



National  
**Suicide Prevention**  
Alliance

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# Responding to suicidal content online

Best-practice guidelines

## About this guide

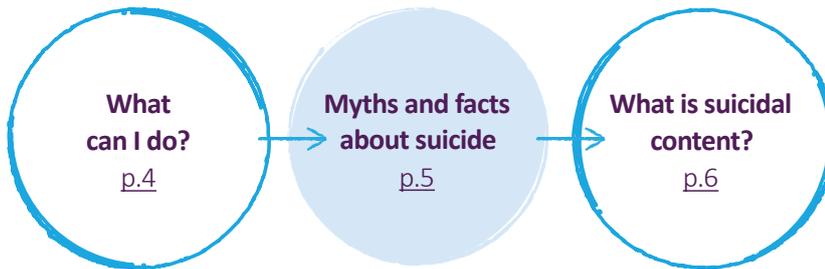
Safe and supportive online spaces provide an opportunity for people to talk about suicidal feelings openly and without stigma, and to get help and support. The right response, at the right time, can be lifesaving.

This guide sets out a recommended best-practice approach to responding to suicidal posts online. It is designed for community managers, moderators or individuals running or facilitating a community online for adults in England and Wales, and will help you provide a safe and supportive response to someone in crisis online. The guide can be used by any online community, including bespoke communities, forums and those based on social media. The approach can be applied in communities of all types and sizes, regardless of topic or whether their principal aim is to provide emotional support.

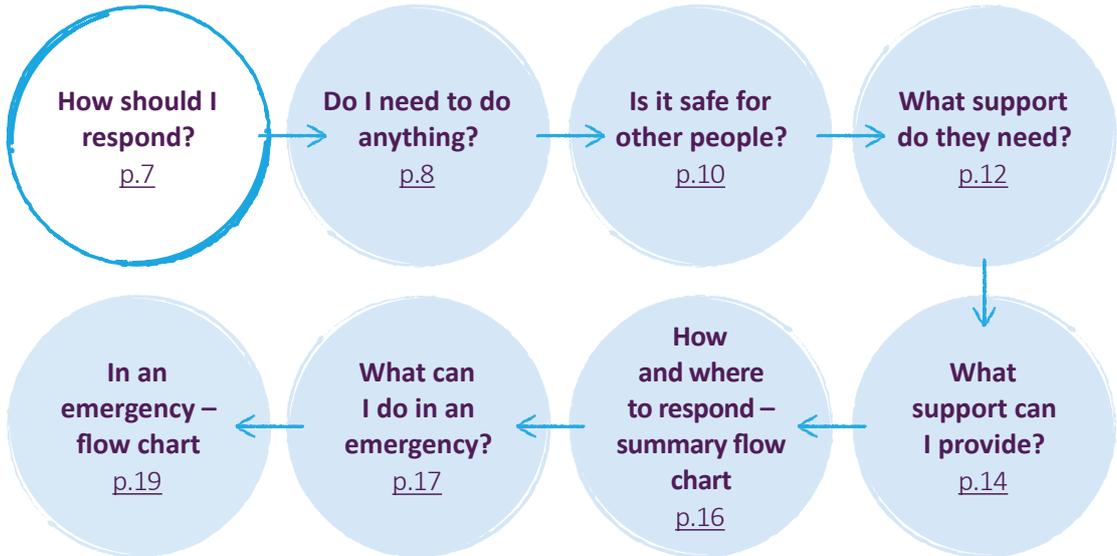
This document has been developed through consultation with leading experts in online communities, mental health and suicide, as well as community members with experience of seeking support for suicidal feelings online. For a full list of collaborators, see [Thanks and acknowledgments](#) at the end of the document.

# Contents

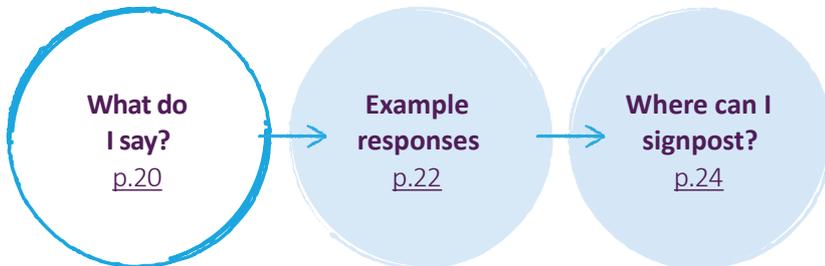
Before you start



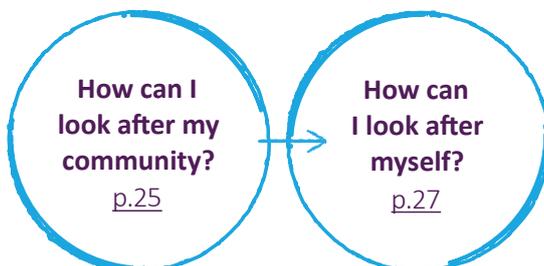
Deciding how to respond



Writing your response



After you've responded



In the long term



# 1: What can I do?

It can be worrying if you see a post about suicidal feelings in your community, and you may feel that you don't know what to do. But you can help.

Before you start, take some time to read through this guide so that you can provide a safe and supportive response.

What you can do	
<b>You can help.</b>	Everyone can provide a safe and supportive response to suicidal content.
<b>Remove unsafe content.</b>	Keep online spaces safe by removing unsafe content.
<b>Make sure everyone gets a response.</b>	Everyone talking about suicidal feelings should get a response – from you or your community.
<b>Listen and validate.</b>	Let people explain in their own words, listen without judgement and let them know you care.
<b>Empathise.</b>	This person is really struggling and they need your help. Treat the person with empathy, compassion and respect.
<b>Encourage the person to get help.</b>	If someone needs more help, encourage the person to get support and let them know what is available.
<b>Look after your community.</b>	Your community may find conversations about suicide difficult, so it's important you look after your members as well.
<b>Develop long-term policies for your community.</b>	Develop and put in place long-term policies that work for your community, based on your community and the resources you have available.



**EmmyD**

I've been really struggling recently, and it's just getting worse. Some days I just don't want to be around anymore. I'm scared I might do something stupid. Help?



**Moderator**

Hi EmmyD, I'm so sorry you've been struggling. If you're having suicidal thoughts, you might find it helpful to have a look at [Mind's information](#) and ideas of where to get help. Samaritans are great if you'd like to talk to someone, and available 24/7. If you're scared about hurting yourself, you need to get professional help. Please phone NHS 111, contact your GP, ring 999 or go to A&E. Take care.



**EmmyD**

Thank you. I feel so much better knowing that someone cares. I don't think I'll do anything to hurt myself – I just feel so hopeless sometimes. Sorry if I worried you.

# Myths and facts about suicide

Read these myths and facts about suicide before you respond. This will help you understand more about suicidal feelings and how you can help.

