

Healthy Hearts & Minds

CCYSB YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION

AUGUST 2026



Back to School, Not Back to Struggling: Helping Young People Start the Year With Connection and Support

The start of a new school year can bring a lot of different feelings. Maybe you're excited to see friends, nervous about a new school, stressed about classes, or wishing summer could last a little longer. You might even feel all of these things at once, and that's okay. A new school year is a big transition. Schedules change, expectations increase, friendships shift, and it can sometimes feel like everyone else has it all figured out.

The truth? You don't have to have it all figured out.

You Don't Have to Start the Year Perfectly

There can be a lot of pressure to make the new school year your "best year ever." Instead of focusing on being perfect, try focusing on being supported.

Ask yourself:

- Who are the people I feel safe talking to?
- What helps me when I'm overwhelmed?
- Who could I reach out to if things get really difficult?
- What's one small thing I can do to take care of myself this week?

You don't have to solve everything at once. Sometimes, taking the next small step is enough.

Pay Attention to How You're Really Doing

Mental health struggles don't always look obvious. Someone who is struggling might seem tired, irritable, withdrawn, distracted, or just "not like themselves." They may stop doing things they usually enjoy or have a harder time keeping up with school, friends, or everyday responsibilities. If you're noticing these changes in yourself, you deserve support. You don't have to wait until things become a crisis to ask for help. If you notice a friend struggling, you don't have to know exactly what to say. Try something simple like, "I've noticed you haven't seemed like yourself lately. How are you really doing?"

If you're worried about someone, don't be afraid to ask directly about suicide. Asking the question does not put the idea in someone's head. It can open the door to an honest conversation and help someone feel less alone. If a friend tells you they're thinking about suicide, take them seriously and involve a trusted adult or mental health professional. You don't have to handle it alone.

Build Your Support Squad

Think about three people you could reach out to if you needed support. This could be a friend, parent or caregiver, teacher, coach, school counselor, therapist, or another trusted adult.

It can also help to make a list of things that help you through tough moments—listening to music, taking a walk, journaling, spending time with someone you trust, or simply taking a break.

Having a plan doesn't mean something bad is going to happen. It means you're taking care of yourself and making it easier to ask for help when you need it.

This School Year, Remember:

You are more than your grades.

You are more than your mistakes.

You don't have to pretend you're okay when you're not.

Asking for help is a strength, not a weakness.

Whatever this school year brings, you don't have to go through it by yourself.

What's Inside:

Back to School, Not Back to Struggling

Build Your "Feel Better" Playlist

The Power of One Person



129th Carroll County 4-H & FFA Fair
July 31st - August 8th 2026



www.carrollcountyfair.com



FREE SUMMER MOVIE: Muppet Treasure Island
Tuesday, August 4 @ 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm | FREE

CONCESSIONS - POPCORN - KIDS
ACTIVITIES IN THE LOBBY & MORE!

Come on in to our air-conditioned, historic theater, bring the family, some snacks, even wear your PJ's and enjoy a free, family movie this summer! General seating, kid activities in the lobby and an escape from the heat and noise outside!

FREE for all ages. No reservations necessary!

The Carroll Arts Center

91 West Main Street
Westminster, MD 21157

Build Your "Feel Better" Playlist

Music can be a powerful way to connect with our emotions. The right song can help us feel understood, calm us down, give us energy, or remind us that we're not alone.

Instead of creating just one playlist, try building a few different playlists for different moments.

When I Need to Calm Down

Choose songs that help you slow down and feel grounded. This might be soft music, nature sounds, instrumental songs, or anything that helps your body relax.

Add 3 songs that help you feel calm:

🎵 _____

🎵 _____

🎵 _____

When I Need a Boost

Sometimes you need music that makes you want to get up, move around, or remind yourself that you can handle what's ahead.

Add 3 songs that lift your mood:

🎵 _____

🎵 _____

🎵 _____

When I Need to Feel My Feelings

You don't always have to cheer yourself up right away. Sometimes, you need a song that helps you feel understood or gives you space to process what you're experiencing.

Add 3 songs that help you process emotions:

🎵 _____

🎵 _____

🎵 _____

When I Need to Feel Connected

Music can remind us that we're not the only ones who have felt a certain way. Choose songs that remind you of people you care about, meaningful memories, or moments when you felt understood.

Add 3 songs that help you feel connected:

🎵 _____

🎵 _____

🎵 _____

When I'm Having a Really Hard Day

Create a playlist for the moments when things feel especially difficult. Include songs that help you feel safe, grounded, hopeful, or supported.

You might also add a voice memo from someone you trust, an encouraging message to yourself, or a reminder of people you can reach out to when you need support.

Add 3 songs for your hard days:

🎵 _____

🎵 _____

🎵 _____

Bonus challenge: Add one song to each playlist that reminds you of a reason to keep going, someone who cares about you, or a moment when you made it through something difficult.

The Power of One Person

Sometimes, we think we need to have the perfect words or know exactly what to do when someone is struggling. We might worry that we'll say the wrong thing, make things worse, or not know how to help. The truth is, you don't have to be a mental health expert to make a difference.

