



Suicide Prevention: Every Conversation Can Make a Difference

Suicide can be a difficult subject to talk about. We may worry about saying the wrong thing, making matters worse, or simply not knowing what to do.

But conversations matter.

Reaching out, listening without judgement and showing genuine care can help someone feel less alone. Sometimes, knowing that another person has noticed and is willing to listen can be an important first step towards getting support.

Recognising When Someone May Be Struggling

There is no single sign that someone may be experiencing suicidal thoughts, and people respond to difficult circumstances in very different ways.

However, changes in someone's behaviour or mood may sometimes indicate that they are struggling. These could include:

- Becoming increasingly withdrawn or isolated
- Appearing persistently low, anxious, distressed or overwhelmed
- Talking about feeling hopeless, trapped or like a burden
- Losing interest in things they previously enjoyed
- Significant changes in sleep, appetite or usual routines

- Increased use of alcohol or other substances
- Giving away possessions or unexpectedly saying goodbye
- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide

Not everyone displaying these behaviours will be suicidal, but significant changes can be a reason to check in and ask how someone is doing.

Starting a Conversation

You don't need to be a mental health professional to reach out to somebody you are worried about.

A simple conversation might begin with:

- "You don't seem yourself lately. How are you doing?"
- "I've noticed you've been having a difficult time. Would you like to talk?"
- "I'm here if you need someone to listen."
- "You don't have to deal with everything on your own."

Give the person time to speak. Try to listen without judgement and avoid immediately trying to fix the situation or telling them what they "should" do.

Sometimes being genuinely heard is exactly what somebody needs.

It's Okay to Ask About Suicide

If you are genuinely concerned that someone may be thinking about suicide, it is okay to ask them directly.

Asking about suicide does not put the idea into someone's mind. Instead, asking calmly and compassionately can give them an opportunity to talk honestly about what they are experiencing.

If someone tells you they are thinking about suicide, take them seriously. Encourage them to access appropriate professional support and, if you believe they are in immediate danger, seek emergency help.

If You Are Struggling Yourself

Sometimes, you may be the person who needs someone to listen.

You don't need to wait until things become overwhelming before reaching out. Difficulties with work, relationships, bereavement, finances, family life, stress, anxiety, low mood or other personal pressures can gradually build up.

Your Tenant Support & Wellbeing Service (TSWS) is available to provide confidential emotional and practical support.

Making the first call can sometimes feel difficult. You don't need to know exactly what to say, have everything worked out or even know what kind of support you need.

Starting the conversation is enough.

This is Not an Emergency Service

The TSWS can provide confidential support when you are experiencing emotional, personal or practical difficulties. However, the TSWS is not an emergency or crisis response service.

If you or somebody else is in immediate danger, has seriously harmed themselves, or you believe there is an immediate risk to life, call 999 or go to your nearest A&E department.

If you need urgent mental health support in England, you can call **NHS 111** and select the mental health option.

Supporting Someone Doesn't Mean Having All the Answers

If somebody confides in you, you are not expected to become their counsellor or take responsibility for solving everything they are experiencing.

Often, the most helpful things you can do are:

- Notice when something doesn't seem right
- Ask how they are feeling
- Listen and take them seriously
- Encourage them to seek appropriate support
- Act if you believe there is an immediate risk to their safety

Supporting somebody who is struggling can also affect your own wellbeing. The TSWS is available for you too, including when you need to talk about the impact of supporting someone else.

Breaking the Silence

Suicide prevention isn't only about responding when somebody reaches crisis point. It's also about creating a culture where people feel able to say when they are struggling and know that asking for help is acceptable.

A conversation with a colleague, friend or family member might feel like a small gesture, but to somebody going through an incredibly difficult time, it could make a significant difference.

Reach out. Listen without judgement. Take people seriously. Encourage support.

And remember, whether you're worried about somebody else or struggling yourself, you don't have to deal with it alone.

Your Tenant Support & Wellbeing Service (TSWS) is there to listen and support you.

Life & Progress

Call us today in confidence

Freephone **0330 094 8845**

Website **www.tenantcare.co.uk**