

A photograph of two young women with long dark hair hugging each other. The woman on the right is smiling broadly, showing her teeth. The woman on the left is smiling more subtly. They are wearing casual clothing. The background is a teal color with a subtle, swirling pattern. In the top right corner, the text "SEE YOU TOMORROW EH!" is written in a white, hand-drawn, sans-serif font.

SEE YOU
TOMORROW
EH!

no one wants to lose a whanaunga



Tiaki Ora Protecting Life

PURPOSE



The purpose of this information is to support members of the public to provide general help to people who may be at risk of suicide. Any public member can assist a person until appropriate professional help is received or the crisis resolves. This information is based on expert opinions of professionals who have knowledge of, and experience in mental health and suicide prevention.

Caution Note:

This information does not replace professional expertise or help - if you are concerned you must contact local mental health services or the Police immediately.

Each person is unique and it is important to tailor your support to the person's needs. People are diverse and not all the same. Therefore, the guidelines enclosed in this information may not entirely be appropriate for every person who has suicidal thoughts and intentions.

If you are concerned about a person in your whānau or that you know, ask yourself the following questions.

Have they shown or shared any of the following:

1. Talking about wanting to die, be dead, or about suicide, or are they causing self-harm to themselves?
2. Feeling like things may never get better, seeming like they are in terrible emotional pain (like something is wrong deep inside but they can't make it go away), or they are struggling to deal with a big loss in their life?
3. Or is your gut telling you to be worried because they have withdrawn from everyone and everything, have become more worried or on edge, seem unusually angry, or just don't seem normal to you? Have you noticed the signs?



HOW CAN I TELL
if someone is feeling suicidal?

One way to tell if someone is suicidal is to ASK THEM. Never ignore a person's expressions of suicide, if you think that someone might be having suicidal thoughts, you should act immediately.

SIGNS A PERSON MAY BE SUICIDAL

Risk Factors	Warning Signs	Tipping Point	Imminent Risk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person is disconnected from their whānau • Person is insecure with their cultural identity • Whānau history of suicide • Alcohol and other drug abuse • Social isolation • Prior suicide attempt • Mental health issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking or writing about dying or suicide • Feeling pouiri sad • Feeling hopeless or worthless • Increasing use of alcohol and drugs • Mood changes • Withdrawing from friends, whānau or community • No sense of purpose • Uncharacteristic behaviours • Taking unnecessary risks without thinking • Impaired judgement • Giving away prized possessions • Untreated depression • Sudden happiness or calm following depressed mood • Extreme anger or rage • Agitation • Sleeping all the time or unable to sleep at all • Tidying up affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship problems (personal, whānau, work, school) • Relationship break ups • Death of a close relationship • Argument at home • Being bullied or abused • Loss of mana status • Inappropriate media reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person has threatened to kill themselves • Person has intention to die • Person has a plan • Person is impulsive • Person is aggressive • Person is looking for ways to kill themselves by seeking access to rope, weapons, vehicle or other means • Person is displaying anti-social behaviour

What shall I do if I see those signs?



- Talk with the person.
- ASK THEM how they are feeling. Tell them they may feel better once they have talked to someone about their problems.
- ASK THEM are you feeling suicidal?
- Do not be afraid about using the word suicide. Talking about suicide will not make a person do it.
- ASK: Do you have a plan to end your life?
- If the person says yes or suggests that they are suicidal, you must take them seriously. Even if the person says only vague suicidal ideas such as “I can’t be bothered carrying on” it is important to find out whether they have definite plans or intentions to take their life. To do this you need to ASK THEM.
- DO NOT keep plans or discussions about suicide a secret.
- UNDERSTAND the threat of suicide may indicate that the person is trying to communicate just how badly they feel. It is important you do not argue, or get angry with the person or make fun of their situation or dare them to ‘go and do it’. You need to keep as calm as possible. Do not place negative judgements upon the person, about their thoughts, feelings or their intentions. Allow the person to share their feelings and their reasons for wanting to die and recognise the person’s courage in talking about their feelings.





How can I tell if the situation is serious?