Sometimes, one person can be the reason someone feels less alone. That person might be a friend who notices something is different. A teacher who takes the time to ask how you're really doing. A coach who reminds you that you matter. A parent, caregiver, counselor, therapist, or another trusted adult who listens without judgment. You don't have to fix someone's problems. You don't have to have all the answers. Sometimes, being there means simply listening, showing that you care, and helping someone connect with the support they need.

You might say:

"I'm glad you told me."

"I'm here to listen."

"You don't have to go through this alone."

"You matter to me."

"I'm really glad you're here."

"Let's find someone who can help."

Don't Be Afraid to Ask

If you're worried about someone, trust your instincts. Maybe you've noticed they've been withdrawing from friends, losing interest in things they usually enjoy, giving away belongings, or saying things that make you wonder if they're okay.

You don't need to wait until you're certain something is wrong. You can simply check in.

Try asking:

"You've seemed a little different lately. How are you really doing?"

Or:

"I've noticed you've been having a hard time. Do you want to talk about it?"

And if you're concerned that someone may be thinking about suicide, it's okay to ask directly. *Asking someone about suicide does not cause suicidal thoughts or make someone more likely to act on them.* It can create an opportunity for them to be honest about what they're experiencing and connect them with support.

If someone tells you they're thinking about suicide, take them seriously. Listen without judgment, stay with them if you can, and involve a trusted adult or mental health professional. You don't have to handle the situation by yourself. Getting help is not betraying your friend's trust, it's one of the most caring things you can do.

Small Things Can Make a Big Difference

You may never know how much a simple conversation means to someone. A text message that says, "I'm thinking about you." An invitation to hang out. Sitting beside someone who seems alone. Remembering something important to them. Asking, "How are you really doing?" These moments may seem small, but they can remind someone that they are seen, valued, and cared about.

Sometimes, people who are struggling don't need someone to solve everything. They need to know that someone notices. That someone cares. That someone is willing to stay.

You Could Be That One Person

You might not be able to change everything someone is going through, but you can help them feel less alone while they're going through it. And if you are the person who is struggling, please remember this: You don't have to wait for someone to notice. You can be the one who reaches out, too.

Tell someone. Send the text. Ask for help. Keep reaching out until you find someone who listens.

You matter. Your life matters. And you don't have to face difficult moments alone.

If you or someone you know is struggling or thinking about suicide, reach out for support. Call or text 988 to connect with the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. If there is immediate danger, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department.

Sometimes, one person makes a difference. Sometimes, that person can be you.

Safety Plans Work

There is hope.



1. Write 3 warning signs that a crisis may be developing.

2. Write 3 internal coping strategies that can take your mind off your problems.

3. Who/What are 3 people or places that provide distraction?
(Write name/place and phone numbers)

_____	Phone _____
_____	Phone _____
_____	Phone _____

4. Who can you ask for help? (Write names and phone numbers)

_____	Phone _____
_____	Phone _____
_____	Phone _____

5. Professionals or agencies you can contact during a crisis:

Clinician: _____ Phone _____

Local Urgent Care or Emergency Department:

Address _____ Phone _____

Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org

6. Write out a plan to make your environment safer.
(Write 2 things)



Modified from Stanley & Brown (2021)

PEP22-08-03-007

Crisis Resources

National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:

9-8-8 (Call or Text)

Chat: <https://988lifeline.org/chat>

The Trevor Project:

thetrevorproject.org

1-866-488-7386

text 678-678

BlackLine®:

Call: 1-800-604-5841

Text: 800-604-5841

Carroll County Mobile Crisis:

410-952-9552

Open Access at CCYSB

Ready to Get Started?

Connect to Care ... TODAY!

As of July 1, 2026, Open Access

Walk-In Assessments will now be

Open Access Services

We offer TWO convenient ways to complete your initial referral and paperwork process:

Option 1:

Call Our Referral Line: 410-848-2500, option 1

OR email: op_referrals@ccysb.org

Referral Availability: Mon-Fri 8:30 am - 4 pm.

Voicemails & emails received between 4 pm and 8:30 am or on weekends will be responded to during business hours

Option 2:

Visit During Walk-In Paperwork Hours

Tuesdays: 8:30 – 11 am **AND** 2 – 4 pm

Wednesdays: 12 – 2 pm

Our 1-Week Commitment to

Connecting You to Care:

Once your initial referral & paperwork are completed, a comprehensive clinical assessment slot will be offered within 1 week, and an assessment will be scheduled.

AUGUST

IT'S IMPORTANT TO
REMINDE YOURSELF THAT
YOUR WORTH HAS
NOTHING TO DO WITH
HOW PRODUCTIVE OR HOW
SUCCESSFUL YOU ARE.

@POSITIVELYPRESENT

My School Year Preview

Fun activities that I did over
summer break...

One word to
describe how I'm
feeling about this
school year...



The thing I am looking forward
to the MOST this year...

One thing I am NOT looking forward to
this school year...



A subject or topic that I'm excited to
learn about this year...



Something I want to
improve on this year...

My biggest accomplishment this
school year will be...



This will be a good school year if...



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