

SUICIDE

PREVENTION

Introduction



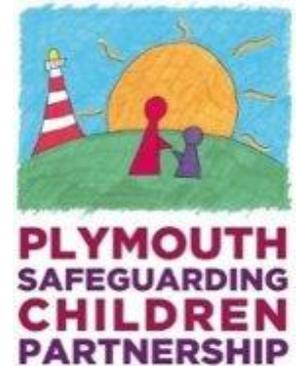
Sometimes people don't want to die but don't necessarily want to live in that moment

SELF-HARM AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

For people who work with adolescents



- We all have the potential to meet an adolescent in mental distress, who have self-harmed and/or has thoughts of suicide.
- This guide for gives you key information that will help you to:
 - ✓ Feel more confident talking about self-harm and suicide.
 - ✓ Know how to respond appropriately.
 - ✓ Understand when and how to seek further support.

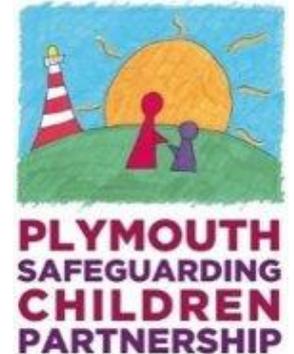


Your support, at the right time, could make a huge difference for that young person.



SELF-HARM AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

For people who work with adolescents



<https://plymouthscb.co.uk/self-harm-and-suicide-prevention/>



The Journey



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SUBJECT OF SUICIDE



Sensitive subject: dealing with distress

Booklets



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Warning signs



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We think it's important that we are able to identify when we may be struggling with our mental health.

In the initial workshops, young people discussed the different warning signs that they had experienced themselves or seen in friends.

In our group, we explored each of the signs and divided them into four types; physical, behavioural, emotional and speech.

WARNING SIGNS - HOW TO RECOGNISE IF YOU OR A FRIEND MIGHT BE STRUGGLING

PHYSICAL

- Panic attacks
- Having trouble sleeping
- Sleeping too much
- Body language
- Decline in self-care or personal hygiene
- Heart palpitations
- Stomach aches

BEHAVIOURAL

- Acting 'off'
- Lack of motivation
- Avoidance or pushing away friends
- Craving substances
- Increase in use of drink or drugs
- Clearing out or deleting social media accounts
- Eating less or more often
- Taking more risks
- Unsafe sex
- Planning a future without you / them in it
- Giving things away

SPEECH

- Saying goodbye in a way that seems final
- Talking about being trapped
- Talking about suicide or dying
- Expressing feeling worthless or saying that there is no hope or no point anymore
- Talking about being a burden and that no one would notice if they were gone

EMOTIONAL

- Changes in mood
- Appearing more sad
- Gut feeling
- Taking things more personally
- Feeling tired or disconnected
- Getting angry or upset more easily

Artificial Intelligence



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Many young people speak to chat bots such as My AI, Siri, or ChatGPT.

For some, it does provide level of support, but it's important to remember that AI can give misinformation, doesn't always give support numbers and is not always fact checked.

It would be more helpful to use it for ideas of distraction techniques for a wellbeing plan rather than in a moment of crisis. Check out page 20 for information on different organisations you can find online that can support you.



We felt that it was important to mention AI as it becomes more common in people's lives, but we didn't necessarily want to promote it's use. It's a balance between recognising that some people use it for mental health support and would feel attacked if we just dismissed it, and pointing out that it can be damaging at times.

Supporting a friend



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SUPPORTING A FRIEND

It can be hard to support others when you have your own stuff going on.

All of the young people involved in writing this booklet said that the best support they got was through talking.

At times you need to ask your friends difficult questions about how they are feeling and actions they might be thinking of taking. Remember talking about suicide doesn't lead to suicide.

At other times you may find it easier to be subtle and mask the 'talk' with an activity like walking the dog.

Either way, try not to jump in with your own stuff straight away.

Acknowledging or validating how someone is feeling can really help.

To do this, make it clear to the person that you are fully engaged with them and listening to what they are saying. You can do this by keeping eye contact and nodding as they are speaking.

Do you want
to talk to me or
someone else?

Would you
like to
talk?

Then respond sympathetically when they have finished opening up to you. Let them know that it is okay that they feel that way. By simply making it known that you care, you have shown them that their feelings are valued.

Finally, let them know you are there for them and reassure them that you are someone they can confide in without fear of judgement. Remember - you don't have to try and fix anything. By simply being a support system for them, you will help them feel more comfortable opening up and confronting their emotions.

If someone does speak out to you, make sure you also get support for yourself if you need it. Organisations that offer support can be found on page 20.

It's okay
to not
be okay

Dealing with loss



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WHAT TO DO IF YOU'VE LOST SOMEONE OR ARE IMPACTED BY SOMEONE'S SUICIDE?

Losing someone to suicide can bring up lots of confusing thoughts and emotions which can be difficult to make sense of. There are two key organisations you can reach out to should you need support.

Jeremiah's Journey is a safe place to tell the story of your grief, your way. They are a bereavement support charity that aims to ensure that children, young people, and their families/carers in Plymouth and the immediate surrounding area have support at a sad and difficult time. To reach out, please call 01752 424348 or email their bereavement services team via hello@jeremiahsjourney.org.uk

'Jeremiah's Journey have helped me so much by giving me a place to air my issues and showing me that grieving is not always the same, not selfish and although it won't go away, we can learn to accept the loss'

Pete's Dragons have a team of specialists dedicated to working with people bereaved by suicide in Devon. They know that losing a loved one is deeply upsetting and shocking for young people and the grieving process can be especially complex when the death was by suicide. They offer one-to-one support to help people navigate and make sense of their grief. This support offer is for anyone who has been impacted by suicide, regardless of how well you knew the person who died. Call 01395 277780 or email support@petesdragons.org.uk

'Pete's dragons have been amazing, they have really helped me'

There can be different ways to remember someone. You may like to talk about them or do some journalling. Creating a **memory box** can also be a good tool.

This doesn't have to be a physical thing, it could be a folder on your phone with pictures and notes you have written.



Try using the box below to think about what you loved about them and add in some words to describe them.



Warning signs

What are my warning signs? What makes me feel bad? What does this feel like?

Things I can do to keep myself safe

What works to help me cope with how I feel? Are there people, places or activities that help distract me?

MY WELLBEING PLAN

Things I should avoid doing when I feel low, worried or unsafe because they make me feel worse...

Things that give me hope – my reasons for living

These things, people and activities are important to me. I like having these things in my life.

Positive things that other people say about me

**A phrase or affirmation
you can repeat to
yourself**



**A distraction or calming
activity that works for
you**



**A person you trust and
can reach out to when
you need support**



**A calming place that
quietens your mind**



**An object that makes
you feel safe and calm
which can help ground
you**



**Anything else that helps
you**



What next...



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<https://plymouthscb.co.uk/sos-subject-of-suicide-dealing-with-distress/>



Activities



Activity 1

We would like you to spend some time thinking about how you can make sure the resources are available to young people that use your services? (If appropriate)

Activity 2

Page 14 in the booklet was inspired by the play 'Every Brilliant Thing'.

The play focuses on a list of brilliant things that a child creates for their parent in an attempt to ease their depression.

The page we created uses the concept of 'brilliant things' and encourages people to think about the things that make their lives joyful.

Have a chat with others on your table about what you all find brings you joy. You may find some inspiration from others or share a common interest.

THANK YOU

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