



# Suicide Prevention

**Guidance for: Workers and Volunteers working with young people to prevent suicide**

This guidance is for anyone supporting people in Kirklees to help them feel more confident to talk to someone about suicide. It has been produced by the Public Mental Health team along with members from the Kirklees Suicide Prevention Action Group.



**How to support  
with mental health**

 **Kirklees**  
COUNCIL

## Key tips:



**DO** approach them - they will find it difficult to tell you without a prompt.



**DO** listen - building trust is the best way.



**DO** offer to talk about it, but don't insist.



**DO** respect boundaries - let them control the conversation.



**DON'T** assume you know.



**DON'T** try to make their problems smaller.



**DON'T** tell them it's just a phase.



**DON'T** panic!



**DON'T** add guilt - they will already be feeling bad enough.



## How can you help? Starting difficult conversations...

**Firstly; Ask open questions to encourage them to talk:**

- How are you feeling about...?
- Tell me about...?
- How did that make you feel at the time?
- Ask them directly about thoughts of suicide
- Break the silence around suicide, make it feel ok for young people to talk about suicide by using the word 'suicide'
- Make yourself approachable so the young person feels they can talk to you.
- If the person you are speaking with is verbalising intent to use a known lethal means to take their own life and has possession of such means, staff may have the opportunity to remove items from the person's possession. However, they may be apprehensive about doing so due to a lack of clarity in respect of what they can do legally in such situations.

**In order to help you navigate these difficult decisions and feel confident in defending your actions afterwards.**

**The Statement of Principle states:**

**It is lawful:**

To remove, with the individual's agreement, items the person may use to self-injure or risk death at some point.\*

To remove (without the individual's agreement) items staff reasonably believe the individual may use to self-injure or risk death; where staff believe there is an immediate risk of serious self-injury, death or risk to others and it is necessary and proportionate to remove the items to avoid potential catastrophic outcome.\*

*\*Where it is safe to do so if staff believe there is an immediate risk.*

**1) Listen! Show you are listening by repeating back what they've told you to check you understood them correctly.**

- Don't rush them. Give them time and space.
- Be patient - it can be difficult for young people to express what's going on.

**2) Reassure them and show your support.**

- Tell them you are there for them.
- Thank them for being honest and open about their thoughts.
- You might not be able to understand what they are experiencing, but you can reflect back that you hear what they're saying.
- Offer them your support and tell them you're there to help if they need it.
- It is normal to want to try and fix a young person's problems or give them advice. Try and let them make their own decisions but reassure them and show support.
- Are there things around the young person that make them feel unsafe? Do you need to speak to someone for some help?

**3) Getting the young person the help they need. Thoughts of suicide don't have to end in suicide.**

- Ask yourself is the young person willing to engage with support?
- Are there things around the young person that make them feel unsafe?
- Can you contact a family member or refer the young person to a service?





**Secondly, check that they know where to get help.**

**1. Useful questions you might ask them include:**

- What has helped you in the past?
- What didn't help or made things worse?
- Do you think about getting some help?
- Would you like me to come with you?

**2. If the young person feels they cannot stay safe, who can they tell? Questions at this point might be:**

- Who do you trust?
- Is there anyone who has helped or supported you in a positive way in the past in relation to a similar challenge you have faced?

**3. If you say something that appears to cause more upset, don't panic.**

**4. If the young person needs help, who can they ring? (Put a safety plan in place).**

**Useful questions you might ask them include:**

- Can you ring a friend?
- Can you ring a family member?
- You mentioned you could trust 'X' earlier, could you call them?
- Could you ring a helpline, using the signposting options at the end of this document?

**5. If a direct referral to a service is made or the young person is provided with signposting options for support, check back in with them to see if they have managed to engage with services and how they are finding the support.**

Online Harms is another area for consideration and with the average person in the UK spending over six hours online daily, digital platforms are in a unique position to help young people with suicide prevention.



