



HERE FOR LIFE

PAPYRUS

are YOU WORRIED ABOUT someone?

Preventing young suicide - and keeping hope alive

0300 102 2470
HopeLine^{24/7}

It can be frightening to think that someone you care about might be thinking about suicide. You might feel unsure what to say, terrified of saying the wrong thing, or overwhelmed by the responsibility of keeping them safe.

If that's you, take a breath. You've already taken a brave step by picking up this guide. You're not expected to have all the answers. You don't have to fix everything. What matters most is that you're here, and that you care enough to look for help.

This guide will help you recognise the signs, talk about suicide safely, and find the right support for both of you. It will also show you how to look after yourself along the way.

Inside, you'll find small, steady steps – not quick fixes. Because suicide prevention isn't about saying the perfect thing. It's about being there, staying calm, and helping someone know that they're not alone and that there's still hope.

You're not alone in this. **HopeLine 24/7**, our free and confidential helpline, is here for anyone who's worried about a young person. You can contact us for advice, guidance, or simply a safe space to talk things through.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

We've included QR codes in this guide so you can find out more, watch short videos, resources or take the next step online.

How to scan a QR code:



Open the camera app on your phone

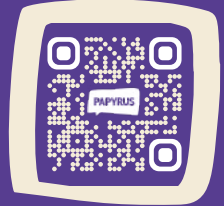


Hold it over the QR code until a link appears



Tap the link to go straight to the right page

It's as easy as taking a photo!



Or visit papyrus-uk.org/feeling-worried



HOPELINE 24/7



CALL
0300 102 2470

TEXT HOPE to
88247



EMAIL HOPE
pat@papyrus-uk.org

WEBCHAT
papyrus-uk.org





YOU'RE NOT ALONE

It's hard to describe the feeling that comes with worrying someone you love might be thinking about ending their life.

Whatever you're feeling, it's okay. You're responding to something painful and worrying. And you don't have to face it alone.

Reaching out for guidance is a strong, caring thing to do. And the truth is, you can make a difference. Simply by noticing, by asking, and by staying alongside them, you can help keep them safe while hope begins to grow again.

By being here, you're already part of their safety net. You don't need to be a professional to make an impact, you just need to show up with empathy, patience, and care.

Even when words feel impossible, presence matters. Sitting beside someone, sending a message, or asking a gentle question can save a life.

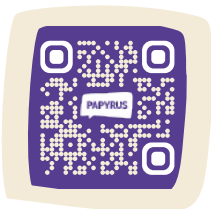
UNDERSTANDING SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

When a young person is having thoughts of suicide, it doesn't always mean they want to die, it often means they want their pain to stop. They might feel trapped, exhausted, or lost in a situation they can't see a way out of.

These thoughts can appear suddenly or build over time. They can affect anyone, regardless of age, background, or circumstance. And they can fluctuate, sometimes strong and overwhelming, other times quiet or hidden.

Suicidal thoughts are a signal of deep distress, not a reflection of who someone is. They might hide how they feel to protect others, to avoid judgement, or because they don't know how to ask for help.

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It can help to remember:

- Thoughts don't always lead to actions.
- Talking about suicide won't make things worse.
- Listening without judgement can help someone feel less alone and more able to stay safe.

You don't have to understand exactly why they feel this way. You just need to believe them and show them that their feelings matter.



SPOTTING THE SIGNS

Sometimes the signs are clear. Other times, they're subtle – easy to miss until you look back and join the dots.

There's no single sign that means someone is thinking about suicide, but there are clues to look out for, including:

CHANGES IN MOOD OR BEHAVIOUR

- Becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Showing sudden calmness after distress
- Expressing hopelessness or feeling trapped
- Talking or writing about death or wanting to disappear

CHANGES IN DAILY LIFE

- Losing interest in things they used to enjoy
- Struggling with work, school, or self-care
- Sleeping much more or less than usual
- Giving away possessions or saying goodbye

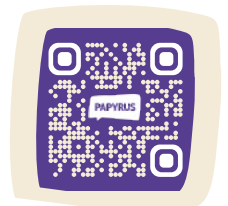
WORDS OR ACTIONS THAT RAISE CONCERN

- Saying things like "I can't do this anymore" or "Everyone would be better off without me"
- Searching online about suicide methods
- Self-harming or talking about self-harm

Trust your gut. If something feels off, even if you can't explain it, it's okay to reach out.

You can find more information and stories from people who noticed the signs early.

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HOW TO TALK ABOUT SUICIDE SAFELY

Many people worry that asking about suicide will “put the idea” in someone’s head. That’s a myth – asking directly can actually open up a conversation and help someone feel less alone. It can be one of the most powerful ways to save a life.

