20for%20pubs_EN_web.pdf

Report by CIHI describing access to care for children and youth with mental disorders. The audience for this document is presumably not parents, but may contain useful information for them.

Communication

Sample responses:

- How to initiate conversation about suicide?
- How to talk to my child when then tell me they are having thoughts of suicide?
- How do I not trigger my child?

Hincks-Dellcrest Centre. (2014). *The ABCs of mental health: A parent resource guide*. Retrieved from <https://www.sickkidscmh.ca/ABC/Parent-Resource/Welcome>



A web site from the Hincks-Dellcrest Centre in Toronto with information for parents about children and their mental health (broken down into age groups and subject matter).

Society of the Prevention of Teen Suicide.(2019). *I am worried about my child, but a little embarrassed to talk about it with anyone and have no clue how to get help. Where do I start?*

Retrieved from <http://www.sptsusa.org/parents/i-am-worried-about-my-child-but-a-little-embarrassed-to-talk-about-it-with-anyone-and-have-no-clue-how-to-get-help-where-do-i-start/>

Resources for parents looking for help and where to turn regarding their child's mental health. It contains sections on: *Group therapy, Psychiatrists, Intensive outpatient programs*, among others.

Society of the Prevention of Teen Suicide. (2019). Taking to your kid about suicide. Retrieved from <http://www.sptsusa.org/parents/talking-to-your-kid-about-suicide/>

Another resource from the Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide, an American organization based in New Jersey. This one offers tips and examples of how to talk to your child about suicide.

There are numerous articles on other areas which may answer parent's concerns. These include:

After an attempt: When your child is released from the hospital:

<http://www.sptsusa.org/parents/after-an-attempt-when-your-child-is-released-from-the-hospital/>

When a child's friend attempts suicide. Retrieved from <http://www.sptsusa.org/parents/when-a-childs-friend-attempts-suicide/>

***The immediate crisis is over—where do we go from here?* Retrieved from**

<http://www.sptsusa.org/parents/when-a-childs-friend-attempts-suicide/>

Healthychildren.(2015). 10 things parents can do to prevent suicide. Retrieved from :

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/emotional-problems/Pages/Ten-Things-Parents-Can-Do-to-Prevent-Suicide.aspx>

A web site of prevention advice for parents from Healthychildren.org produced by the **American Academy of Pediatrics.**

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. (2019). Teens and suicide: What parents should know? Retrieved from <https://afsp.org/campaigns/talk-about-mental-health-awareness/teens-and-suicide-what-parents-should-know/>

AFSP site answering similar queries to the ones asked in this survey. Examples include:

- What can I do to protect my teen or tween from suicide risk?



- Should I use the same approach for different age groups, i.e. tweens (ages 8 to 12) or teens (13 to 17)?
- What if they don't want to talk?

Ackerman, J. (2019). *ADHD and youth suicide: Is there a link?* Retrieved from <https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/family-resources-education/700childrens/2019/08/adhd-and-youth-suicide>

A blog by John Ackerman of Nationwide Children's detailing ADHD and its connection to suicidal behaviours. He offers pointers for parents on communicating with their children and providing safety and supports.

Daviss, W. & Diler, R. (2014). *Suicidal behaviors in adolescents with ADHD: Associations with depressive and other comorbidity, parent-child conflict, trauma exposure, and impairment. Journal of Attention Disorders, 18(8), 680-690.*

A study on ADHD and suicidal behaviours. The authors suggest clinicians should focus on depression, parent-child conflict, victimization trauma, and social impairment as correlative factors for suicidal behaviours of ADHD patients rather than levels of ADHD symptoms.

(2019). *What parents need to know: Bullying is not a normal part of growing up. PREVNet.* Retrieved from <https://www.prevnet.ca/bullying/parents>

This is a Canadian website, PREVNet, which contains information and resources for parents concerning bullying and its effects on their children. It is supported by Queens University and York University. It features separate sections for pre-school children, elementary school children, adolescents and LGBTQ youth.

Douponik, S. (2019). *I treat teens who attempted suicide. Here's what they told me.* Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/10/30/20936636/suicide-mental-health-suicidal-thoughts-teens>

A recent column in Vox by pediatrician and child health advocate, Stephanie Douponik, describing her experiences with 27 clients who entered the emergency department for suicidal ideation or attempted suicide. The results informed a study published in *Hospital Pediatrics*. The anecdotes present insights into the thoughts and actions of suicidal youth which may be helpful for parents. Themes include: *Coping with social pressures; Relationship problems; Social media; Treatment*, among others.

Crisis Action

Sample queries:



- When should I call emergency services?
- What do I do or what do I say to reach my child while in crisis? What will help? What would make things worse?
- What action do I take to keep them safe?

Association for Children’s Mental Health. (n.d). *What is a Mental Health Crisis & What To Expect When One Occurs: How do I know if my child is having a crisis or a mental health emergency?* Retrieved from <http://www.acmh-mi.org/get-information/childrens-mental-health-101/expect-child-crisis/mental-health-crisis-expect-one-occurs/>

A listing of signs that your child may be experiencing a mental health crisis. A webpage from Association for Children’s Mental Health, Lansing, Michigan.