Myths	Facts
<b>We shouldn't talk about suicide.</b>	For many people, talking about suicidal feelings is a huge source of support. It can help someone express and understand their feelings better, get support, and start to explore how to move forward.
<b>Talking about suicide encourages people to do it.</b>	Talking about suicide in a safe and supportive way actually helps to reduce the risk of suicide.
<b>We can talk about suicide in any way we want.</b>	There are safe and unsafe ways to talk about suicide. We need to make sure conversations about suicide are kept safe and that unsafe content is removed from public spaces.
<b>People who talk about suicide online are just attention-seeking.</b>	Talking about suicide is not attention-seeking – it is a way of seeking help. Many people who go on to take their lives reach out for help first.
<b>People who think about suicide are weak or selfish.</b>	Many people experience suicidal feelings at some point in their lives, often as a reaction to extreme pain or difficult circumstances, such as bereavement or trauma. This has nothing to do with being strong.
<b>If someone wants to end their life, they will and there's nothing anyone can do.</b>	With the right help and support, many people recover from suicidal feelings.
<b>Everyone who experiences suicidal feelings wants to end their life.</b>	Some people who are suicidal may not actually want to end their life. They may just want their pain to stop, and be unable to see another way out.
<b>If someone is feeling suicidal, they will always feel this way.</b>	Suicidal thoughts are often temporary and can change over time.
<b>Suicide only affects certain people.</b>	Suicide can affect anyone, but there are groups of people who are at particular risk.
<b>It's easy to tell if someone is suicidal.</b>	Online, this can be difficult as we lack information, context and verbal and visual clues, so it's important to take all posts about suicide seriously.

## 2: What is suicidal content?

It's not always easy to identify when someone is talking about suicide online. Some people talk about suicide openly, whereas other people use euphemisms to describe how they feel.

**Keep an eye out for posts that talk about the following, as they may indicate that someone is feeling suicidal:**

- feeling hopeless or not wanting to go on
- feeling worthless or being a burden to others
- struggling or being unable to cope
- feeling trapped or desperate
- wanting to die or disappear
- saying goodbye
- making arrangements, such as drawing up a will or giving things away.

I wish I wasn't here.

People would be better off without me.

Who cares if I'm dead anyway.

I'll not be around next week.

Soon you won't have to worry about me.

That's it, I have everything planned.

I can't take it anymore, goodbye.

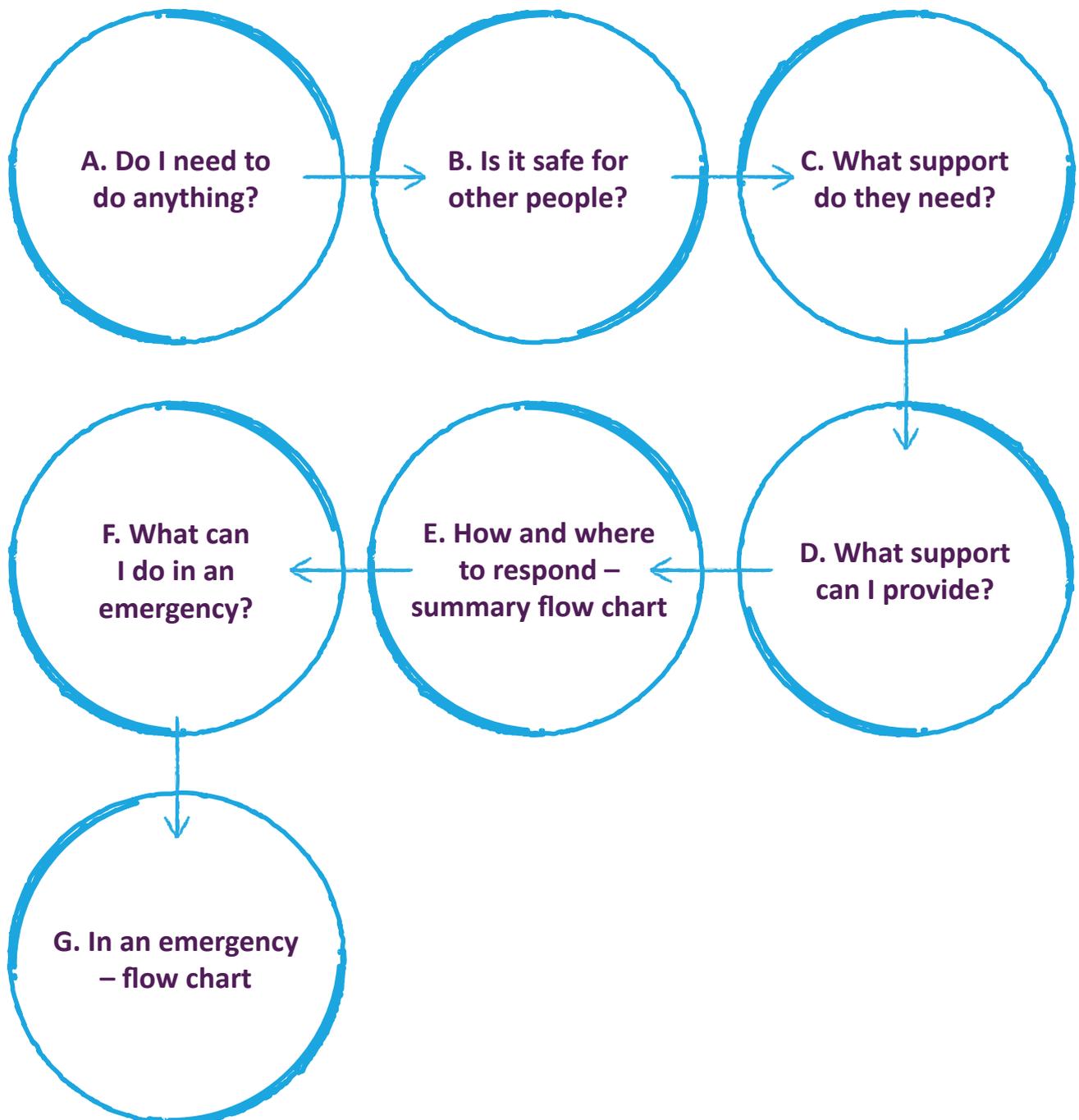
### **i** Be aware:

**People communicate differently**, and the way someone talks about their feelings isn't always related to how distressed they are, or how serious they may be about taking their life.

Because of this, **we need to take all posts that might be about suicide seriously** and make sure the person who wrote the post gets the support they need.

### 3: How should I respond?

Before you respond, take a few minutes to read this section to help you decide what to do.



## A. Do I need to do anything?

All posts about suicide should get a response. However, this response doesn't necessarily have to be from you – if someone is talking about their feelings safely and getting the support they need from community members, you may not need to step in.

### Always intervene if:

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- the [content is unsafe](#)
- the person isn't getting [appropriate support](#)
- the person needs [urgent help](#).

### It may be helpful to step in if:

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- you want to reassure your [community](#)
- you could help by [signposting](#) information or resources.

### Be aware:

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**Don't wait until crisis point** before stepping in. If someone is clearly and consistently struggling, try to offer help before things get too bad.

# Examples

The following messages are examples of when you would and would not need to respond to a suicidal post online.

## A. No need to respond



JJ

Had another appointment with my team today, no help again. What's the point? I don't think I'm ever going to be OK. Just want to end it all.



Comment1

Could you make another appointment and ask someone to go with you? I've found that really helpful in the past when my team was being a bit useless.



Comment2

That sounds so hard JJ. Do you have someone to talk to? You could always call Samaritans if you need to – they've been great for me. Or go to A&E or call 999 if you're worried. Please take care.



Comment3

So sorry you're feeling like that. Thinking of you. xxxx



JJ

Thanks everyone, this makes me feel a bit better.

