

be suicide

ALERT

simple steps to save lives



We all have a role to play
in suicide prevention

If someone is contemplating suicide, they may:

- Talk about wanting to die
- Talk about feeling trapped, hopeless or being a burden to others
- Be stressed or anxious and seem to be not coping
- Appear careless, moody or withdrawn
- Have lost interest in their appearance
- Be misusing drugs and/or alcohol
- Give away prized possessions, or be putting their affairs in order for no obvious reason

Someone who has appeared stressed or distressed may appear calm and in control once they have made a suicide plan.

Sources of support

If someone is at immediate risk of suicide call 999 and don't leave them alone.

Encourage the person to contact their GP or call NHS24 Mental Health Hub anytime on 111

These free and confidential helpline services can also provide support for anyone who is struggling to cope:

Breathing Space - 0800 83 85 87 (Mon-Thurs 6pm-2am; Fri 6pm-Mon 6am)

Samaritans - 116 123 (24/7)

SHOUT text service – Text SHOUT to 85258 (24/7)

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide - 0300 111 5065 (Monday & Tuesday 9am—5pm). Contact the local coordinator on scottishborders@uksobs.org to find out more about local group support.

Childline – 0800 1111 (24/7)

Stay Alive App - Search for the Stay Alive App on [Apple](#) or [Android](#).

For information on looking after your own mental health and wellbeing and suicide prevention resources visit www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/wellbeingpoint



ASK if you think someone may be thinking about suicide.

You can use direct language, and the question won't put the idea into someone's head, if they aren't already thinking about it. People who have thoughts about suicide say that they felt a huge sense of relief, just at someone asking them the question "Are you thinking about suicide?"

LISTEN carefully to what the person is saying.

You don't need to try to make it better, tell them how important they are, or how much they have to live for. Just allowing someone to talk, and acknowledging their feelings will let them know that you care.

ENCOURAGE them to talk further.

Family, friends, their GP, a counsellor, telephone support services or someone else they trust are all potential sources of support. There are contact details for various organisations on the opposite page, or on the United to Prevent Suicide Lifelines card.

RIGHT NOW contact emergency services or a crisis line if you think someone has immediate suicide plans. *Don't leave someone alone if they have a plan and the means to carry it out.*

TALK to someone.

Supporting someone who is suicidal can be a difficult experience. You may need time and support to process your own emotions about it.

If you have a professional role, you may also need to consider your Adult Protection or Child Protection policy and procedures. You can talk to your manager without breaking confidentiality, if you're not sure whether you need to take action.

Do you want to:

- ☑ know more about suicide prevention?
- ☑ increase your confidence to talk about suicide?
- ☑ understand how to support someone who may be thinking about suicide?

Free training is available

Get in touch on health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk or 01835 825970 to find out more about free training available in the Scottish Borders.

The Art of Conversation - A Guide to talking, listening and reducing stigma surrounding suicide

The ALERT steps are taken from The Art of Conversation, a booklet produced by Health Scotland.

The Art of Conversation includes sections on myths about suicide, spotting the signs and listening skills, along with advice on starting difficult conversations and helping people to stay safe.

It can be downloaded free, in various languages, at:

[https://unitedtopreventsuicide.org.uk/
TheArtofConversation.pdf](https://unitedtopreventsuicide.org.uk/TheArtofConversation.pdf)

Take action

United to Prevent Suicide is a movement of people from all across Scotland, who believe that each and every one of us has a role to play in preventing suicide. Find out how you can get involved and pledge your support at:

www.unitedtopreventsuicide.org.uk

