

## Services that could help

Knowing where to get help, especially in a crisis situation, can be pretty hard. Using a central database or contacting the services listed below can be a good place to start.

### Support service databases

- Jigsaw Community Services Database: [www.crisissupport.org.au/jigsaw](http://www.crisissupport.org.au/jigsaw)
- Lifeline Service Finder: [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)
- Service Seeker: [www.serviceseeker.com.au](http://www.serviceseeker.com.au)

## Ongoing support

### Local GP

Many local GPs have completed additional, specialised training in mental health. Their details can be found on [www.beyondblue.org.au/index.aspx?link\\_id=107.1007](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/index.aspx?link_id=107.1007) or call the beyondblue info line on 1300 22 46 36. GPs may also be able to refer to a psychologist under Medicare.

### Psychologists and counsellors

For counsellors, contact the Australian Counselling Association:

**T:** 1300 784 333 **W:** [www.theaca.net.au](http://www.theaca.net.au)

For psychologists, contact the Australian Psychological Society:

**T:** 1800 333 497 **W:** [www.psychology.org.au](http://www.psychology.org.au)



## 24-hour crisis support

### 24 hour telephone counselling services

#### Suicide Call Back Service

Professional crisis counselling and ongoing support for people at risk, caring for someone at risk, or bereaved by suicide.

**T:** 1300 659 467 **W:** [www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

#### Lifeline

Provides support and information for people experiencing personal or community crisis. **T:** 13 11 14 **W:** [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

#### MensLine Australia

Professional telephone support, information and referral especially for men. **T:** 1300 789 978 **W:** [www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)

#### Kids Helpline

Telephone and online counselling for young people aged 12-25.

**T:** 1800 55 1800 **W:** [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

#### National Hope Line

Support for those who have lost someone to suicide.

**T:** 1300 467 354 **W:** [www.suicideprevention.salvos.org.au/get-help](http://www.suicideprevention.salvos.org.au/get-help)

There may be other telephone counselling services specific to your location and issues. Check out one of the support services databases.

### Emergency services

- Emergency mental health services. Contact your local hospital and ask for the emergency psychiatric service (call directory assistance 1223).
- In the case of overdose call Poisons Information on 13 11 26 for assistance.
- If the person is at immediate risk or has already hurt themselves call emergency services on 000 for an ambulance.

## Carers' support

Supporting someone who is in crisis and potentially suicidal can be very stressful. It's really important to take care of yourself. Along with the services listed above, there are some specific services available for carers. To find out what's local to you, check out one of the support services databases.



LIFE Communications is a National Suicide Prevention Strategy project managed by Crisis Support Services on behalf of the Department of Health and Ageing.

# Suicide: Worried about someone?



**LIFE**  
[livingisforeveryone.com.au](http://livingisforeveryone.com.au)

The thought that someone you know and care about could be contemplating suicide can be quite confronting. While it may seem impossible to help them, there is actually a lot you can do.

Understanding a little more about suicide and the support services available in the community is a good step towards keeping them safe.

## Some common warning signs and risk factors

### Comments

- “I can’t take this anymore”
- “No one would care if I was gone”
- “I wish I could go to sleep and not wake up again”
- “No one can help me; it’s all hopeless and it always will be”
- Explicit talk of wanting to complete suicide, for example, “It’s useless, I just want to kill myself”

### Behaviours

- Giving away personal items (especially those that hold significant meaning)
- Risk taking that is out of character
- Acting impulsively
- Previous suicide attempts
- Unexplained consistent crying
- Over- or under-sleeping
- Social withdrawal
- Lack of interest in things they usually enjoy
- New or increased use of alcohol or other drugs

### Major life events

- Recent unemployment
- Relationship breakdown
- Mental illness (e.g. depression, schizophrenia, anxiety)
- Recent death of someone (including to suicide)
- Diagnosis of a chronic, especially terminal, illness
- Chronic physical pain

## Understanding suicide

A number of people will experience suicidal thoughts at least once during their lifetime – a common response to being in a crisis. People struggling with suicidal thoughts probably feel trapped, and in extremely intense emotional or psychological pain; this is sometimes referred to as ‘psychache’.

Suicide can appear to be a way to end this pain. Sometimes suicide may be the only option considered, but at other times it is one among many other options. Having the chance to explore and see that there are better alternatives to suicide can be the key to survival.

## So what can I do?

Try starting a conversation. Tell the person you’re concerned about them. If there are particular situations, behaviours, comments that have concerned you, mention a couple of examples.

By starting the conversation about suicide, you can help them realise that many people can feel this way when faced with a crisis, that there are many other options, and that their safety is most important.

People often worry that asking someone about their suicidal thoughts could influence them towards completing suicide - this is not the case. By talking about it together, you can figure out how to support them through the distressing feelings they are experiencing and seek out professional support.

To get a better idea of the person’s risk you could ask them the following questions:

**What:** Do you have a suicide plan?

**How:** Do you have access to the means?

**When:** Do you have a time set to complete suicide?

**Note:** This is a tough conversation. If you don’t feel you can talk to them about this, try to find someone who can. This could include contacting one of the services listed over the page. If after talking together you are still concerned, contact a professional service for immediate support.

## What now?

Encourage the person to get some professional help. Ask them to contact a professional support service by themselves if they can, and offer to attend an appointment with them.

**Remember:** Never agree to keep someone’s suicidal thoughts a secret. Make sure you talk to a professional about what you’ve learned, especially if the person is unwilling to seek their own help. If you continue to be concerned about the person and they’re unwilling to get professional help, speak to your local psychiatric emergency service.

This is a particularly difficult and stressful time for anyone personally involved so it’s important to get support and take care of yourself. For professional support during this time (or any time later) speak to one of the services listed over the page.

