



CASP CANADIAN ASSOCIATION
FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

ACPS ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE POUR
LA PRÉVENTION DU SUICIDE

I'm Concerned About Someone

What you can do when you're concerned

Never agree to keep thoughts of suicide a secret. Sometimes instinct tells us we have to break confidentiality. It's better to have someone alive and mad at you than dead by suicide and you feeling that you missed an opportunity to help them keep safe. We recommend treating this subject and the people involved with respect, dignity and compassion and don't keep it to yourself. Know who you can connect with as this work cannot be done alone. You may, as a helper, experience thoughts and feelings that are uncomfortable. It's OK to reach out.

Talking about suicide can provide tremendous relief and being a listener is the best intervention anyone can give. Talking about suicide will not cause suicide. When experiencing intense emotions, the person will not be able to problem solve. It is not your job to fix their problems. Listen, care, validate and be nonjudgmental.

Questions to Consider when you're concerned:

(The responses to the following questions will enable you to reflect back your concern to the person and/or communicate to a trained professional.)

- Are you thinking of suicide?
- Have you tried to end your life before?
- Have you been feeling left out or alone?
- Have you been feeling like you're a burden?
- Do you feel isolated and or disconnected?
- Are you experiencing the feeling of being trapped?
- Has someone close to you recently died by suicide?
- How are you thinking of ending your life?
- Do you have the means to do this (firearms, drugs, ropes)?
- Have you been drinking or taken any drugs or medications?
- How have you been sleeping?
- Are you feeling more anxious than usual?
- Who can we contact that you feel safe and/or comfortable with?



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For the helper:

- Are you noticing or have you noticed any dramatic mood changes?
- Changes in work behavior or school attendance/marks dropping?
- Does the person seem to be out of touch with reality?

What are Warning Signs?

Suicide prevention depends heavily on our ability to recognize people who are in distress and may be at risk. The American Association of Suicidology developed a simple tool that we can all use to remember the warning signs of suicide. This tool is called “**IS PATH WARM**” and outlines the key points to remember.

Suicide is preventable. Help is available. There is hope.
Know Suicide Warning Signs

I Ideation (Suicidal Thoughts)	P Purposelessness	W Withdrawal
S Substance Abuse	A Anxiety	A Anger
	T Trapped	R Recklessness
	H Hopelessness/Helplessness	M Mood changes

How to be Helpful When Someone is Suicidal

- Take all threats or attempts seriously
- Be aware and learn warning signs of suicide
- Be direct and ask if the person is thinking of suicide. If the answer is yes, ask if the person has a plan and what the timeline is.
- Be non-judgmental and empathic
- Do not minimize the feelings expressed by the person
- Do not be sworn to secrecy ...seek out the support of appropriate professionals
- Ask if there is anything you can do
- Draw on resources in the person’s network
- Do not use clichés or try to debate with the person
- In an acute crisis take the person to an emergency room or walk in clinic or call a mobile crisis service if one is available
- Do not leave them alone until help is provided
- Remove any obvious means e.g. firearms, drugs or sharp objects) from the immediate vicinity

Source: International Association of Suicide Prevention