



Helping a loved one who's thinking of suicide

If someone you know is considering suicide, there are things you can do to help prevent it. Intervention is not easy, but having the strong support of family and friends could change the mind of a person on the brink of suicide.



Understanding the situation

Typically, people who think of suicide are exhausted, in pain — physical, emotional, and mental — and have lost hope things could change for the better. Many believe no one will help them, and they're overwhelmed with negative thoughts. Most people who try to take their own life do not want to die, just end their pain and depression. Suicide may also be an impulsive choice while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

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How you can help

Tell your friend or family member you care and want to assist them in finding help. Take the threat of suicide seriously. Here are suggestions on how you can intervene:

- Encourage them to talk openly.
- Accept them and listen without judgment.
- Don't ask too many questions or analyze the situation.
- Validate their experience.
- Stress that the situation is not a cause for shame.
- Do not offer advice on specific problems.
- Be positive, even if they say there's nothing you can do.
- Offer to enlist support from others.
- Point out places where they can find help and offer to go with them.
- Buy time and stay calm.



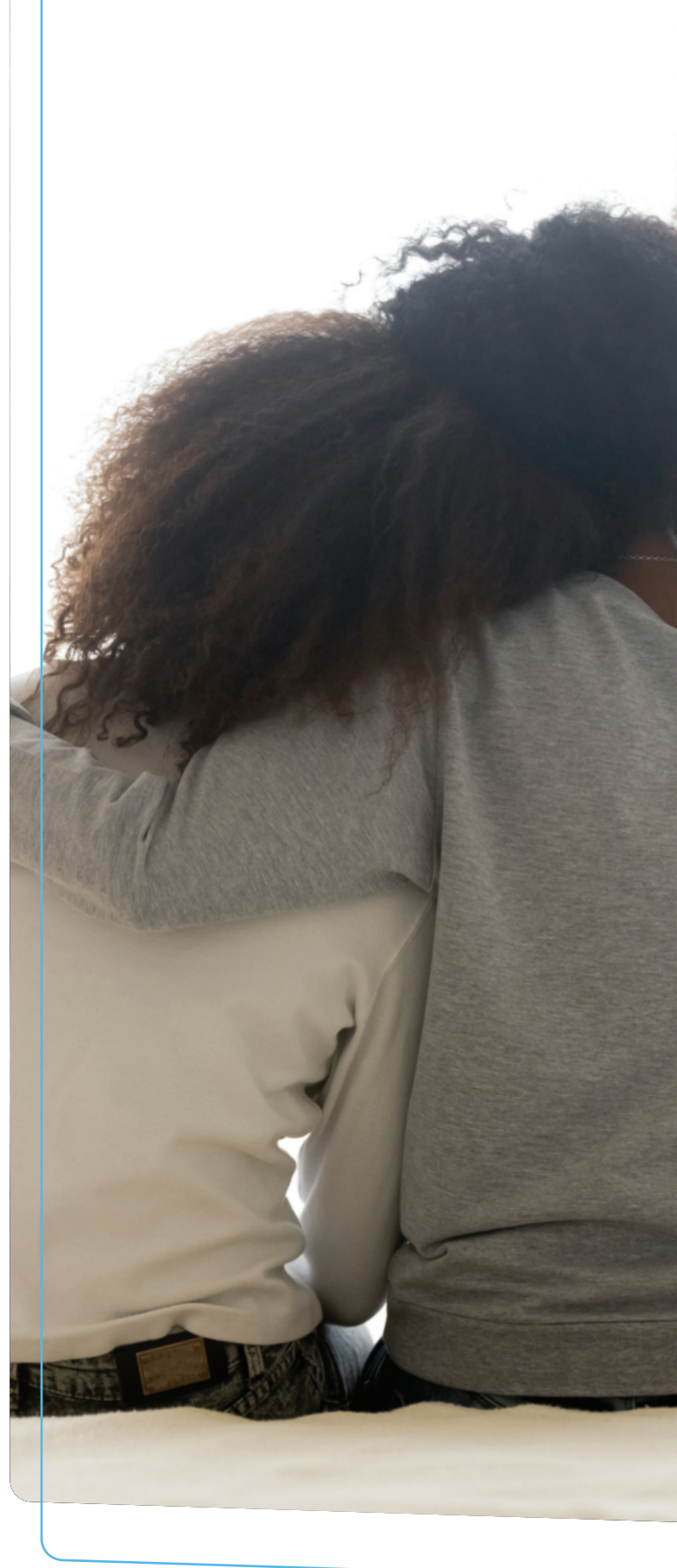
Choose your words with care

Whatever you do, do not say:

- You will get over it.
- It is not as bad as you think. Here is what you should do.
- How could you do something like this?
- Do you know how much this will hurt your family?

If suicide is an immediate threat, call a doctor or suicide line, or take the person to an ER — or do all three. Most of all, do not give up trying. Be prepared to stay with the person at risk or stay in touch with them until the threat of suicide has passed. Be part of their support system and help them find hope and a reason to live.

If you or anyone you know is in crisis and need help immediately, call **988** any time. This is a 24/7 suicide prevention lifeline available to anyone for free. All calls are confidential.



Source:
Beacon Health Options website: *Suicide Prevention* (accessed March 2021); [achievesolutions.net](https://www.achievesolutions.net).

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