When you’re ready to talk, try to:

- **FIND** a quiet, safe and private space.
- **STAY** calm and patient, even if you feel emotional inside.
- **SPEAK** gently and clearly.
- Use **OPEN** questions.
- Avoid rushing to give advice or trying to “fix” things straight away.



WHAT YOU CAN SAY

If you're not sure where to start, you could say:

"I've noticed you don't seem yourself lately, and I'm worried about you, are you having thoughts of suicide?"

"Sometimes when people feel this low, they think about suicide. Have you been feeling like that?"

"It sounds like you're in a lot of pain. Are you thinking about ending your life?"

It is important to ask someone directly if they are experiencing thoughts of suicide. This signals that you are a safe person to talk to, reduces stigma around suicide and ensures there's no ambiguity about the topic so it can be discussed openly and safely.



If they say yes, take a breath. Thank them for being honest. Then say something like:

"I'm really glad you told me. You don't have to face this alone. We can find help together."

"Thank you for opening up to me. You're not alone in this. I'm here to listen."

If they say no, but you still feel worried, keep checking in. Let them know you'll always be there to talk.

WHAT TO AVOID



Try not to give "reasons to live" or tell them to look on the bright side, it can make them feel misunderstood.

Avoid minimising what they say ("You'll be fine" or "It's just a phase").

Don't promise to keep suicidal thoughts a secret. Their safety matters more than confidentiality.

Don't panic or react with shock, it can make them shut down.

Even if they're not ready to talk yet, your openness shows them you're a safe person to come back to.

CHECKING SAFETY

If someone shares they are having thoughts of suicide, it is important to check their immediate safety. Ask the person if they are currently safe from suicide. You can do this by saying something like:

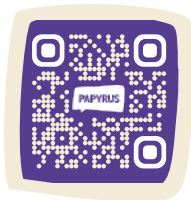
“Are you safe from acting on your thoughts of suicide at the moment?”

“Have you taken any steps to harm yourself or end your life?”

“Do you have a plan to act on your thoughts of suicide?”

If someone is about to attempt suicide or has already taken steps to harm themselves, act immediately. You won't make things worse by stepping in. You are taking the necessary steps to keep them safe.

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HERE'S WHAT TO DO:

- 1** Call 999 or go to your nearest A&E.
- 2** If you can, stay with them until help arrives.
- 3** Remove anything nearby that could cause harm, if it's safe to do so.
- 4** Stay calm and reassure them: “You're not in trouble. You're safe now.”
- 5** If you're not with them but know they're in danger, try to keep them talking while help is on the way unless this would create a barrier to them receiving support. If this is the case, work with them to secure their immediate safety and then end the call so emergency services can easily reach them.

IF THEY'RE NOT IN IMMEDIATE DANGER

If someone is having suicidal thoughts but isn't in immediate danger, your goal is to help them stay safe and connected.

You can:

- Encourage them to contact **HopeLine 24/7**, or call together.
- Help them build a Safety Plan to prepare for difficult moments.
- Encourage small, manageable steps – a walk, a meal, a message to a friend.
- Keep checking in – even if they don't reply.
- Avoid making promises you can't keep. Instead, say: "I'll only share what I need to, to help keep you safe."

BUILDING A SAFETY PLAN TOGETHER

A Suicide Safety Plan is a short, personal guide someone can use when suicidal thoughts feel stronger. The most effective plans are built together with a **HopeLine 24/7** adviser on the phone – we'll listen, ask gentle questions, and help shape clear steps that feel doable right now.

WHAT A PLAN CAN INCLUDE:

- Warning signs that thoughts are getting worse
- People and places that feel safe
- Distractions and coping ideas that calm things down
- Steps to take if risk increases
- Emergency contacts
- Reasons to stay safe
- How to keep the environment suicide safe





BEST FIRST STEP

Call Hopeline 24/7 and build the plan with us.

Call: **0300 102 2470**

Text: **HOPE** to **88247**

Email: **pat@papyrus-uk.org**

Webchat: **papyrus-uk.org**

If the young person isn't ready to call, you can call us as a concerned parent, friend, or colleague. We'll help you think it through and prepare, then, when they're ready, we can complete the plan with them on the phone.

You can also start or review a plan online.

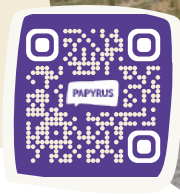
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KEEPING IT USEFUL:

- Keep the plan somewhere easy to reach (phone home screen, notes app, wallet)
- Share it with trusted people if that feels right
- Update it when things change

If you're supporting them, it can help to keep a copy, so you know what works when things feel difficult.



