

Suicide Prevention | What to Do

SUICIDE INTERVENTIONS ARE ABOUT HUMAN CONNECTION. Caring for our peers, family members, and even strangers is at the root of preventing suicide. While it is difficult to predict when someone is struggling with their emotional or physical well-being or is considering suicide, making a caring connection is always the first step.

TAKE WARNING SIGNS SERIOUSLY. Most people who die by suicide gave some indication of their intention to those close to them. When someone is in distress, approach them with a caring attitude and don't be afraid to voice your concern. It is okay to ask what is troubling them, even when they may be reluctant to talk. Listen attentively to what they are going through. Just being there for support provides a seed of hope.

ASK DIRECTLY IF SOMEONE IS CONSIDERING SUICIDE. Explain why you are concerned and be direct. Remember, asking about suicide does not cause someone to consider or complete suicide. When someone expresses that they are considering suicide, ask them if they can agree on being safe while getting more professional help. Be there to assist them by contacting a mental health professional. The National Suicide Prevention Hotline can be a great resource to get additional support 24/7/365. **Just call (1-800-273-TALK (8255)).** If you are ever unsure of what to do, or if the individual cannot agree to stay safe, call 911 or assist them in getting to the nearest emergency room. Remember, most efforts to persuade someone to choose safety instead of suicide will be met with agreement and relief. Don't hesitate to get involved.

Stop Stigma | What to Say

Become a voice against mental illness stigma. Try these simple tips for talking.

STOP THE SILENCE - If someone discloses that they have a mental illness, they are opening up to you in a big way. Ask questions, show concern, but keep the awkward silence at bay.

BE NICE - It sounds simple enough, but try to say the right things with openness, warmth, caring and sincerity.

LISTEN - The fact that you are there can make a world of difference, so in your conversation, try to err more on the side of listening.

KEEP IN CONTACT - Offer availability by phone, text, email, or a time to meet up. Just be there.

DON'T IGNORE IT - Don't be afraid to ask about the well-being of another if you think they might be hurting. Trust your senses.

OFFER HELP - Everyone is different. They may want very specific help or no help at all. Either way, you can always ask and be open to the answer.

KEEP THE CONVERSATION MOVING - It's ok to talk about other things to keep silent lulls out of conversation; as long as they know you're completely open to revisiting the topic later.