## B. Respond



Lindsxx

Can't face the world anymore. Feeling so awful and frightened of myself. Really strong thoughts of suicide and just don't know if I can fight them anymore.



Comment1

Hugs xxxx

## B. Is it safe for other people?

The first step is to decide whether suicidal content is safe for other people. Unsafe content can have a negative and potentially dangerous impact on others, and should be removed.

### Unsafe content can:

- **encourage people** to take their life
- provide **vulnerable people with information** about how to end their life, and increase the risk of someone doing so
- **trigger difficult or distressing emotions** in other people, including suicidal feelings.

### Safe content

- Talking about feelings and emotions.

None of this works. What's the point? Want to die, please just let me die.

Six months since my husband died. I just want to leave the world and be with him again.

Tried everything, no one wants to help me. Had enough of the world.

Strong thoughts of suicide tonight. Can't help thinking everyone would be better off without me.

### Unsafe content

- Graphic descriptions or images
- Plans – when or how
- Means or methods
- Pro-suicide content – encouraging comments, advice or suicide partners
- Glorifying or sensationalising a suicide or suicide attempt
- Bullying
- Suicide notes or goodbyes
- Blaming other people or making others feel responsible for their safety

Time to end it all. Saw my kids one last time. So relieved now I know it'll all be over.

Thanks to all of you, I feel a lot worse. Hope you feel awful when I'm gone.

Just taken sooo many pills. Guess I really meant it this time. Bye everyone.

Lulu29, you're just attention-seeking now. For goodness sake, just do it and stop whining.

### **i** Be aware:

You also need to consider the **impact on the rest of your community**. Consider taking a post down if lots of people find it distressing, or feel worried or unsafe.

## Remove unsafe content and follow-up

Removing unsafe content can be upsetting for the person posting, so be as sensitive and supportive as possible.

### **Remove the post.**

Delete or hide the message, or edit so it is safe.



**Contact the person to explain** that their post has been removed and why.



### **Tell them where to get help.**

Remind them what you can and can't do for them, and where to get more support.



### **Support them to post again.**

Encourage them to reword their message so it is safe.

### **i** Be aware:

If someone is distressed, they may find it **difficult to post safely**. They may not be able to take house rules on board or know how else to express their feelings.

**Be kind and supportive.** Make sure you don't make someone feel they've done something wrong, or that they have upset you or other people.

**Don't expect a positive response.** This person is struggling to cope and may feel angry, upset or ambivalent. Try not to take this personally – they may well appreciate your help later when they're in a more positive space.

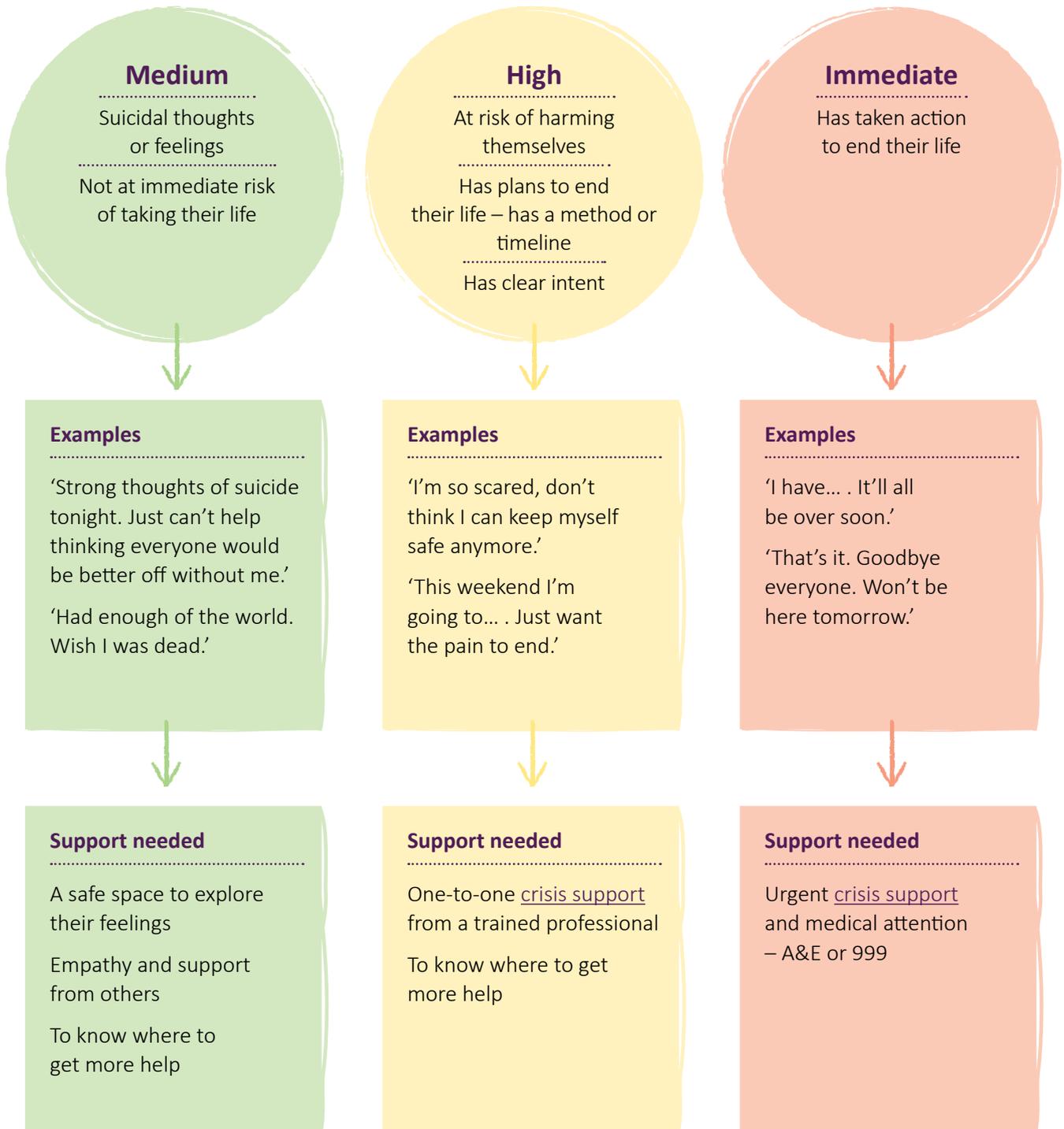
## Example message

This is an example message from a moderator to someone who has had their content taken down. Feel free to adapt and use this for your community.

Hi, we've seen your post and we're worried about you. Your last post included an image of a suicide method, so we've taken this down (see our house rules). If you can, please post your message again. If not, remember you can talk to Samaritans at any time, on the phone, by email or by text. If you're not sure you can keep yourself safe, please contact your GP, go to A&E or call 999. Please take care.

