MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

Signs that the child may be experiencing a mental health crisis can include, but are not limited to:

- Thoughts or statements about harming self or others
- Rapid/extreme mood swings
- Feeling agitated or restless, pacing
- Unable to complete daily tasks
- Racing thoughts
- Confused or irrational thinking, losing touch with reality
- Isolating themselves (ex. not coming out of room)
- Major changes to sleep or eating patterns

WHAT TO DO IN A CRISIS SITUATION:

If you have a safety plan, put it into place. Take steps to try and calm the situation.

- Remove hazards such as medications, weapons, or other objects that could be used to harm oneself or others.
- Stay with the child.
- Speak slowly and confidently with a gentle, caring tone of voice.
- Do not argue or challenge the child, even if what they are saying seems unreasonable.
- Do not threaten.
- Ask simple questions, and listen actively.

If the situation feels out of control or too much to handle on your own, reach out for help. Don't wait!

- **In life-threatening situations, call 9-1-1.**
- Contact the child's mental health or other health care provider.
- Contact a state or local helpline:
  - **NAMI Helpline:**
    - Call 1-800-950-6264
    - Text “NAMI” to 62640
  - **Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:**
    - Call or text 988.

Pro tip: It is helpful to have a safety plan ahead of time. Talk to the child's mental health care team about what to do in an emergency. Have important phone numbers, names, and details about the child's medical history available.