

WHAT TO DO IN A CRISIS?

When your child is in the throes of a crisis, whether from drug overdose, alcohol poisoning, domestic/relationship violence, or mental health issues, it can be hard to know what to do. Where do you go for help? Who can you call? What are the protocols?

SAFETY IS ALWAYS THE FIRST CONCERN! If someone is in immediate physical danger, dialing **911** for the police/fire department can be the best bet for getting help quickly, whether from an EMT, a mediator, or law enforcement. In addition:

- **Stay calm** and **communicate clearly** with those involved.
- **Validate** feelings – “I hear you...”
- Gather as much **information** as you can, and **listen attentively** without judgement. Avoid assumptions.

For other challenges and emergencies, calling or texting **988**, the **Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**, offers trained crisis counselors for insightful, empathetic, non-judgmental guidance. They are trained to assess situations and:

- Provide **emotional support**
- Help **de-escalate** the immediate situation
- Provide **direct resources** to help callers move forward.

Counselors are trained in working with teens as well as adults, and they have special resources for LGBTQ youth. For more substantive assistance, they can connect you to additional agencies, such as:

- **Behavioral Health Helpline** - 24/7 service for MA residents can do behavioral health assessments over the phone, and connect callers with providers, treatment centers, support and peer groups, and free resources – **833-773-2445**
- **Mobile Crisis Intervention Agency** 24/7 for MA residents if in real immediate crisis not warranting police, social workers trained in crisis intervention in behavioral health and substance abuse situations can be dispatched – **877-382-1609**
- **Youth National Suicide Prevention Line** – 24/7, especially for teens – **800-273-8255**