KEEPING THE CONVERSATION GOING

When someone has opened up, it's important not to let the conversation end there.

Keep showing up. Keep listening. Keep the door open.

YOU COULD TRY:

- Sending a simple text: "Thinking of you today. No pressure to reply."
- Checking in after appointments or stressful days.

- Encouraging structure – sleep, meals, time outdoors.
- Asking open questions: "How's your day been?" "What's been hardest this week?"

Even quiet, steady contact helps people feel connected and safe.

If you ever feel unsure what to say next, **HopeLine 24/7** can help you plan the conversation safely.



HOW HOPELINE 24/7 CAN HELP YOU

HopeLine 24/7 is for anyone who is:

- Under 35 and thinking about suicide,
- Worried about someone else, or
- Supporting a person who has suicidal thoughts.

When you contact us, you'll speak to trained advisers in suicide prevention.

They'll listen, support, and help you plan how to stay safe for now, or how to support someone else safely.

Call: 0300 102 2470

Text: HOPE to 88247

Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

Webchat: [papyrus-uk.org](https://www.papyrus-uk.org)

We also offer British Sign Language access and Language Line support in over 240 languages



LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF TOO



Supporting someone through suicidal thoughts can feel heavy and may come with a range of emotions. Whatever you're feeling it's completely normal.

You can't pour from an empty cup. Looking after your own wellbeing doesn't mean you care any less, it helps you stay steady for the person who needs you.

TRY TO:

- Talk about how you're feeling. **HopeLine 24/7** is here for you too.
- Take breaks. It's okay to step back and rest.
- Eat, sleep, and recharge when you can.
- Reach out to friends, family, or support groups.

You deserve support as much as the person you're helping. If it ever feels like too much, please reach out. You are not alone in this either.

PRACTICAL TOOLS & DIGITAL SUPPORT

Between conversations, you might find these free tools helpful for yourself or the person you're supporting, scan the QR code to find them.

HOPELINK

An online space to create and store a Suicide Safety Plan.

HOPEBOX

A digital or physical box to fill with comforting items, photos, or reminders of reasons to stay safe.

HOPEBOOK

A place to write down thoughts, goals, and things that bring hope.

APP LIBRARY

Safe, reviewed apps for mindfulness, sleep, and focus.

COPING STRATEGIES

DISTRACTION TECHNIQUES



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EDUCATION & TRAINING

Every person who learns how to talk about suicide helps make our communities safer.

Papyrus offers training for individuals, schools, workplaces, and professionals, including:

SPARK – Suicide Prevention Awareness, Resources and Knowledge

A 30-minute introduction to suicide prevention.

SPOT – Suicide Prevention Overview Training

A 90-minute session exploring suicide awareness and how we can all play a part.

SPEAK – Suicide Prevention Explore, Ask, Keep-Safe

A 3.5-hour interactive workshop teaching how to spot the signs and start conversations safely.

ASIST – Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

A two-day course helping participants recognise, understand, and respond to suicidal behaviour. (Not currently available in Scotland.)

SEASONS FOR GROWTH

An early-intervention grief education programme for children, young people, and adults experiencing loss or major change. It helps participants understand and cope with grief through peer support and reflection.

HOPEBOX

An interactive workshop that helps participants understand stress, emotions, and self-care, while learning how to create a personalised Hopebox using the five senses. We have tailored sessions for three different age groups: Primary, Secondary and 16+.

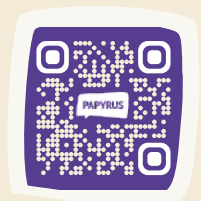
SINKING FEELING

A schools-based educational resource (England only) to assist with the teaching of mental health, emotional wellbeing, and suicide awareness to students from Y6 – Y13.

TO LEARN MORE OR BOOK A SESSION:

Email: training@papyrus-uk.org

Visit: papyrus-uk.org/training





IF YOU NEED SUPPORT NOW

If you're worried about someone, or you're struggling yourself, you don't have to face it alone.

If someone is in immediate danger:

- Call **999** or go to your nearest A&E.
- If you can, tell someone you trust and ask them to go with you.

If you're not in immediate danger but need support, contact our **HopeLine 24/7** advisers. They're here all day, every day.

Hold on. We're here 24/7.

Preventing young suicide.
Promoting hope.

Together, we can make every conversation count.

0300 102 2470
HopeLine24/7

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HopeLine24/7

If you are thinking about suicide or are concerned about a young person who may be, you can contact HopeLine24/7 for confidential support and practical advice.



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