

Crisis Support Services' mission is to reach out and offer support to people of all ages and backgrounds during times of crisis, to work to prevent the suicide of those who are actively suicidal, and to offer hope and caring in times of hopelessness.

"Helping people get through the hard times..."

Founded in 1966, Crisis Support Services of Alameda County offers a broad range of counseling, education and prevention services in a safe environment. The Crisis Line provides crisis intervention, assessment, emotional support and referrals to more than 60,000 callers each year. We offer on-going therapy groups for suicide attempters and for persons dealing with grief. Our school-based counseling program provides on-site support for students impacted by violence, loss and trauma. The senior in-home counseling program provides supportive counseling for home-bound elders. Teens for Life suicide prevention and education programs reach more than 11,000 students and adults in schools throughout Alameda County.

Warning Signs of Depression and Suicide Risk

Suicide happens to young, old, rich and poor. But fortunately there are some common warning signs which, when acted upon, can save lives.

A person who is suicidal may:

- talk about committing suicide
- have trouble eating or sleeping
- experience drastic changes in behavior
- withdraw from friends and social activities
- lose interest in hobbies, work or school
- prepare for death by writing a will and making final arrangements
- give away prized possessions
- have attempted suicide before
- take unnecessary risks
- have had a recent severe loss
- be preoccupied with death and dying
- lose interest in their personal appearance
- increase use of alcohol and/or other drugs
- feel hopeless and helpless

What you can do to help:

Talk about suicide openly. Do not be afraid to ask "Do you sometimes feel so bad you think about suicide?"

Don't:

Avoid the subject of suicide, act shocked, make moral judgments, give advice such as "pull yourself together" or "think about how much better off you have than some people." Don't leave the person alone if you think there is immediate danger.

Do:

Take warning signs seriously. Listen and try to imagine how you would feel in his or her place; openly discuss suicidal feelings; let the person know you care. Get help by calling your local Suicide Prevention Center.

Crisis Line Number

1-800-309-2131

All calls are toll-free and confidential
TDD and language translation available

Grief and Senior Counseling Programs

1-800-260-0094

Business Office
Community Education
Teens for Life
Attempters Group
Volunteer Information
(510) 420-2460

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK

Crisis Support Services of Alameda County

P.O. Box 3120
Oakland, CA 94609
www.crisissupport.org

Connecting people in need WITH people who care.

Suicide Prevention
Grief Counseling
Senior Counseling
School-Based Counseling
Teens for Life
Community Education
Disaster Response
Consultation

FOR PREVIEW ONLY

24-Hour Telephone Counseling

Each year, CSS responds to more than 60,000 calls from people who are in crisis or feeling depressed, suicidal or extremely isolated. The Crisis Line staff provides counseling and information about options for dealing with the immediate crisis and gives assistance in referral to community agencies. The Crisis Line is staffed by professional mental health workers and more than 80 trained interns and community volunteers. All Crisis Line counselors receive intensive training in clinical intervention and crisis work and are supervised by licensed mental health professionals. The Crisis Line is the provider of after-hours support services for the Alameda County Behavioral Health Care ACCESS line and for similar mental health programs throughout California.

Grief Counseling

CSS provides low-fee counseling to adults who are bereaved or affected by traumatic loss through suicide or homicide. Our support groups for suicide survivors and those who have attempted suicide are vital for isolated and at-risk individuals during times of loss.

"For the first time I felt accepted and safe to talk about the suicide of my son"

— a father in Survivors of Suicide support group

CSS has a major role responding to traumatic events and post-disaster community mental health needs. In major community disasters, such as the Oakland Hills Fire and the Loma Prieta Earthquake, our counseling staff provide both immediate and longer-term support to individuals who experience loss and trauma.



Senior Counseling

Aging can be a time of challenge, as well as opportunity. Common obstacles to a healthy life for seniors are isolation, physical decline, loss and grief, and family problems. It is normal to experience an increase in anxiety and symptoms of depression when faced with such challenges. However, untreated depression is the single most significant risk factor for suicide in older adults. CSS offers an extensive range of individual, couples, family and group counseling for persons over age 55 at our office in Oakland.

"A great source of comfort, understanding and connection as Mom's world was growing smaller and more isolated"

— the daughter of a frail elder

Home-bound seniors are isolated and often do not have access to counseling and mental health support services. The CSS Senior In-Home Counseling Program is designed to help frail elders maintain their independence and remain in their homes by addressing their mental health needs.

School-Based Counseling

CSS counselors provide in-school counseling, mental health assessment and referral to ongoing support for students throughout Alameda County. Students who are depressed and at risk for self-destructive behavior or suicide are referred by school staff for individual or group counseling with our staff of highly trained interns. Often these are students facing loss and trauma in the wake of violence, substance abuse, family conflict, parental incarceration or lack of parental support.

Teens for Life

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among youth and 15-24 year olds. Under CSS's Teens for Life program, we reach more than 11,000 young people in 45 schools each year to reduce youth suicide and suicide attempts. Our professional staff provide information and give students a safe place to explore their own understanding and feelings about depression and suicide—and offers them resources for help in times of crisis.

"It is so important to know that other people have gone through the same things... maybe I can help someone else now"

— a 13th grade student

Our adult education component is designed to develop a strong school and community base of trained adults who understand youth depression and suicide issues and know how to make appropriate referrals for intervention.

Community Education

The Adult Community Education Program educates the public about suicide risk factors, the warning signs of self-destructive behavior and the appropriate response to individuals in crisis. CSS provides in-service training to agencies, community groups, mental health providers, psychology interns, school staff and parents. Topics include: Grief & Loss; Crisis Intervention; Depression and Suicide in Adults; Depression and Suicide in Adolescents.

All services are free of charge or low fee to Alameda County residents. No one is turned away for lack of ability to pay. CSS is certified by the American Association of Suicidology, is a member of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and the Bay Area Suicide and Crisis Intervention Alliance.

You Can Help

Our donors are essential in providing 24-hour crisis support to our community. CSS is there in times of personal or community crisis... we invite you to join us in Connecting People in Need with People Who Care.

Donation Amount:

☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ Other \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number () _____

Email Address _____

☐ check ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard

Card No. _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

To donate online:
www.crisissupport.org

Make a Difference—Volunteer

Volunteers are the heart of the Crisis Line. Volunteers staff the Crisis Line 24 hours every day. After completing an intensive four-month training program, volunteers commit to one 4-hour shift per week for one year. No previous crisis line experience is necessary. To learn about our volunteer program, please call our Volunteer Coordinator at (510) 420-2471.



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of Alameda County