



## YOUTH Taking Care of Yourself When a Friend is in Crisis

Please remember that helping your friend is not just your responsibility—it is the responsibility of our community (parents, school-based health center counselor, school counselors, law enforcement, mental health professionals, Oregon YouthLine) and not yours alone. And, **it's okay to take care of you** while you care for someone else! Here are some ideas that may be helpful:

- **Know your limits.** Say “no” when you need to.
- **Review your priorities, other responsibilities,** and your **core values.** Make sure that those are tended to first.
- **Create space** for helping your friend, and when that space is full, move on to other things.
- **Lean on those who support you.** Sometimes, people who are great at helping others aren't so good at letting others help them. A problem shared is a problem halved—Ask a trusted adult for help when you need to.
- **Set clear boundaries.** While it may be hard to say “no,” it's necessary. It isn't helpful to the other person or to you when you're the *only* one who can help.
- In fact, the best skill you can share with the person in crisis is to **teach them how to ask for help** from a few different trusted resources. This way, the person in crisis will always be able to get help from others when you're running out of energy or when your own family really needs your attention.

**Friends care for friends.** That's what we do. But, life has tons of difficulty without taking on everyone else's burdens in addition to our own.

- In order to be a good friend, it's okay to take care of your own needs. A friendship includes balance, where both people care about and respect the other's needs and boundaries.
- If the friendship is toxic, refer the person to professional support or other trusted adult.



**Text teen2teen to 839863**

[StompOutBullying.org/get-help/helpchat-line/](http://StompOutBullying.org/get-help/helpchat-line/)



**Get the support you need from adults and the people you trust when/if:**

- You constantly have to save this person and fix their problem.
- You cover up or hide things for them.
- You feel exhausted and drained after being with them.
- You dread seeing them.
- You feel sad, angry, or depressed when you are around them.
- Your own behavior has changed.
- You're affected by their problems.

### More Resources



**For LGBTQ youth.**  
**866-488-7386**  
**Text "Trevor"**  
**to 1-202-304-1200**  
**Available Wed-Friday**