

# Warning signs about mental health

The National Alliance on Mental Illness has launched “Say It Out Loud,” a program for faith communities and civic organizations to use in reaching out to youth, ages 14 to 18, to start conversations about mental health.

But the warnings signs may be observed by anyone: friends, parents, and self. Take the warning signs seriously. Seek help from your family doctor, counselor, or mental health professional:

- Feeling very sad, withdrawn, or unmotivated for more than 2 weeks
- Making plans or trying to harm or kill oneself
- Out-of-control, risk-taking behaviors
- Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart or fast breathing
- Not eating, throwing up, or using laxatives to lose weight; significant weight loss or weight gain
- Severe mood swings causing problems in relationships
- Excess use of drugs or alcohol
- Drastic changes in behavior, personality, or sleeping habits
- Extreme difficulty in concentrating or staying still
- Intense worries or fears getting in the way of daily activities like hanging out with friends or going to classes

