

Supporting a Loved One Who is Thinking About Suicide

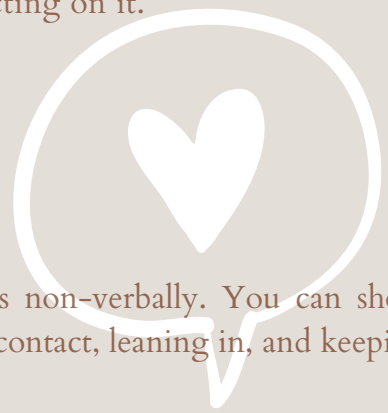
"Nobody has ever measured, even poets, how much the heart can hold."
Zelda Fitzgerald



Ask

Openly talking about suicide gives your loved one the opportunity and option to talk about their thoughts and work through the issues that trigger thoughts of suicide. Directly asking them if they are having thoughts of suicide reduces the risk of acting on it.

Be Supportive



Body Language – the majority of the way we communicate is non-verbally. You can show interest and support by stopping what you are doing, keeping eye contact, leaning in, and keeping arms uncrossed.

Validate – You can show you understand where they are coming from by reflecting back the feeling(s) they are experiencing. Validating is not agreeing. It just shows you understand their experience.

(i.e. "You feel sad about the loss of your brother", "You are feeling desperate to have relief from the pain.")

When to Call 911



If they are expressing an intent to act on their suicidal thoughts, and especially if they have the ability to act on it, then going to the hospital or calling 911 is essential. If you aren't sure, that's ok. You can call a crisis line to help.



Get Support for Yourself

You don't have to take it all on yourself! There are professionals trained in supporting people who are thinking about suicide and their families. Call a crisis line and consider accessing counselling for yourself.

After a Suicide Crisis

Now your loved one has accessed help (e.g. hospital, crisis resource) and is back home. They will have created a plan of ways to keep safe to prevent acting on thoughts of suicide in the future (e.g. who to talk to, strategies and possibly counselling). You can continue to support them by checking in with them and encouraging them to follow up on their safety plan.

24/7 Crisis Resources

Thunder Bay Crisis Response	807-346-8282
Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Center (Hospital ER)	807-684-6000
Kids Help Phone (up to age 20)	1-800-668-6868
Crisis Text	Text HOME to 686868
Talk 4 Healing – for Indigenous Women in Northern Ont.	1-855-544-HEAL (4325)
Beendigen Crisis Line for Women	1-888-200-9997
Sexual Abuse Crisis Line	807-344-4502

Write down the Contacts for Crisis Services in your Community:

Find out more at kellymentalhealth.com