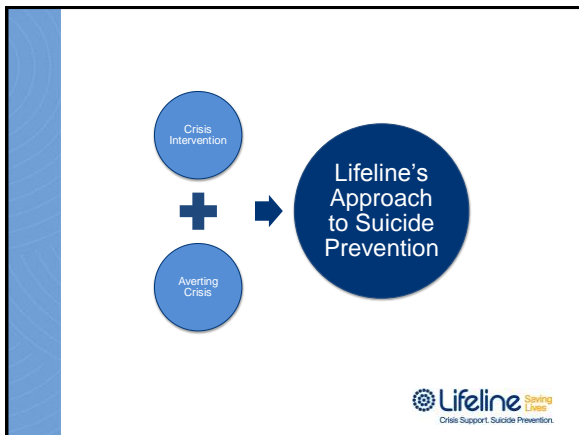


Young people and crisis

- In 2013, 348 people aged 15-24 years died by suicide
- Suicide is the leading cause of death in young people, accounting for 29.6% of deaths
- Triggers often involve an overwhelming stressful event or series of events for the young person – **a crisis**
- For example: death of an important person, abuse, bullying, a sense of failure at school/work, relationship issues (particularly break-ups), family problems, discrimination, recent suicide of an important person, work/school stresses, isolation, diagnosed or undiagnosed mental illness

Lifeline Saving Lives
Crisis Support, Suicide Prevention.



Assessing for Suicide in Young People

Signs to watch out for:

- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide
- Threatening to hurt or kill themselves
- Planning for suicide
- Seeking access to things they can kill themselves with
- Saying things like:
 - "I wish I were dead"
 - "Everyone will be better off without me"
 - "I can't take it anymore"
 - "I give up, there's no point"
- Dramatic change in mood
- Emotional outbursts
- Sad, unhappy, crying
- Rage, angry, seeking revenge
- Feeling hopeless & worthless
- Feel they have no future/ trapped
- Feeling lonely and isolated
- Withdrawing from family & friends
- Stop doing things they enjoy
- Risky or reckless behaviour
- Relying on alcohol & drugs

Lifeline Saving Lives
Crisis Support, Suicide Prevention.

Assessing for Suicide in Young People

Ask directly about suicide

- Are you thinking of killing yourself? Have you been thinking about suicide?
- Sometimes when people go through things like this, they start thinking about suicide. Are you having thoughts about suicide?

Checking for a suicide plan

- Have you decided how you would kill yourself?
- Have you decided when you would do it?
- Have you taken any steps to get the things you need to carry out your plan?

Remember that not having a plan for suicide does not guarantee safety. Take ALL talk of suicide seriously.

Other considerations

- Have you ever tried to kill yourself before?
- Have you been using alcohol or other drugs?

Lifeline Saving Lives
Crisis Support, Suicide Prevention.

Assisting a Young Person to Stay Safe

Communication

- Tell the young person that you care, and want to help
- **Narrative approach- spend time hearing their story**
- Tell them thoughts of suicide are common, and do not need to be acted on.
- Explain that there is help available
- Avoid "cliché" statements e.g. "everything will be ok", "keep busy", "you'll feel differently tomorrow"
- Avoid minimising their feelings or experience

Developing a Safety Plan

- Disable any plan (remove access)
- Minimise alcohol or substance use
- Ensure they are not left alone
- Encourage coping strategies & strengths

Lifeline Saving Lives
Crisis Support, Suicide Prevention.

Assisting a Young Person to Stay Safe

Linking to Other Supports

- Work through any barriers to getting help
- Consider both professional and informal supports
- Professional: e.g. GP, psychologist, counsellor, Headspace
- Informal: Friends, family, school, sport groups etc.
- Ask about supports used in the past that has helped
- Explain the options of supports e.g. in person, telephone, online
- Involve the young person in decisions about supports that would help
- Ensure the young person has crisis telephone contacts, such as Kids Helpline, Suicide Call Back Service or Lifeline

- **If risk is immediate:**

Phone Emergency 000 or take the person to a Hospital Emergency Dept.



Crisis Intervention Framework (Kalafat, 2002)

Establish Rapport

Define the problem

Acknowledge feelings

Explore Past Coping

Explore Alternatives



For 24/7 Crisis Support, talk to us