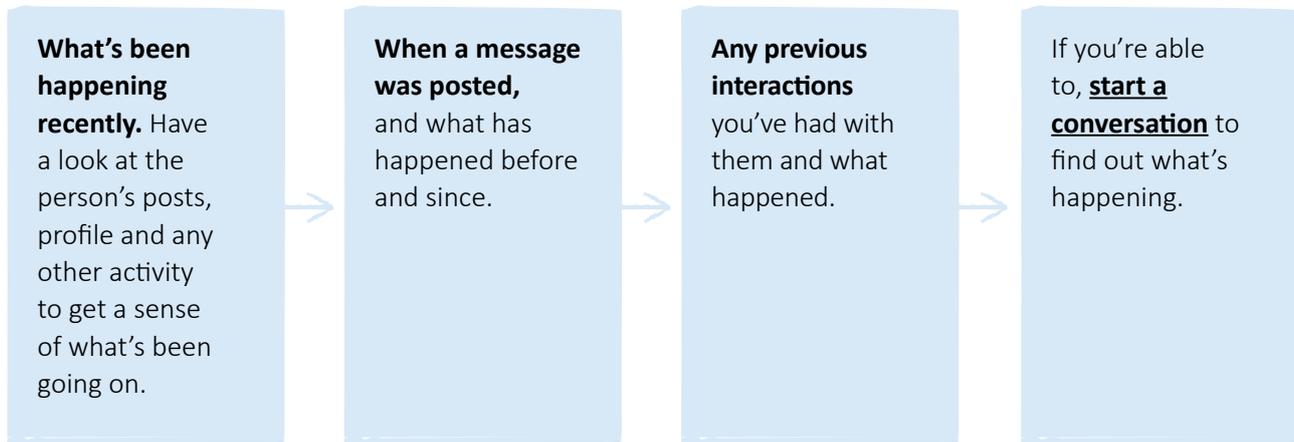
## C. What support do they need?

Use this diagram to help you work out what support someone needs. If you're not sure, it can help to [check the context](#).



## Check the context

Deciding what someone means and whether they need support can be tricky online. We often lack information about their situation, and we don't have the same verbal and visual clues to help us as we would in an offline situation. If you're not sure what someone means, checking the context of the post can help you get a better understanding of what the person means.



## Things to watch out for

Keep an eye out if someone:

- is **socially isolated** or **lacks support** from friends, family or professionals
- is experiencing a **difficult life event**, such as a loss or bereavement, relationship breakdown, financial problems or unemployment
- **self-harms** or **has tried to take their life** before
- shows or talks about **significant changes in behaviour** – such as withdrawing from friends, losing interest in activities they enjoy, sleeping or eating more or less, using drugs or alcohol, acting recklessly or experiencing extreme mood swings
- is part of a **high-risk group**, such as men, people with mental health problems, LGBTQ+ groups, people from rural communities, people with drug or alcohol dependency, homeless people, people with long-term health conditions, veterans, BME communities, and people in contact with the criminal justice system.

### **i** Be aware:

**Don't assume someone isn't serious if there aren't any signs.** There are many reasons people feel suicidal and you can't always tell at first glance.

If you're not sure, **stay on the side of caution** and **take the post seriously.**

Things can move quickly online, so **keep an eye on anyone you're worried about** in case they start to feel better, or worse.

## D. What support can I provide?

Everyone can provide a safe and supportive response to suicidal content. However, what you can do depends on the experience/training, resources and time that you have.

### Levels of support

There are three types of support that you can provide:

- **Basic** – A one-off reply
- **Intermediate** – [A conversation to find out more](#) about someone's situation
- **Advanced** – One-to-one therapeutic support

#### Be aware:

You must have **professional training** to provide one-to-one therapeutic support.

### Private vs public

You will need to decide whether to respond in private or in public.

Private	Public
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allows you to <b>have a conversation</b>.</li><li>• Allows you to <b>talk about things that may be unsafe</b> for others.</li><li>• Your <b>community can't see</b> that you have responded.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides an opportunity to <b>reach out to other people in distress</b> and let the person know where to get help.</li><li>• Shows <b>your community how to respond positively</b>, so they can mirror your response in future.</li><li>• <b>Reassures your community</b> that you are in control.</li><li>• Allows you to send a <b>one-off reply</b> only.</li></ul>

#### Be aware:

**Conversations should always be in private**, as they may become unsafe for others. If you can't contact someone privately, send them a one-off reply.

## Reporting suicidal content on social media

If your community is on social media, you can report suicidal content via their reporting channels.

- **Facebook** [facebook.com/help/contact/305410456169423](https://facebook.com/help/contact/305410456169423)
- **Instagram** [help.instagram.com/388741744585878](https://help.instagram.com/388741744585878)
- **Reddit** [reddit.com/report](https://reddit.com/report)
- **Twitter** [support.twitter.com/forms/suicide](https://support.twitter.com/forms/suicide)
- **YouTube** [support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802245](https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802245)

## Starting a conversation

Having a conversation with someone can be a very helpful way to find out more about their situation, and what type of help they need. However, it's important that you can keep the conversation safe. If you can't, send a one-off reply instead.

### Things to think about:

- How much **time** do you have?
- Are you prepared for the **possible outcomes**?
- Are you able to **follow through** if the person needs help?
- Do you have **someone to help you** make decisions and **to talk to afterwards**?
- Are you able to have **similar interactions** in the future?

Ask the person short, direct questions to clarify their situation.

Are you talking about suicide?

How long have you been feeling like this?

Are you alone?

It sounds like you're planning ..., is that correct?

We're worried you've ... . Is that right?

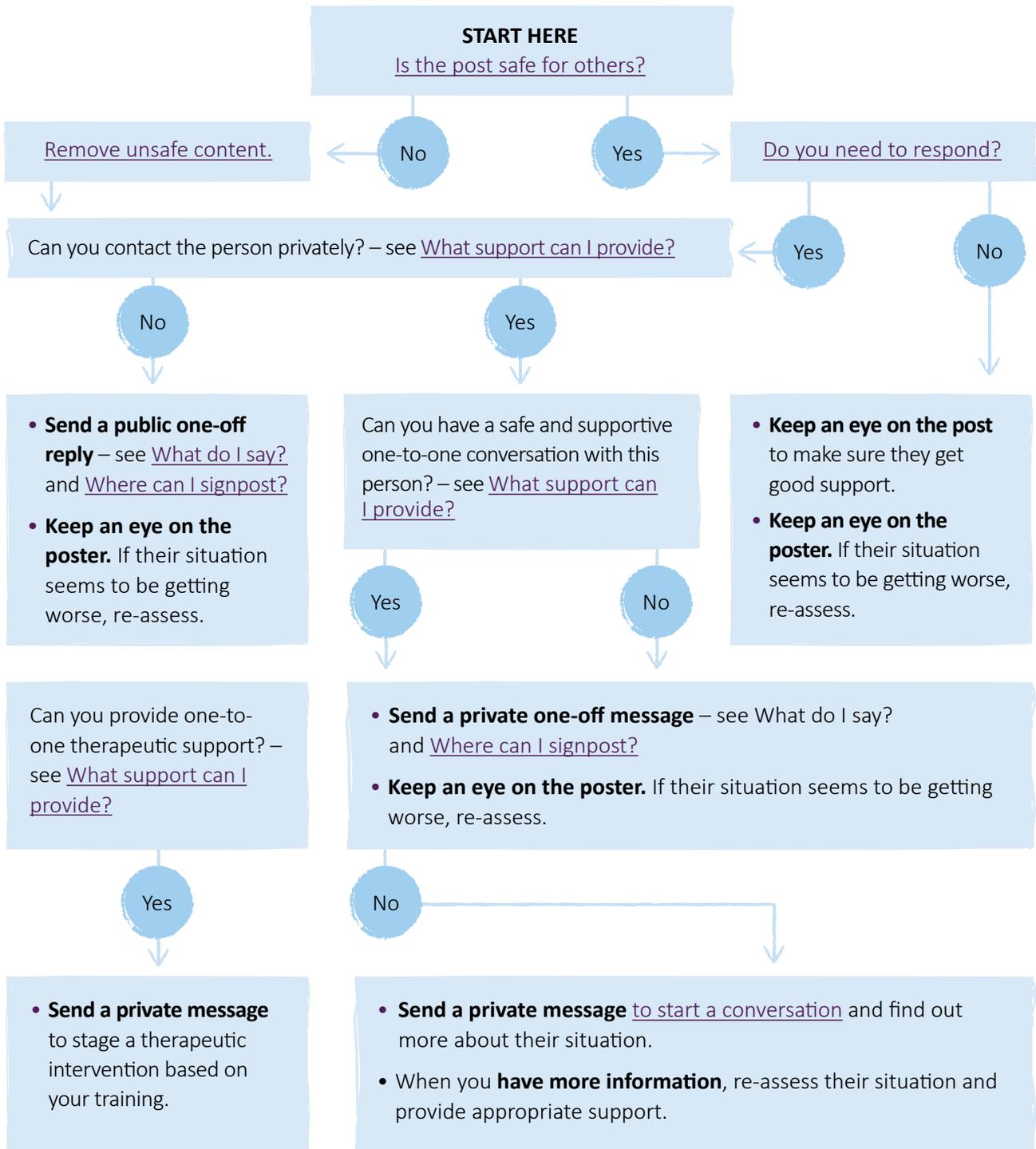
### Be aware:

