

5 Action Steps to Help Someone Having Thoughts of Suicide

Here are 5 steps you can take to #BeThe1To help someone who is having thoughts of suicide:

- ☐ ASK: “Are you thinking about suicide?” It’s not an easy question to ask, but it can help start a conversation. Studies show that asking people if they are suicidal does not increase suicidal behavior or thoughts.
- ☐ BE THERE: Listening without judgment is key to learning what the person is thinking and feeling. Research suggests acknowledging and talking about suicide may reduce suicidal thoughts.
- ☐ HELP KEEP THEM SAFE: Reducing access to highly lethal items or places can help prevent suicide. Asking the person if they have a plan and making lethal means less available or less deadly can help the person stay safe when suicidal thoughts arise.
- ☐ HELP THEM CONNECT: Connecting the person with the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (call 988) or LOCAL Guidance Center 24/7 Crisis Line (800) 542-1031 and other community resources can give them a safety net when they need it. You can also help them reach out to a trusted family member, friend, spiritual advisor, or mental health professional.
- ☐ FOLLOW UP: Staying in touch with the person after they have experienced a crisis or been discharged from care can make a difference. Studies show that supportive, ongoing contact can play an important role in suicide prevention.

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/site-info/citing-nimh-publications-and-webpages>