### **Why might young people post or search for self-harm and suicide content?**

Some of the reasons that users may post, search for, or engage with self-harm and suicide content include:

Wanting to find out more about what they're feeling and experiencing

- Finding a place to speak openly without fear of judgement
- Reading stories or connecting with others with similar experiences
- Seeking a supportive online community where they can get peer support
- Finding support for themselves or someone they know
- Finding help materials or support options
- Raising awareness of self-harm or suicide prevention
- Accessing immediate support – this is particularly important for users in crisis or waiting to access support from health professionals

Young people may also stumble upon content by accident or engage with it for more harmful reasons, such as to find information about methods of harm.

It is therefore important to ask a young person the question about their use of online content and if they access any online content associated with suicide or self harm.



### **Risks associated with self-harm and suicide content online**

Whilst lots of self-harm and suicide related content can be extremely helpful for users and a part of their recovery, there are some risks associated with particular types of content:

**Promotion, encouragement or glorification of self-harm and suicide** – content that promotes or portrays self-harm and suicide in positive ways, whether intentionally or unintentionally, can be harmful for users by making the behaviours appear more appealing. Examples include portraying self-harm or suicide as effective ways to end distress and encouraging other users to try these behaviours.

**Sharing methods of harm** – can put users at increased risk. This includes sharing details or instructions around methods, suggested equipment or places to harm yourself, and comparisons of the effectiveness of different methods. Research suggests that when researching methods of suicide online, users are likely to find resources that instruct or encourage suicide, which can distract attention away from signposts to available support.





### High Risk

- Injury or overdose with risk to life
- Current situation felt to be unbearable / high distress
- Plans to act on suicidal thoughts may be detailed with time, location or method. Choosing a place where the plan is unlikely to be disrupted is a high-risk factor
- Self-harm increasing in frequency, severity or both
- Evidence of current, severe mental health problems.



### What to do

**A&E:** Call 999 if the person is at immediate risk

**CAMHS Crisis Line:** 01484 343763

8:00am - 8:00pm Mon - Sun 365 days a year

**NHS 111:** Select the mental health option (24hrs)

**Duty and Advice:** 01484 414 960 (24hrs)  
(for when you think a child is being abused or mistreated)

- Stay with young person until they are safe (make sure you are safe too)
- Contact Young person's parent or carer.

### Raised Risk

- Experiences frequent suicidal thoughts, but they come and go quickly
- Situation is felt to be painful, but not in immediate crisis
- No explicit plan or expressed immediate intent.



### What to do

**CAMHS Crisis Line:** 01484 343763

8:00am - 8:00pm Mon - Sun (365 days a year)

**Night Owls:** 0800 1488244

**Text:** 07984 376950

**Chat online:** [wynightowls.org.uk](http://wynightowls.org.uk)

from 8:00pm - 8:00am 365 days a year

- Encourage the young person to speak with their parents / carer, GP or social worker

Further signposting and support can be found at: [Mental Health Support](#)

### Low Risk

- Suicidal thoughts are infrequent and / or are dismissed quickly
- Current situation felt to be painful, but bearable
- No plan of how they could complete suicide
- Occasional or no self-harming with little injury
- No / few signs of depression (low mood, lack of motivation, loss of interest in everyday activities).



### What to do

Encourage young person to speak to parents / carer, GP, teacher or other trusted adult.

Encourage young person to register for **Kooth** by accessing [kooth.com](http://kooth.com) if the person would prefer support to do this an adult can support a young person to register and be present at any counselling sessions (if arranged).

Request support for the young person with **Kirklees Keep in Mind** further information: Kirklees Keep in Mind - Helping young people improve their mental health

**Families Together Gateway** gives you access to a wide range of services, information and advice for you and your family, including:

- One-to-one support
- Support with young people's emotional wellbeing and Mental Health

Telephone: 01484 456823

Website: [kirklees.gov.uk/families-together](http://kirklees.gov.uk/families-together)

Complete an online referral form [here](#).

**Invictus Wellbeing** provides crucial support to young people 11-25 with mild-moderate mental health concerns.

Invictus Wellbeing offer counselling, one-to-one support, signposting, groups, peer support and more through our central team in Huddersfield. Parents, Carers and Professionals can make an online referral via the website:

[Kirklees Social Prescribing 11-25 | Invictus Wellbeing](#)