Parent Guide: A crisis management strategy for the safety of self and others for adolescents with serious maladaptive behaviours. *Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 27(3), 182-190. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327103424_PARENT_GUIDE_A_Crisis_Management_Strategy_For_the_Safety_of_Self_and_Others_and_for_Adolescents_with_Serious_Maladaptive_Behaviors/link/5d67e5ca92851c91e67f550c/download

A Canadian practical guide for parents with adolescents who have maladaptive behaviours. It is applicable for both crisis and non-crisis situations. It is based on the findings of Junek’s study (next entry).

Junek, W. (2018). Practical crisis management for parents and clinicians: Adolescent suicide, aggressive, elopement behaviours: Intensive treatment settings. *Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 27(3), 182-190. Retrieved from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6054287/pdf/ccap27_p0182.pdf

***Attaway, J. (2018). Taking a child to the emergency room: An open letter about what the ER can (and can’t) do for your child in a psychiatric emergency. *Child Mind Institute*(see accessing services section).**

Information/Evidence about suicide

Sample queries:

- Is there science based evidence to say removing as many potential tools for suicide such as knives and pills is effective?



- My daughter was put on an SSRI and we were told it would take 6 weeks to work and to watch her because it could make her suicidal. What should we watch for?
- We have been told (by knowledgeable CAMH staff) to treat our child with Borderline Personality differently than others who attempt suicide...And the suicide protocol is different for people with Borderline Personality Disorder.
- They say talking about suicide helps however if that is so why is suicide among our youth on the rise?

Evidence for restriction of access to means:

Sarchiapone, M., Mandrelli, L., Iosue, M., et al. (2011). Controlling access to suicide means. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 8, 4550-4562. Retrieved from

https://scholar.google.ca/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=%29.+Controlling+access+to+suicide+means.+&btnG=

Yip, P., Yousuf, S., ...& Chen, Y. (2012). Means restriction for suicide prevention. *Lancet*, 379, 2393-2399. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6191653/>

These two studies demonstrate that restriction of means is a best practice for suicide prevention.

Means Matter. (2019). Families: Recommendations for families. Retrieved from

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/recommendations/families/>

A webpage from the reputable Harvard site, *Means Matter*, which is resource from Harvard's School of Public Health. This page is guidance for families to restrict access to means of suicide for members of their family that may be of concern to them.

Evidence for asking about suicide:

Dazzi, T., Gribble, R., Wessely, S. & Fear, N. (2014). Does asking about suicide and related behaviors induce suicidal ideation? What is the evidence? *Psychological Medicine*.

DOI:10.1017/S0033291714001299 Retrieved from

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Rachael_Gribble/publication/263709839_Does_asking_about_suicide_and_related_behaviours_induce_suicide_ideation_What_is_the_evidence/links/53f315160cf2dd48950c8ae1/Does-asking-about-suicide-and-related-behaviours-induce-suicide-ideation-What-is-the-evidence.pdf

A review of literature looking at published literature examining whether enquiring about suicide increases suicidal ideation in adults and adolescents. Findings: No increase in suicidal ideation. "Our findings suggest acknowledging and talking about suicide may in fact reduce, rather than increase suicidal ideation, and may lead to improvements in mental health in treatment-seeking population".

Information on SSRIs and teens:



Mayo Clinic.(2019). *Antidepressants for children and teens*. Retrieved from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/teen-depression/in-depth/antidepressants/art-20047502>

This webpage from the venerable American institution provides information on risks and benefits of children and antidepressants. It details what parents should monitor and signs to look for when their children take these prescriptions.

Adolescents and Borderline Personality Disorder(BPD) (and other disorders)

Yen, S., Gagnon, K. & Spirito, A. (2013). *Borderline Personality Disorder in suicidal adolescents. Personality and Mental Health, 7(2), 89-101.*

This study finds that adolescents with BPD are at higher risk for suicide than other youth. They state: “compared to other acutely suicidal adolescents, the clinical profile of BPD participants is unique and suggests an increased risk for suicidal behaviors”.

***Daviss, W. & Diler, R. (2014). *Suicidal behaviors in adolescents with ADHD: Associations with depressive and other comorbidity, parent-child conflict, trauma exposure, and impairment. Journal of Attention Disorders, 18(8), 680-690.*(see communication section).**

Internet/Social media

Sample queries;

- How can you keep your child safe in a world that communicates primarily through social media?
- How to talk to youth about the risk of online info found, chat with strangers?

(2019).How to keep your child safe online: The ultimate guide for the non-techie parent...Pixel Privacy. Retrieved from <https://pixelprivacy.com/resources/keep-children-safe-online/>

A very thorough webpage from Pixel Privacy providing essential information about the online experience and its potential pitfalls. Steps are outlined for parents to take to help ensure their children are safer when online.

(2019).Internet Safety. Common Sense Education. Retrieved from <https://www.commonsense.org/education/digital-citizenship/internet-safety>

More useful internet tips for parents from this American source—Common Sense Media, a non-profit organization out of San Francisco.