**Be clear about your boundaries.** Avoid providing one-to-one emotional support if you're not able or comfortable doing this.

If you have provided all the information and support you can, it's fine to **stop the conversation** and to reiterate where to get more help.

# E. How and where to respond – summary flow chart

This flow chart is a summary of the previous sections to help you decide how to respond. Make sure you read the sections before you reply.



<p><b>Crisis support</b></p> <p>Go to the <a href="#">crisis section</a> if at any point you think someone:</p>	<p>has <b>plans</b> to take their life</p> <hr/> <p>has <b>taken action</b> to end their life.</p>
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## F. What can I do in an emergency?

If someone has a **clear and immediate plan** to take their life or has **already taken action** to do so, the person needs to get urgent professional help.

### Emergency help

If someone needs emergency help, encourage them to:

- call their GP for an emergency out-of-hours appointment
- call 999
- go to A&E.

### Should I call 999?

If someone doesn't want to get help themselves, you may have to consider calling 999 for them. This is a serious decision, so make sure you think it through carefully. Talk through your decision with someone else, and remember to [look after yourself](#). If for whatever reason you feel unable to call 999, send the person a message to let them know you care and encourage them to get help themselves.

### Breaking confidentiality

Breaking confidentiality is when you share someone's confidential personal information without their consent. You may be asked to do this if you call 999.

According to [data protection and sharing laws](#), you **can only break confidentiality** if:

- there is a risk of **immediate harm** to the person
- there is **potential risk of harm to others**
- a **child** is present or at risk
- someone **lacks mental capacity** according to the [Mental Capacity Act](#)
- it is necessary to **prevent a crime**.

However, you **don't have to** contact emergency services in these situations. Some organisations have their own policies about sharing information that differ from the above. See [How can I develop best-practice policies for my community?](#)

#### **Be aware:**

- If you call 999, **keep the person informed** about what is happening, unless this might increase the risk to them or someone else.
- This person is going through a crisis. **Remain supportive and empathetic** throughout.

## Do I want the ambulance or police?

If you call 999, ask for:

- **an ambulance** – if you have a full name and address
- **the police** – if you don't know the person's name and/or address.

## What should I tell the emergency services?

If you contact the emergency services, give them any relevant information about the person and their situation.

### Tell them:

- your name and contact details
- your organisation's name, and/or the name of your community
- that someone has told you online that they have a plan to end their life
- what the person has said
- the date and time of the post
- the person's identity and location if you know it
- an IP address if you have one, and explain that they can use this to find someone's location.

It may also be useful for the police to see a **screenshot** of the relevant post or posts.

## What will happen?

When you contact the police:

- They will **assess the case** and decide what to do.
- If they decide to intervene, they will try to **track the person** and get them help.
- If there is very limited information about the person, they **may not be able to do anything**.
- The police may **contact you again** for information or to follow up.
- Usually, you **won't find out what happened** to the person. This can be tough, so make sure you [look after yourself](#).

