

What Can I Do To Help A Friend Who May Be Facing Depression?

You can be a support person in many different ways:

- Be there by spending time with or hanging out with your friend.
- Give them time to just talk.
- Listen without judging. Ask what is happening, how they are feeling & what they are doing.
- Invite them to talk to other friends or trusted adults. Keeping someone safe is a task for many.
- Ask them what they can do for themselves to relieve the sadness or pain (e.g. physical activity, such as shooting hoops, going for a walk, playing with pets, dance, sing, or drawing. What works for them? Encourage them to do it, or do it with them.
- Ask them if they are thinking of hurting themselves or killing themselves. Using the words will not cause them to think or do anything to harm themselves.
- Do not swear to secrecy, even if they ask you to. It is better to have a living friend who is mad at you, than a dead friend with whom you can't have a relationship anymore.
- Find a way to share some humor. Watch a funny movie together. Introduce them to your favorite funny show. Laughing 'til you cry is a sure-fire stress reliever.
- Get informed: go online, take out books, join a support group, attend community info sessions, and talk to others.
- Look for more [interactive options](#) (such as abuw.org/index.php/get-help) to help them discover resources.

If none of this works, or it's not enough to keep your friend safe, reach out and get help for your friend:

- Talk to your parents, your friend's parents, your friend's friends or their brothers/sisters
- Talk to a guidance counselor. Ask for help in helping your friend.
- Find listings in the phone book under mental health or on the internet (the Acton Boxborough United Way website is a good place to start at www.abuw.org for additional local resources.