Non-Crisis Action/Other/Prevention/Parent & Caregiver

Sample queries (from a range of the later categories)

- How to get help with young adult who refuses support?
- How to keep a child safe?



- How can you prevent mental and emotional fatigue in parents that have a child that constantly threatens suicide?
- What tools can I offer my child to build resiliency so he/she can better manager their own mental health crises when they are older?

Centre for Addictions and Mental Health. (2019). When a family member is unwilling to seek help. Retrieved from <https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/guides-and-publications/when-a-family-member-is-unwilling-to-seek-help>

Advice to speak to family members experiencing mental health or addiction problems who are unwilling to seek help. Includes sections on:

- *Talk to your family member about your concerns, and encourage them to seek support*
- *Take care of yourself*
- *Support other family members*
- *How do I prepare for a crisis?*
- *Can I force a family member into treatment?*

Centre for Suicide Prevention. (2019). Safety plans to prevent suicide. Retrieved from <https://www.suicideinfo.ca/resource/safety-plans/>

Crafting a safety plan for someone at risk of suicide. Details what a safety plan entails, when it should be written, and the steps take to writing one.

A safety plan template is found here:

http://suicidesafetyplan.com/uploads/SAFETY_PLAN_form_8.21.12.pdf

Stanley, B. & Brown, G. (2012). Safety planning intervention: A brief intervention to mitigate suicide risk. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice*, 19(2), 256-264.

Much of the traction that safety planning has made can be attributed to Brown and Stanley's safety planning intervention is a seminal resource.

Allard, J. (2016, April 25). Parents of suicidal teens say they feel alone. Here are resources to help. *Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/parenting/wp/2016/04/25/parents-of-suicidal-teens-say-they-feel-alone-here-are-resources-to-help/>

Really good lived experiences from a parent of a suicidal teen. Recommendations include:

- finding peer-support (other parents in similar situations);



- letting go of sense of control.”
- When teenagers become suicidal,
- Doing the best we can, while acknowledging our lack of control,
- realizing that recovering from suicidal behaviours is not always linear there will be forward progress and setbacks.

Kelty Mental Health Centre.()Parents and Caregivers. Retrieved from

<https://keltymentalhealth.ca/parents-caregivers>

Useful information for parents/caregivers of what to look for when there is concern about a child’s mental health. Also, some tips of how to navigate the (British Columbia but is applicable to other jurisdictions) health care system.

After a suicide attempt: A guide for family and friends. Waterloo Region Suicide Prevention Council; Klinik Community Health Centre. Retrieved from

http://www.togethertolive.ca/sites/default/files/waterloo_after_a_suicide_attempt_for_family.pdf

This resource has important information pertaining to the self-help of the caregiver and supports that are available (found on pp.11-14).

Barksdale. C., Walrath, C. & Goldston, D. (2009). Caregiver strain and youth suicide attempt: Are they related? Suicide and Life-Threatening Behaviors, 39(2), 152-160. Retrieved from

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2847271/>

A study of the mental strain that the suicidal behaviours of a child may have on the parent or caregiver. “Given the integral role that caregivers play in recovery and prevention, it is possible that caregivers of suicidal children would benefit from interventions that facilitate expression, understanding, and acceptance of the difficult emotions common in the wake of a child’s suicide attempt”.

Schools and school prevention/Signs and awareness

Sample queries:

- How do you work with schools, specifically when child is away at school or when child is still living at home?
- How to work with school to better help my youth
- How do we know when to take statements seriously? Suicidal ideation but no plan or verbalized plan to execute?
- More subtle signs of mental illness/suicidal thoughts.



Manitoba Health.(2014).Best practices in school-based suicide prevention: A comprehensive approach. Healthy ChildManitoba. Retrieve from

https://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/yasp/yasp_bestpractices.pdf

A great Canadian resource for school suicide prevention. Parents are not the primary audience but does offer some solid information on aspirational suicide prevention goals for a school setting.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, & Suicide Prevention Resource Center. (2018). After a suicide: A toolkit for schools (2nd ed.). Waltham, MA: Education Development Center.

Retrieved from <http://www.sprc.org/sites/default/files/resource-program/AfteraSuicideToolkitforSchools.pdf>

One of the best resources concerning schools and suicide postvention. Although the intended audience for this toolkit are school administrators and educators themselves (and is an American source) it offers parents insight into what measures schools can and should take in a suicide postvention situation. Includes section on: *Crisis response, Helping children cope, Working with the community*, among others.

Headspace School Support.(2012) *Suicide Prevention Toolkit*. Retrieved from

<https://headspace.org.au/assets/download-cards/HSP058-Postvention-Toolkit-May-2012-FA2-LR.pdf>

Similar information as to the previous two resources but from an Australian perspective. On pp.35-39 there is specific information for parents regarding suicide in schools.

Crisis Services Canada. (2012). *Know someone thinking about suicide?* Retrieved from

<https://www.crisisservicescanada.ca/en/someone-you-know-thinking-about-suicide/>

Helpful webpage from Crisis Services Canada which explains what signs of suicide to look, less obvious signs and actions that you as a caregiver can take.