- **UNDERSTAND** It is not always easy to tell how serious the situation is. Be aware that the person may not admit entirely to having suicidal feelings or thoughts because of a sense of whakamā (shame), guilt or for other reasons.
- Be aware the person may not have a plan to take their life, as sometimes suicide can occur by the person acting impulsively. In most situations, people do not want to die, they want to end the emotional pain they are feeling.
- **UNDERSTAND** risks of someone thinking about suicide may increase if:
 - The person has had a relationship breakdown recently
 - The person is isolated
 - The person is using alcohol or and drugs
 - The person is intoxicated
 - The person has experienced significant loss
 - The person knows someone who has died by suicide
 - The person has made a suicide attempt in the past.

In any of these situations, even if the person is intoxicated, take the person seriously.

What can
I do to keep
the person
safe?

Provide manaakitanga (comfort to the person, sit with the person, make them a drink tea, coffee, milo, water and offer your time and support.

If you can, **stay with the person** and without judgement encourage them to work out ways of dealing with their problems. Focus on the person's strengths, find out if there are close whānau, friends, kaumātua, kuia, ministers that may've helped in the past, and would be beneficial for them now whilst they are working through their issues.

Encourage them to get help, offer 24-hour safety contacts in case they feel unable to continue.

Whānau, should you need help a list of helplines and support groups that you can contact has been provided below.

If this is an emergency – if you feel you or someone else is at risk of harm:

- **phone 111 now OR**
- **go to your nearest hospital emergency department OR**
- **phone your local mental health crisis team, contact numbers can be found here at Healthline 0800 611 116.**

If you are feeling suicidal, are concerned about a family member or friend, or know someone who needs help, please note that we don't provide counselling or direct support services. Whānau, should you need help a list of helplines and support groups that you can contact has been provided below:

- **Helpline Free call or text us for 24/7**
- Text 1737
- **Healthline** - 0800 611 116
- **Youthline** - 0800 376 633 or free text 234 or e-mail talk@youthline.co.nz
- **Rainbow Youth** - 09 376 4155
- **Depression Helpline** - 0800 111 757 or www.depression.org.nz
- **Kidsline** - 0800 54 37 54 (aimed at children up to 14 years of age; 4 pm to 6 pm weekdays)
- **Child Helpline** - 0800 366 694 (aimed at children from 5 - 18 years of age; 9am - 7pm daily)
- **What's Up** - 0800 942 8787 (for 5-18 year olds; 1 pm to 11 pm) or www.whatsup.co.nz (7pm - 10pm)
- **Rural Support Trust** - 0800 787 254
- **Alcohol Drug Helpline** - 0800 787 797 or free text 8691
- **Samaritans** - 0800 726 666 (for callers from the Lower North Island, Christchurch and West Coast) or 0800 211 211 (for callers from all other regions)
- **Casper** - 0508 227 737 (Community Action on Suicide Prevention Education and Research)
- **OUTLine NZ** - 0800 688 5463 (This provides confidential telephone support for sexuality or gender identity issues)
- **The Lowdown** - www.thelowdown.co.nz or free text 5626 or email team@thelowdown.co.nz (e-mails and text messages will be responded to between 12 noon and 12 midnight).

You could also talk to your General Practitioner (GP), local health professional or someone you trust.



A person who is actively suicidal must not be left alone.

During a Crisis

- Do not place yourself at risk of harm
- If the person has in their possession the means to end their life and they do not hand it over, then emergency professional help is needed immediately.
- If the person takes off, and they have said they will kill themselves, contact Police.
- If there is a weapon, then ensure your safety and that of others is paramount, contact Police.
- Even if the person refuses to involve someone else, you must ensure that the person gets help from an appropriate professional or someone in their community until the crisis resolves.
- Once help is sought, plan with the person the activities you can do together to keep the person calm and safe until help arrives.

After the Crisis

- Encourage the person to continue to receive professional help, and to problem solve once the crisis has passed.
- Continue to support the person.
- Do not make promises you cannot keep.
- Find someone to talk to about your experiences as the helper in this situation, and to ensure you look after yourself as well.

A photograph of two young women with long dark hair, wearing dark jackets, crouching on a sandy beach. They are focused on building a sandcastle together, with their hands in the sand. The background is a blurred beach scene.

Whakakaha
te tūāpapa

STRENGTHEN THE
FOUNDATIONS

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