

Let's Talk... Worried about someone having suicidal feelings?

This leaflet aims to help parents, carers and friends to understand what suicidal thoughts are, why someone might feel that way, support to spot the signs, what you might say and how to access support.



Suicidal thoughts explained

Suicide is the act of intentionally taking your own life. In the UK, suicide is the leading cause of death in young people. Around 200 young people die by suicide every year.

What are suicidal thoughts?

Suicidal feelings means having negative thoughts about ending your life. The young person might feel that people would be better off without them and feel tearful and overwhelmed by these negative thoughts. They may also feel unbearable pain that they can't imagine ending and feel desperate, as if they have no other choice.

Why might someone feel suicidal?

Suicidal feelings can affect anyone at any age and at any time in their life. The young person may be struggling to cope with their suicidal or negative thoughts and may not know why they feel this way. These feelings may build over time or might change from moment to moment.

Here are some causes of suicidal feelings:

- Breakdown of a relationship
- Are depressed or have another mental illness
- Struggle with low self-esteem
- Were bullied or felt discrimination
- Are feeling lonely
- Physical, sexual or emotional abuse
- Use alcohol or drugs
- Loss of a loved one

Warning signs

Signs that someone could be feeling suicidal:

- Threaten to hurt themselves or take their own life
- Talk or joking about suicide or wanting to die
- Write about death, dying or suicide
- Unexpected mood changes
- Socially withdrawn
- Change in sleeping and eating patterns
- Lack of energy
- Neglecting personal appearance
- Reckless behaviour
- Increased drug or alcohol abuse
- Anger or irritability
- Giving away their belongings
- Saying last good bye to friends and family

What to say?

How to start the conversation

Sometimes there are no warning signs so just **talk**; it could be a huge relief.

Stay calm and find out how they are feeling by asking them:

- "Are they thinking about taking their own life?"
- "How is this making them feel?" and
- "How often they have had these thoughts?"

Let them know **"It's okay not to be okay"**

Listen to them and be non-judgemental

Try to make them feel better by sharing what you like about them

Avoid relating to them by saying things like 'We all have bad days, the other day I...'
or say 'I wouldn't let something like that bother me..'

People who are suicidal may feel embarrassed to talk about suicide. Reassure them to talk to someone. They are not alone and that it is okay to ask for help.

Share your concerns with them and tell them that you would like to get them help and consider the options like calling their **GP surgery, call 999 or take them to A&E or ask them if it may be easier to talk to a stranger and call a helpline.**



Self-help

Tips for coping with suicidal thoughts and when you are feeling overwhelmed



Try not to think about the future – just focus on getting through today



Stay away from drugs and alcohol



Go to a safe place, like a friend's house



Be around other people



Do something you enjoy

Try the 5-4-3-2-1 distraction technique using your 5 senses to shift your focus

5 things you can **see**

4 things you can **hear**

3 things you can **touch**

2 things you can **smell**

1 thing you can **taste**

Support and resources

Support is available for someone who is having suicidal thoughts or if you or someone you know is affected by suicide.

Local support	National support	Apps
<p>At Home Parents/carers, brother/sister, friends or other trusted relative.</p>	<p>Childline - Young people under 19 years of age 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk</p>	<p>DistrACTApp Free information and advice about self-harm and suicidal thoughts www.nhs.uk/apps-library/distract</p>
<p>In School School nurse, teacher or pastoral support</p>	<p>Papyrus Hopeline UK 0800 068 41 41 www.papyrus-uk.org</p>	<p>Stay Alive App Free suicide prevention resource https://www.prevent-suicide.org.uk/find-help-now/stay-alive-app/</p>
<p>School Nursing Service Access number: 01922 423349 or schoolnursing@walsallhealthcare.nhs.uk</p>	<p>Calm - Support for young men aged 15+ in the UK 0800 58 58 58 www.thecalmzone.net/help/get-help</p>	
<p>Walsall Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub 0300 555 2866 (option 2)</p>	<p>The Mix - Support for young people aged 13-25 08 0808 808 4994 www.themix.org.uk/mental-health/self-harm</p>	
<p>Local GP surgery</p>	<p>Shout Text Service Text Shout to 85258 www.giveusashout.org</p>	
<p>Black County Mental Health NHS Trust Crisis Service 0800 008 6516 (24 hours) www.blackcountryhealthcare.nhs.uk/contact-us/help-crisis</p>	<p>YoungMinds 0808 802 5544 - Parents Helpline Text YM to 85258 - Crisis Messenger 24/7 www.youngminds.org.uk/find-help</p>	
<p>Black Country Emotional Support Helpline (16+) 0808 802 2288 www.rethink.org/help-in-your-area/services/advice-and-helplines/the-black-country-emotional-support-helpline</p>	<p>Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800 273 8255 https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/</p>	
<p>Kooth - Online support for young people www.kooth.com</p>		
<p>Walsall Psychological Help (WPH) Counselling and Education Services 01922 649000 www.wphcounselling.org/Selfharm.htm</p>		