

SUICIDE PREVENTION CONVERSATION TOOLKIT



STARTING THE CONVERSATION ABOUT SUICIDE.

Suicide is one of the leading causes of death among teenagers and young adults. Everyone has a different reason for why they don't want to live anymore. But taking your own life is never the answer. There is always hope and a way to address the reason you feel this way. **TALKING TO JUST ONE TRUSTED PERSON** is a simple way to start understanding what you're going through and getting the help you deserve. When you first start having thoughts about hurting or killing yourself, don't keep them to yourself. These negative thoughts will likely not go away on their own—they will only get worse if left untreated.

WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE. Some people decide to commit suicide very quickly while others plan it for a long time. That's why it's so important to recognize some of the warning signs early on, before things get to a point where you can't go back. **Ask yourself the following questions. If you say "yes" to even a few of them, then it's a good idea to talk to someone.**

YES NO // Do I feel down, depressed, or hopeless?

YES NO // Have I thought about or threatened to hurt myself?

YES NO // Have I been experiencing mood swings?

YES NO // Have I been using alcohol or drugs to escape my feelings?

YES NO // Have I been experiencing moments of rage or acting aggressively toward others?

YES NO // Have I been thinking, writing, or talking about death a lot?

YES NO // Have I thought about giving away my belongings or saying "goodbye" to anyone?

YES NO // Have I recently gone through a stressful event like a break up?

YES NO // Have I thought about ways to kill myself?

HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT PERSON TO TALK TO.

No matter how alone or isolated you feel, there is always someone that is ready and willing to help. If you don't feel ready to talk to a mental health professional, that's perfectly fine. Start by telling one trusted person you feel comfortable with and you know will be a good listener.

The right person doesn't have to have personal experience with suicide—he or she just needs to take your thoughts, feelings, and concerns seriously, and help you take the next step.

YOUR TRUSTED PERSON MAY BE A:

FAMILY MEMBER

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

TEACHER

CHURCH LEADER

COACH

CLOSE FRIEND

HOW TO START THE CONVERSTION. There's no right or wrong way to tell someone that you are having suicidal thoughts. But there are steps you can take to make the conversation easier to start and more productive.

FIND A COMFORTABLE PLACE AND TIME. This could be a coffee shop, school, home, or anywhere that you can have some privacy away from distractions.

PLAN WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY. Write down how you're feeling or practice the conversation in front of a mirror.

BE READY FOR QUESTIONS. The person you're talking to will probably want more information on your situation. Be honest and share as much as you feel comfortable.

DON'T RUSH THE CONVERSATION. This topic may be challenging for the person you're talking to, so give them time to listen and process what you're saying.

DON'T TRY TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM ALL AT ONCE. Remember, this is just the start of the process.

BE PROUD. It takes courage to tell someone how you feel.

WHAT YOU CAN SAY:

"I don't feel like I have a reason to live and don't know what to do."

"This is hard for me to talk about, but I've been thinking about suicide."

"I'm worried that I may hurt myself."

"I've been having suicidal thoughts lately. I think I may need help."

WHAT TO DO AFTER THE CONVERSATION. Hopefully after your first conversation, you'll feel a sense of relief and hopefulness. Be sure to keep things moving in a positive direction.

1 Stay in touch with your trusted person and keep him or her updated on how you feel.

2 If the first conversation didn't go the way you had hoped, **don't worry or give up.** Try finding another trusted person that may be better suited to help.

3 Make healthy lifestyle choices such as diet, exercise, and sleep.

4 If you're ready to take the next step to receive a diagnosis and treatment, **talk to a mental health professional or organization.**

Visit [JustTellOne.org](https://www.JustTellOne.org) or call 716.245.6JT1 to find available services in your area.



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ONE.org