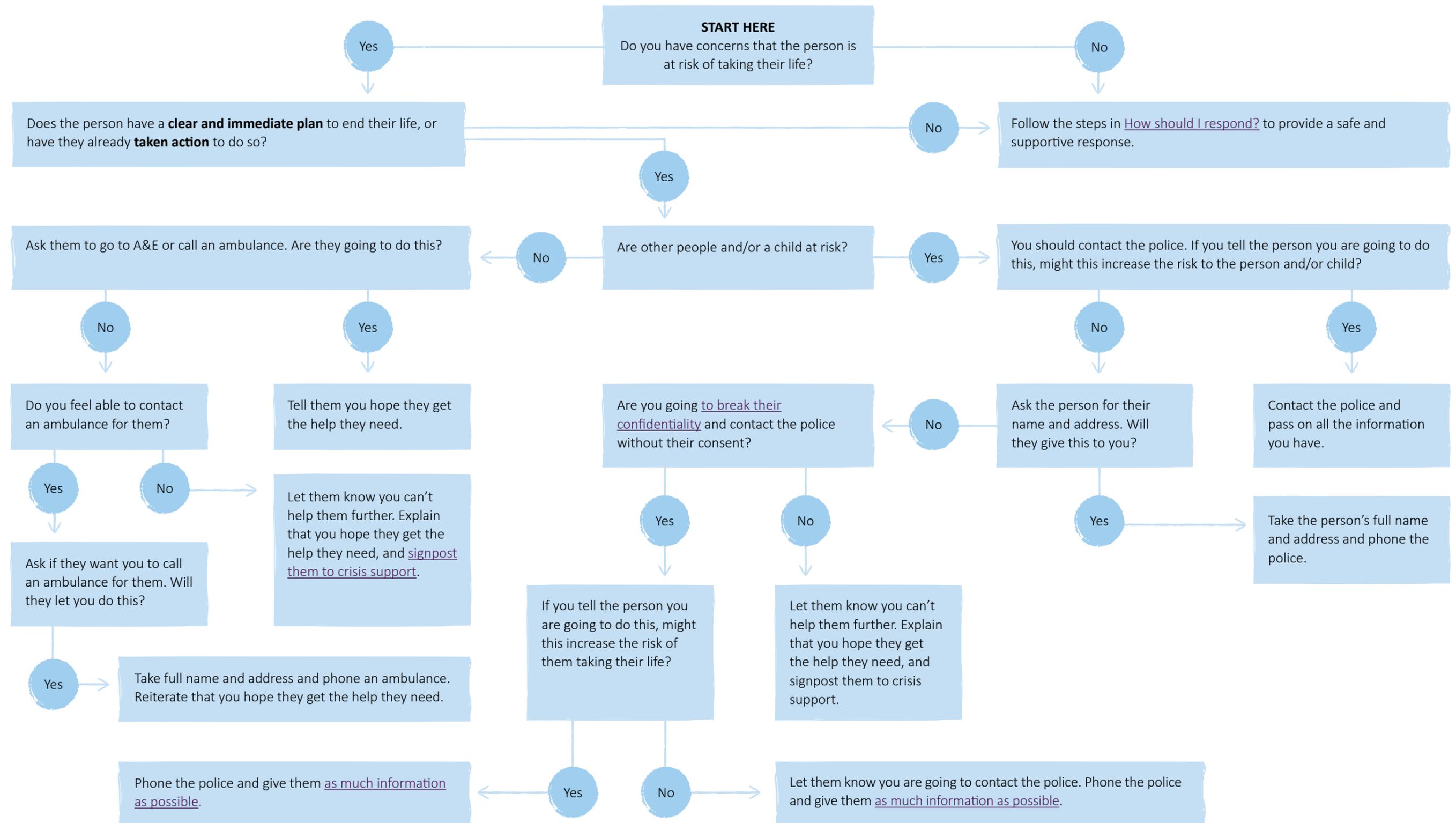
## Follow up

If you have had to break someone's confidentiality, it can help the person feel supported and safe if you send a follow-up message afterwards to see how they are doing and whether they need any further support. For example:

Hi xxxx, we just wanted to check in to see how you are. I hope you're feeling better and managed to get some support. Remember, that the community is always here for you – please carry on reaching out. Best, xxx

## G. In an emergency – flow chart

Follow the flow chart if you think that someone has a **clear and immediate plan** to end their life, or has already **taken action** to do so.



## 4. What do I say?

The most important thing is to remember that you are talking to a person, and that they are in a really bad place. They are taking a huge and courageous step to reach out, and deserve help and support.

Use **clear language**, and **short, simple sentences**.

### 1. Listen

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Being able to express your feelings, and having someone listen, can be very powerful. To show you're listening online:

- **Match** their language – how do they talk about themselves and their situation?
- **Summarise** what they are saying – this will clarify their situation for them and you.
- **Reflect** what they say – 'It sounds like...'



### 2. Empathise

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Empathy, compassion and non-judgement are key to helping someone feel a bit better and to them taking a step towards getting help.

- Be **kind and empathetic**. This person is in a bad place right now and they need some help.
- **Validate** how they feel. Let the person know it's OK to feel this way, and that you're there to help.
- **Don't judge**. Don't ask for reasons or offer solutions to their problems.



### 4. Where to get support

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Signpost the person to services that can support them.

- **Encourage** them to get support and find a way forward.
- **Inform** them about options for support.
- **Suggest** options, rather than tell them what to do – 'Have you thought about ...?'
- **Respect** their experiences – they are best placed to know what helps.



### 3. What you can do

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Let the person know what you can and can't do to help. Be clear about the services you offer and the limitations to what you can provide.

## What to say

We see you've been talking about ..., and we're worried about you.

I care about you and what happens to you, but I'm not qualified to provide one-to-one support.

You've taken a really big step in reaching out.

That sounds really difficult.

I'm so sorry you're feeling like that.

Have you thought about ...?

We know that some people find ... and ... helpful.

## What not to say

Chin up, it's not that bad.

What about your children/family/partner?

It sounds like you're overreacting.

I'm sure you'll feel better tomorrow.

You need to try a bit harder.

But you have so much to live for.

Are you serious?! How can you even say that?!

I just don't understand.

# Example responses

The messages below are examples of responses used by experienced moderators and managers when responding to suicidal content online. Feel free to use and adapt these for your community.

## Using template messages

Template messages can help you ensure that your responses are consistent, and make sure you feel confident responding to suicidal content. However, be aware that using templates in the wrong way can have a negative impact and can make someone in crisis feel rejected or ignored.

If you use a template:

- **Personalise** it as much as possible – use the person’s name and reflect the language they’ve used to describe their feelings.
- **Adapt it to their situation** – what they say they’ve tried, organisations that have been useful or not, and any barriers that they feel are stopping them seeking help.
- **Minimise repeated use** of templates, particularly if the person you are responding to has reached out to you before.

Hi xxxx, it sounds like you’re dealing with a lot of difficult things at the moment, and we just wanted to see if we can help. We know that reaching out isn’t always easy, and we’re really pleased you can talk about how you’re feeling here. If you feel you’d like some extra support, you may want to have a look at ... and ... . And remember that Samaritans are always there if you need to talk on 116 123 – you can send an email or text if you’d prefer to talk that way as well: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)/07725 90 90 90. Please take care of yourself today, xxxx

Hi xxxx, I’m so sorry you’re feeling like this. Unfortunately, I’m not trained so I can’t give you one-to-one support. I see that you’ve been to see your GP and that it wasn’t helpful – you could try asking to see another doctor if you think that might help. If you’re worried about how you’re feeling, and you’re not sure you can keep yourself safe, please go to A&E, where you can see a psychiatrist. Best, xxxx

Hi xxxx, it sounds like you’re having a really hard time at the moment. We’d really like to help, but we don’t have the experience to do that here. There are lots of online communities designed to support people with their mental health – have a look at ..., ... and ... . They should be able to help you better than we can. Please take care, and I hope you get the help you need. xxxx

Hi xxxx, I've seen your post and I'm worried about you. It sounds like you have a plan to take your life. Can you let me know if that's right? We'd like to help you get the support you need, but first we need to make sure you're safe. xxxx

Hi xxxx, we're really worried about you. From your last post, it sounds like you have a plan to end your life. If so, please go to A&E, call 999, or contact your GP for an emergency appointment. We care about you, and you deserve to get help. Please stay safe, xxxx

Hi xxxx, we know that you don't want us to call 999, but we have a responsibility to get you help. We're going to call the police now and they should be with you soon. Please take care of yourself, and do your best to keep yourself safe. xxxx

Hi xxxx, it sounds like you've done something to harm yourself. If you need medical attention, please go to your local A&E or call 999. We can call them for you if you'd like – just reply to this message with your name and address. Stay safe, xxxx

Hi xxxx, we're going to call an ambulance for you now. It should be with you soon. Please do your best to stay safe. xxxx

Hi xxxx, we understand that you don't want us to call an ambulance for you, and we won't do anything without your consent. The offer is always here if you'd like us to call someone for you. We care about you and you deserve to get the help you need. Please try to stay safe. xxxx

# Where can I signpost?

If you can't provide the support that someone needs, let them know where they can get help. Use the scale to help you, and see [Signposting](#) for a list of organisations and resources.

**Medium  
support  
needed**



**Intermediate  
support  
needed**

## Signposting options:

- online community for mental health support
- information about suicidal feelings
- self-help resources
- talk to someone they trust
- contact a crisis or suicide helpline
- phone NHS 111 for local medical advice
- ask their GP for an emergency appointment
- get in touch with their mental health worker or team (if they have one)
- dial 999 for an ambulance
- go to the nearest Accident and Emergency department (A&E)

## If you can:

- Signpost **organisations that may be able to help** with the causes of someone's distress, as well as the distress itself.
- **Include a mix of contact options**, such as telephone, face-to-face and online. Some people online find it hard or are unable to access services offline, so include both options wherever possible.
- **Personalise** your response with organisations that are specific to the person and their situation.
- **Be realistic** about support options and what these can do to help.
- **Recognise and challenge barriers.** If someone doesn't want to access a particular service, acknowledge their reasons, but explore whether you could encourage the person to try again.

