

5 Action Steps For Starting A Conversation On Suicide Prevention

Starting a conversation with a friend or family member about getting help can be challenging. It's important to remember that communicating your support for suicide prevention can make all the difference. These five action steps are supported by evidence in the field of suicide prevention.

Ask: Research shows people who are having thoughts of suicide feel relief when someone asks them in a caring way. Ask open-ended questions, meaning the person has to reply with more than a “yes” or “no.” Additionally, findings suggest acknowledging and discussing suicide may reduce rather than increase suicidal ideation.

Be There: Individuals are more likely to feel less depressed, less suicidal, less overwhelmed, and more hopeful after speaking to someone who listens without judgment. This can look like repeating back what you heard during your conversation and also thanking them for being willing to speak with you.

Keep Them Safe: Determine if they have a detailed plan and what access they have to their planned method. Once you know these answers, you can determine the severity of the danger the person is in and seek help accordingly. The 988 Lifeline is always available if you aren't sure what to do next.

Help Them Stay Connected: Helping someone at risk create a network of resources and individuals for support and safety can help them take positive action and reduce feelings of hopelessness. Supports can include resources such as the 988 Lifeline and setting up an appointment with a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic like Seven Counties Services.

Follow Up: Brief, low-cost intervention and supportive, ongoing contact can be an essential part of suicide prevention. This is especially true for individuals after they have been discharged from hospitals or care services. To follow up with someone, consider calling or texting them to see how they're doing and if there is anything you are capable of helping them with.

Talking about suicide prevention takes a lot of courage, and Seven Counties Services is here to help! To schedule an appointment, call (502) 589-1100 or complete an online appointment request. If someone is in immediate danger, such as having thoughts of self-harm or suicide, call emergency services (911) or the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline immediately.



Seven Counties Services