

Listen and empathise:

Listening in a compassionate and non-judgemental way is one of the most helpful things you can do. Avoid the temptation to try and change the subject or to list all the "positives" in the person's life. Just listen and try and see things from their point of view.

Ask if they have a plan:

It may not be easy, but it's important to talk openly about this. If the person has a specific suicide plan and the means to take their own life then they need urgent help.

Get help:

If you have serious concerns for the individual's immediate safety, do not leave them on their own. You can ring 999 or, depending on your relationship with the person, you might support them to get an urgent GP appointment or take them to A&E. See also a list of helplines overleaf that may be helpful.

Do not put yourself at risk:

Your own safety must come first.

Take care of yourself:

Supporting someone who is suicidal can be shocking and distressing. Be mindful of your own wellbeing – and talk to someone you trust about how it has made you feel. Alternatively, it may help to phone one of the helplines overleaf to talk it through.

“ Reaching out to
someone in distress
is a simple, human act –
and it could save a life. ”

CPSL Mind: Reg. Charity Number 265087

Helplines:

Freephones:

NHS First Response Service

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (UK) only



111, select the mental health option
(24-hour helpline)



Samaritans



116 123 (24-hour helpline)



www.samaritans.org

Lifeline

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (UK) only



0808 808 2121 (11am - 11pm everyday)

CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably)

A charity dedicated to preventing suicides



0800 585858 (5pm - 12am everyday)



www.thecalmzone.net

Papyrus

Advice for young people at risk of suicide



0800 068 4141 HOPELINE247 (24-hours everyday)



www.papyrus-uk.org



Make the STOP Suicide Pledge
www.stopsuicidepledge.org



@stopsuicidecam



STOPSuicidePledge



Cambridgeshire,
Peterborough and
South Lincolnshire



STOP suicide

Save a life. Choose to live.

Help us to create a suicide-safer
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Supporting someone who is suicidal

www.stopsuicidepledge.org

An illustration at the top left shows several stylized figures standing on a light-colored ground under a dark, starry sky. Multiple colorful rainbows arch over the figures. The quote "Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does." is written in white text above the figures.

"Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does."

- William James

Worried about someone?

We can all do things to help create a suicide-safer community:

You don't have to be a mental health professional to help someone who is feeling suicidal.

Suicide is everybody's business. Around 1 in 5 of us has had suicidal thoughts at some point* and an estimated 75 per cent of suicides are by people who have not had contact with mental health services in the year before their death.

Asking directly about suicide is the right thing to do if you are worried about someone.

Many people fear talking directly about suicide in case they "give the person the idea", but there is no evidence that talking about suicide can be harmful – quite the opposite. For many people it can be a huge relief to be asked the question in a direct way.

It is a MYTH that people who talk about suicide are unlikely to go through with the act.

Anyone who talks or writes about taking their own life should be taken seriously. Never assume that a person who has spoken about suicidal thoughts before and not acted on those thoughts won't do so this time.

Be alert:

Not everyone who thinks about suicide will tell someone and there are some people who give no indication at all of their intention. However, there are warning signs that we can all look out for:

These include, if a person is:

- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide.
- Actively looking for ways to kill themselves.
- Talking about feeling hopeless or of having no reason to live.
- Talking about being a burden to others.
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain.
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs.
- Suddenly very much 'recovered' after a period of depression.
- Visiting or calling people unexpectedly to say goodbye either directly or indirectly.
- Making arrangements; setting their affairs in order.
- Giving things away, such as prized possessions.

Be honest:

Tell the person why you're worried about them, and ask about suicide.

Be direct:

Suicide remains a huge taboo in our society and the person at risk may have kept these feelings to themselves for a long time. By asking about suicide directly you are getting across the message that it's OK to talk about it – and that you are there to listen. Say what you mean.

Ask:

"Are you having thoughts of suicide?" OR
"Have you been thinking about killing yourself?"

Avoid phrases like:

"You're not going to do anything silly are you?" OR
"Are you thinking of ending it all?"

Don't panic:

Hearing that someone is feeling suicidal can be shocking, but it won't help the situation if you panic. Try and stay calm and supportive.

*Source: OPCS Surveys of Psychiatric Morbidity 2007