## Crisis and safety plans

A crisis or safety plan is a document that explains what someone can do if they are feeling suicidal. If you know that someone is in touch with mental health services, ask them if they have a crisis or safety plan. If they do, encourage them to use it.

## 5. How can I look after my community?

Conversations about suicide can be difficult for your community, and could leave people feeling worried or unsafe. Follow these steps to look after your community and make sure your members feel safe and supported.

### Show your community you are dealing with suicidal content

Respond to suicidal messages publicly to show your community you are aware of what is happening and are dealing with the situation. If you need to respond to a message privately, think about how you could let your community know what's going on, and if so, how to do this in a way that respects the individual's privacy.

### Respond to reports

If someone tells you they're worried about someone, let them know you are following up their concerns within a reasonable timeframe. Thank them and reassure them it was the right thing to do.

### Make sure the person is able to take on support

If someone is too distressed to take on support or is refusing to seek help, this can leave community members feeling worried and responsible. Consider taking the post down and contacting the person privately with support options instead.

### Be clear about your limitations

In a crisis situation, your community may want you to do more than you can. It's important to be clear with your community members about what you can and can't do, so they understand the limits of the support you can provide in a crisis.

### Encourage people to look after themselves

Encourage your members to look after their own wellbeing when using your community. This could include:

- Setting boundaries about the type of support they are able to offer to others in the community and when, and getting them to take a break if things are getting too much.
- Recognising content that may trigger their own feelings, and make them feel worried or distressed.
- Taking control of the content they see. For example, if someone is going through a rough patch, they may want to minimise the amount of suicidal posts that they see. This could include removing content, unfollowing particular people or only visiting particular spaces.
- Allowing users to control their own content and delete their posts. If someone has posted about their suicidal feelings, and is now feeling a bit better, reading back over their posts could be difficult and trigger their feelings again.

## Be consistent

A consistent approach sends a robust message about what is and isn't appropriate in your community. Make sure you respond to posts within a consistent timeframe, and provide the same level of support in each situation. This will ensure that the community understands what type of support it will get and when.

### Suspending or deleting accounts

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If someone is unable to use your community safely, you may have to consider suspending or deleting their account. If you decide to do this, think carefully about the impact this will have on the individual posting and the rest of the community, and be aware that you may be taking away a valuable source of support. If you do have to take this step, explain your reasons clearly and carefully, let the poster know you are worried about them, and encourage them to look for support elsewhere. Try to review suspended accounts regularly.

## Post positive content

If the community has been through a rough patch, post positive content to lighten the mood and to keep a positive focus. Consider posting something about mental wellbeing, like asking people how they are going to look after themselves that evening. It may also be helpful to remind your members about where to get support if they are affected by conversations in the community.

## 6. How can I look after myself?

Responding to someone suicidal online can be stressful, difficult and emotionally demanding, so it's important to look after yourself.

### **i** Be aware:

Thousands of people experience overwhelming suicidal thoughts every day, but **find a way to get through** their intense feelings. Every time you **compassionately support someone in distress**, you may be saving their life.

### Be aware of how you are feeling

While you are online, be aware of what you're doing and how it makes you feel. It's particularly important you're aware if things are getting too much, and have a plan in place about what to do if this happens.

#### Before you respond

- How are you feeling?  
Are you able to provide the support this person needs?
- If not, is there someone else who can help?
- Will responding to that person make you feel unsafe? If so, please put your own wellbeing first, and think about whether you could ask someone else to help.

#### As you respond

- Are you confident about how to deal with this situation?
- Do you understand your role and the limits of the support you can provide?
- Do you know where you can signpost this person to for more support?

#### After you log off

- How are you feeling?  
Would it be useful to talk to someone?
- What are you going to do to look after yourself now?

### Share decisions and talk things through

It's important that you don't feel that you have to deal with this on your own. Talk over any difficult decisions or things you are unsure of with a manager, colleague, friend or family member. When you finish a shift, try to debrief with someone in person, over the phone or online.

### Set boundaries

Set boundaries for yourself, such as not logging on outside of work or on a personal device. You may also find it helpful to moderate under a pseudonym or to respond as an organisation, so things feel less personal.

## Take care of yourself

If you've been dealing with suicidal content, try to do something to look after yourself. Think of a few things that help you relax and switch off, and write them down.

Having a bath.

Playing a game on my phone or tablet.

Ringing my manager to talk things through.

Taking my dog for a walk.

Watching TV that makes me laugh.

Going out to meet a friend.

## Consider getting training

[Suicide awareness and response training](#) can help you feel more confident in dealing with suicidal content, and in knowing how to do this more safely. Make sure the training that you choose matches your organisation and role, and is the most suitable one for you.

### Be aware:

We recommend [suicide awareness and response training](#) to anyone who doesn't have the experience and skills to respond to distressed people they may come into contact with.

## Get support if you need it

Supporting someone online can be tough and emotionally demanding. If things are getting too much, take a break and talk to someone about how you're feeling. If this starts to affect your own mental health, talk to your manager (if you have one) or visit your GP to get some help.

## 7. How can I develop best-practice policies for my community?

Follow these 10 best-practice principles to make your community safer and more supportive in the long term. These principles can be used and adapted for any type of community, of any type, size or format, regardless of topic or whether the main aim is to provide emotional support.

### 1. Design an approach that works for your community

Make sure that you develop all long-term policies and processes to match the time and resources you have available. Think about:

#### Size

The bigger your community is, the more likely you are to get posts about suicidal content.

#### Topic

Suicidal content can come up in any online community. However, if you talk about topics related to suicide, this increases the likelihood that people will talk about suicidal feelings.

#### Audience

Your processes should fit your audience's needs. For example, if you work with young people and children rather than adults, your processes will be different.

#### Format and functionality

The format and functionality of your community, such as whether you can send private messages or delete content, will affect what you can do.

#### Resources

When and how often you can moderate, the training and/or experience you have, and the resources you have available in your organisation, will largely determine what you can do.

## 2. Be clear about what you do

Members should have a clear understanding about what you do, the type of support you can and can't provide and when. If there are times when your community is unmoderated, you may need to think about how to communicate this, so you don't attract harmful content or trolls.

Include:

- the types of support you can and can't provide, such as peer support or one-to-one counselling
- when you provide support and whether there are times when support is unavailable
- how long it will take you to respond to messages or reports
- whether your community is international or based in a particular country
- where members can get more support if you can't provide this, including in an emergency
- what you will do if you're worried someone is in danger of taking their life
- whether your service is confidential or not, and in what situations you would [break confidentiality](#).

## 3. Develop guidelines for talking about suicide

Clear guidelines support members to talk about suicide safely and supportively. Post these in a public place, and keep them short, simple and easy-to-understand.

Guidelines should include:

- what is and isn't safe to post
- when content will be removed and what will happen for that person
- when an account will be suspended or deleted and what will happen for that person.

## 4. Make it easy for members to report content

Clear reporting channels help people flag worrying or unsafe suicidal content to you, and keep your community safe. This is particularly important if you rely on your members to flag content to you in order to moderate.

