



ACADEMY of Grief & Loss
INFORMATION
RESOURCES
EDUCATION
SUPPORT

Things You Would Suggest to the Family Members of Teens Whose Friend Died by Suicide

Compiled by students from Johnston High School, Johnston, Iowa

- Be Supportive, but not overbearing.
- Be understanding when your teen has a short fuse.
- Don't be overprotective.
- Talk, but don't ask 20 questions every time you see your teen.
- Don't ask, "How are you doing?" DUH!
- Ask, "What do you need?", "Do you want to talk about it?", or "What can I do to help?" and then be sure to follow through with it
- Monitor social media because your teen is going to tell their friends how they're REALLY feeling.
- Let your teen lead with physical touch (i.e., hugs, pats, back rubs). Just keep doing what was normal before.
- Watch out for too much self-isolation; encourage interaction with others. Offer to do something together with your teen.
- Be prepared for unpredictable, volatile emotions from your teen.
- Understand that for the short-term, schoolwork may not be a top priority and your teen may fall behind. Be understanding, communicate with teachers, and offer solutions to help get back on track.

