

Suicide and Prevention



Self Help and helping others

Guidance

Useful Information

Useful contacts

Image 1.: charlottewattshealth.com

What are the signs that someone may be feeling suicidal?

Someone may display signs of a change in personality and their behaviour may change, signs may include, having negative thoughts about themselves, sleeping too much or too little, noticeable mood swings, being anxious, irritable or confrontational (Nhs.uk, 2018). For many people, they may be unsure about suicide and will look at the pros and cons of living and dying (Nhs.uk, 2018). If someone is threatening to hurt or kill themselves, showing signs of self-harming, talking about death, suicide or dying or actively looking for ways to end their lives such as gathering medication, it is important that they seek help as soon as possible (Nhs.uk, 2018).

Please be aware that not everyone shows signs, some may not show any signs or difference in behaviour at all.

Understanding why would someone want to end their life?

People may choose to end their lives for many different reasons, they may suffer from a mental health disorder, they may live alone and not see many other people which may make them feel as if no one loves them, they may have a physical condition which leaves them in a lot of pain, they may have little or no money which makes them feel unworthy, or they misuse drugs or alcohol (rethink. Org, (n.d). There may be many more reasons also which aren't listed (rethink.org, (n.d).

It is important not to blame yourself if you are not able to spot the signs if someone is feeling suicidal as not everyone shows signs and it may be a complete shock to you (mind.org.uk, 2017).

How to help someone who may be feeling suicidal

There are a lot of things that you can do that might help, you could; try offering emotional and practical support, encourage them to talk about how they are feeling, try to support them in making plans for themselves with self-help or simply reassure and encourage them that it is ok for them to get help from a support group, to visit a doctor, speak to a friend, teacher or to visit a counsellor (mind.org.uk, 2017).

Some people may just want someone to listen to what they have to say, this can be a huge relief for some people, if you feel ok in doing this you could try asking simple questions that they have to answer with more than 'yes, no or maybe' for example, how has your day been? this means they may answer with 'not very good' this will allow you to open a conversation with them, allowing them to express their feelings, they may be able to tell you more this way (mind.org.uk, 2017).

You may feel shocked, upset or frightened about what they are telling you, but try not to let it upset you, they may not be able to control the way they feel, give them time to talk and try not to hurry them, although you may want quick answers, it may take them time to find the answers themselves, stay calm, listen and let them speak (mind.org.uk, 2017). Take them seriously and talk openly, ask them if they are feeling suicidal, this may help them talk openly about how they are feeling, although this may sound like the wrong thing to do, in fact research has shown, that by being direct, can decrease the likelihood of them acting on their emotions (mind.org.uk, 2017). If you are unsure of how to have the conversation or not feeling comfortable with it, try encouraging them to contact one of the support group numbers at the end of this leaflet or to visit their doctor or someone professional as soon as possible.

What others are doing to help

The World Health Organisation (WHO) believe that suicides are avoidable, with support both globally and from our individual countries along with individual levels (WHO. Int, 2018). WHO believes that by reducing access to the aid of suicide such as access to firearms, certain medication, early intervention, training and follow up care for people who have already attempted suicide can reduce the risk of future suicide attempts (WHO.int,2018).



Image 2, Librarything.com, (2015).

What to expect if someone has taken their own life

When someone dies, it is normal to feel angry towards the person who has died, or to be angry with themselves or others, they may feel unable to live without that person, they may feel anxious and have questions about why the person reacted the way in which they have, they may feel sadness, fear and frustration and may want to cry and behave a bit different than usual (Clark, n.d).

There is no right or wrong way to support someone dealing with a bereavement, everyone deals with it differently, it is ok if nothing you do helps, just being there can be enough, but if you feel that it is too much to deal with, then it is ok to speak to someone else about how it is making you feel too (Clark, n.d). There are support numbers at the back of this leaflet or if you would prefer to speak to someone face to face then try to visit the school health nurse or make an appointment with a bereavement

counsellor or a teacher or someone else you feel comfortable speaking to.

Maintaining mental health and wellbeing

It is important for someone dealing with bereavement that they are looked after and also able to look after themselves, taking into account their mental health and well-being (NHS.UK, 2016). Trying to keep to a normal routine as possible can be difficult, but it is important to stay connected to family, friends, groups and neighbours. Trying to stay fit and healthy can be helpful, maybe just going for walks to get fresh air or finding an activity that is enjoyable can help someone who's dealing with bereavement (NHS.UK, 2016).

In 2017 a group of 4 boys from Haverfordwest who called their charity funding page 'Get the boys a lift' organised a 700 mile round trip race, purely by thumbing lifts in order to raise awareness of the stigma of mental health (just giving.com, 2017).

What support is available in schools

Schools should have designated members of staff to deal with pupils who are dealing with bereavement and should have the necessary skills required to help support pupils and other members of staff (cruse.org. uk, n,d). Some schools may hold a memorial service, plant a tree or have a memorial bench, plaque or something else in the school in remembrance of the pupil (cruse.org.uk, n,d).



Image 3, Thomas, 2017).

Facts

- One in fifteen people have made a suicide attempt at some point in their lives (McManus *et al*, 2016, *cited in* Mental Health Foundation, 2018).
- Suicide is the highest cause of death for men aged 20-49 in England and Wales (ONS, 2015, *cited in* Mental Health Foundation 2018).
- In 2016, 5,668 suicides were recorded in Great Britain, 75% were male and 25% were Female (ONS, 2016, *cited in* Mental Health foundation 2018).
- In 2016, the suicide rate in Great Britain decreased by 3.6% than that of 2015 an amount of 6,188 less (John, 2017).

Project eighty four

The Calm Zone (campaign against living miserably) is a charity dedicated to preventing male suicide (the calmzone.net, 2015). Calm was first introduced in 1997 into Manchester by the department of health, they claim that suicide is the main reason for death in males under the age of 45 in the UK, further reporting that 75% of suicides in 2015 were male (the calmzone.net, 2015).

Despite 84 men taking their own life every week, there is currently no minister in the UK government officially responsible for suicide prevention and bereavement support

(The calmzone.net, 2018).

Available Contacts

Childline: (Children and young people under 19)

Tel 0800 1111 (the number will not show on bill)

THE MIX: (Under 25's)

Visit www.themix.org.uk/get-support

Papyrus: (Under 35's) Contactable via phone, text or Email mon-fri 10am-10pm Sat-Sun 2pm-10pm

Tel 0800 068 41 41 or Text 07786 209697 Email pat@papyrus-uk.org

Samaritans: contact via telephone or email 24/7

Tel 116 123 or

Email jo@samaritans.org

Calm: (For men) Contact via phone or visit their website

Tel 0800 58 58 58 5pm-12am

www.calmzone.net/help/get-help

The Silver Line: (For older people)

Tel 0800 4 70 80 90