

Concerned about suicide

What are the warning signs?

Most people who feel suicidal don't really want to die, they just want an end to their pain. These are some of the signs which may indicate that someone is thinking of taking their life:

- A suicide attempt or act of self-harm
- Expressing suicidal thoughts
- Preoccupation with death
- Depression
- Becoming isolated
- Alcohol abuse
- Drug abuse
- Sudden changes in mood or behaviour
- Making 'final' arrangements, eg giving away possessions (such as books, CDs, DVDs)

Note: Some of these warning signs can be associated with everyday behaviour. You should look at the overall picture for the person you are concerned about. However, the more warning signs and associated risk factors, the higher the possible risk.

Associated risk factors

- Access to a method of suicide, eg medication, firearms
- Loss of someone close (such as a friend or family member)
- Relationship break-up
- Impulsiveness, recklessness and risk-taking behaviour
- Alcohol/drug abuse

How to respond

If you are concerned about someone you can follow these three steps:

Show you care

Offer support and let them know you care. Say something like:

'I'm worried about you and I want to help'

'What's up? I'm very worried about you'

'Whatever's bothering you we will get through this together'

Ask the question

Don't be afraid to discuss suicide – asking about it won't put the idea in people's heads:

'Do you feel like harming yourself?'

'Do you feel like ending your life?'

'Are you so down that you just want to end it all?'

Call for help

Encourage them to look for help:

'Let's talk to someone who can help'

'I will stay with you until you get help'

'You're not alone and there are people who can help you out of this situation'

Where to go for help

If you, or someone you know, is in crisis now and need someone to talk to:



0808 808 8000

24/7 phone support for those in crisis

SAMARITANS

BELFAST

Freephone 116 123

24/7 listening ear to those in distress



Health and
Social Care

028 9074 4447 (in North and West Belfast)
028 9079 6220 (in South and East Belfast)

The GP Out of Hours service provides care for urgent problems when your own GP is closed.



028 9080 5850

Freephone 0800 088 6042

Offers a 'no appointment' service for anyone in crisis

LIGHTHOUSE

028 9075 5070

Provides accessible support services to people who are directly affected by suicide and self-harm



Bridge of HOPE

McSweeney Clinic
028 9543 8707 or
Ashton Clinic
028 9022 1022.

Offers a range of services to support people experiencing stress, trauma or anxiety.

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CHANGING LIVES EVERY DAY

0845 2590520

Extern Crisis Response Team
Offering One to One Support



028 9039 1630

Offers a counselling service

More information on looking after your mental health and the support which is available across Northern Ireland can be found at www.mindingyourhead.info

Adapted from information produced by the HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention, Ireland, and the Suicide Awareness Coordinators for Northern Ireland, with the support of CAWT (Cooperation and Working Together).