

If you suspect someone may be feeling suicidal, ask them - it could save their life.

Most people thinking about suicide will try to let someone know. There are several signs to watch out for. The key to helping is watching out for the warning signs and knowing what to do to help. Everyone is different so in some cases few or none of these signs are evident, however here are some of the most common ones.

If someone you know:

- Talks about wanting to die, not seeing the point or a way out of their situation.
- Has been through stressful life events or experienced significant losses and doesn't seem to be coping.
- Gives away prize possessions.
- Starts putting things in order e.g. arranging wills, pet or childcare.
- Shows marked changes in behaviour, appearance or mood. They may seem distracted, sad, distant or lacking in concentration. Also watch out for sudden uplift in mood or calmness as this can sometimes be because the person feels they have found a solution to their problems, no matter how drastic this may be.
- Has made a previous suicide attempt.

..they maybe at risk of suicide.

You can help. Be ALERT:

Ask if they are thinking about suicide.

You may feel frightened to bring up the subject of suicide in case you think it will put the idea in their head. This is not true. Don't hesitate to raise the subject. Be direct in a caring and supportive way.

Listen and show you care.

Let the person talk about their feelings and listen carefully to what they have to say. Don't judge them and rather than dismissing it as a 'silly thing to do', try and understand why they are feeling this way. Let them know you care.

Encourage them to get help and support them to do so

Asking and listening are the first steps in developing a sense of hope. Now is the time to move forward with this hope and get help to keep the person safe. You may feel out of your depth to help the person, but there are people out there who can and you can put them in touch with someone who is qualified and able to help them.

Right now

If the person has an immediate suicide plan and the means to carry it out, do not leave them alone. Get help immediately by phoning a doctor, 999, a local crisis support service (look in a phone book, Yellow Pages or Thomson Directory) or one of the helplines below.

Tell someone

Never promise secrecy. Dealing with suicide can be difficult and you can't do it alone. Find someone to talk to about your own feelings.



Reg'd charity no. 1003758

SAMARITANS

Phone: **0800 1111**

Phone: **08457 90 90 90**

Email: jo@samaritans.org

<http://www.childline.org.uk/> <http://www.samaritans.org.uk>

ChildLine is the free 24 hour helpline for children and young people in the UK.

Samaritans is available 24 hours a day to provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair

This information is taken directly from the Choose Life website www.chooselife.net developed as part of Scotland's national Strategy for suicide prevention. More information about suicide prevention can be found on the site.