You should:

- explain when and how to report suicidal content
- make sure reporting channels are clear and easy-to-use
- encourage your members to report content and thank them when they do
- let members know what will happen to the person who has posted if they report
- consider measures that reassure members about reporting, such as using language like 'flag' or 'I'm worried', or having a specific category for suicidal content.

## 5. Develop your community's skills

To help your community feel confident to respond to suicidal content, you could do some work around developing your members' skills. This will help your community feel more confident and supported.

For example:

- Clarify the role of peer support – have clear guidance around what members can and can't do to support someone else, and how to avoid a conversation becoming unsafe.
- Improve digital literacy – community members may benefit from information about how an online environment differs from an offline one. For example, how to manage online friendships, why a post may not get a reply, and what happens if someone stops posting or deletes their account.
- Help people identify their own triggers and what content they find upsetting. You could also support your members to create an action plan for what to do if this happens, such as reducing their profile or taking a break.
- Post wellbeing resources about looking after yourself to help your community develop its resilience and maintain its own wellbeing.

## 6. Have a clear internal process

Develop processes in consultation with your members and moderators, as well as key stakeholders, such as trustees. Make sure your process is consistent across any other services that you provide.

Your process should cover:

- how to identify suicidal content
- when to remove unsafe suicidal content and what to do
- when to leave suicidal content and when to intervene
- who a moderator should talk to if they are unsure or have to make a difficult decision
- what to do if you think someone is in danger of taking their life
- whether you will break confidentiality and, if so, in what situations
- who has responsibility for making decisions in different situations, and who moderators should escalate to if they are not responsible.

## 7. Understand duty of care and safeguarding

Make sure you are aware of legal issues around [safeguarding and duty of care](#), and how they relate to you and your organisation. This depends on the type of organisation and the services you provide – you may want to get legal advice.

Make sure you:

- understand your duty of care towards community members, as well as your staff and volunteers
- understand what safeguarding is and how it applies to your community
- know when to report safeguarding concerns and who to report them to
- record any safeguarding issues that come up and how you dealt with them
- get a DBS check for all staff and volunteers working with potentially vulnerable people.

## 8. Be aware of data protection and sharing law

Be clear with your community about how you collect and use personal data, and make sure you understand the implications of collecting someone's data. You may want to get legal advice.

Make sure that:

- you provide clear and easy-to-read information for members about how you collect and use data
- your members understand and agree to this
- you and your members understand how you would share data in an emergency
- you follow [data protection and sharing laws](#).

## 9. Provide support for moderators

Moderators should have appropriate support to respond to suicidal content. If you moderate on your own, think about how you will manage this in a way that works for you.

Make sure moderators have:

- enough time to respond to suicidal content in the way that they are asked
- someone they can ask for help, and feel able and confident to do so
- a clearly delineated role and responsibilities, and understand when to pass things on where appropriate
- someone to talk to after a shift, in person, over the phone or online
- a clear pathway about what to do if things are getting too much, and feel able to follow it if this happens
- appropriate levels of support if working out-of-hours or remotely
- access to emotional support if they need it
- access to training in suicide awareness and response if appropriate.

## 10. Make sure your community is inclusive for diverse and at-risk groups

All your members should feel able to seek and get appropriate support for suicidal feelings, regardless of their age, gender, sexuality, ethnic background, culture or religion. This is particularly important as suicidal feelings tend to be more prevalent in minority groups.

- Allow people to explain their experiences in their own words, and don't make assumptions about, or based on, someone's gender, sexuality, culture or religion.
- Let people define their own identity, and match the language they use. Use gender-neutral pronouns until you know differently.
- Never allow language or jokes that might make someone feel uncomfortable, even if posted in good faith, as they could make people less likely to seek help.
- Deal with any disagreements or unsupportive comments quickly, as they can discourage people from sharing how they feel.
- Ask for feedback. Proactively encourage consultations and feedback about how to make your community safer for people to share their experiences and seek help if they need it.

## 8. Resources

This list of resources is intended to provide a useful starting point for community managers, moderators and individuals running or facilitating online communities, and is not exhaustive. The National Suicide Prevention Alliance does not endorse any particular organisations or services.

### A. Signposting resources

#### Help in an emergency

If you think that someone is at risk of taking their life, they need to seek professional crisis support. Tell the person to:

- call NHS 111 for local medical advice
- call their GP for an emergency out-of-hours appointment
- call 999
- go to A&E.

#### Helplines

##### Samaritans

samaritans.org

freephone: 116 123

text: 07725 90 90 90

jo@samaritans.org

24-hour emotional support for anyone struggling to cope.

##### Befrienders Worldwide

befrienders.org

Database of international crisis helplines.

##### CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably)

thecalmzone.net

0800 58 58 58 (5pm-12am daily)

Helpline and webchat for men at risk of suicide.

##### Helplines Partnership

helplines.org/helplines

Find a helpline service in the UK and internationally.

##### NHS 111

call: 111

Non-emergency medical help and advice for people in England.

##### PAPYRUS

papyrus-uk.org

0800 068 41 41

(10am-10pm Mon-Fri, 2-10pm weekends, 2-5pm bank holidays)

text: 07786 209 697

pat@papyrus-uk.org

Helpline, email and text support for young people at risk of suicide.

##### SANE

sane.org.uk

0300 304 7000 (6-11pm daily)

Helpline for adults experiencing mental health problems.

#### Online support

##### Big White Wall

bigwhitewall.com

Online community for adults experiencing emotional or psychological distress. Available free by prescription via the NHS, employers and universities.

##### Bipolar UK eCommunity

bipolaruk.org/ecommunity

Peer support community for adults with bipolar disorder.

##### CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably)

thecalmzone.net

Webchat for men at risk of suicide.

##### Elefriends

elefriends.org.uk

Peer support community from Mind, for anyone struggling with their mental health.

##### Friends in Need

friendsinneed.co.uk

Peer support community for people with depression.

##### I'm alive

imalive.org

US-based instant messaging service for people in suicidal crisis.

### **MindOut**

mindout.org.uk

Out-of-hours online chat for LGBTQ+ people experiencing mental health problems. Opening times change weekly – check the website for more information.

### **Recover Your Life**

recoveryourlife.com

Peer support community for people who self-harm.

### **SANE**

sane.org.uk

Peer support community for adults with mental health problems.

### **The Site**

thesite.org

Online community and instant chat for people aged 16-25, including mental health.

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## **Information and self-help tools**

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### **Connecting With People – Staying Safe Tool**

connectingwithpeople.org/stayingsafe

Practical resource for people experiencing suicidal thoughts and those supporting them.

### **Connecting With People – U Can Cope resources**

connectingwithpeople.org/ucancope

Practical information for people experiencing suicidal thoughts.

### **Mind – Information for people experiencing suicidal feelings**

mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/suicidal-feelings and those **supporting them** mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/suicide-supporting-someone-else.

### **Mind – I need urgent help**

mind.org.uk/i-need-urgent-help

Practical tool that talks someone through a crisis step by step.

### **Rethink – Information about suicidal feelings**

rethink.org/diagnosis-treatment/symptoms/suicidal-feelings and **supporting someone else** rethink.org/carers-family-friends/what-you-need-to-know/suicidal-thoughts-how-to-support-someone.

### **Samaritans – Personal experiences of contacting Samaritans**

samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/how-our-service-helps/personal-experiences-contacting-samaritans-0

### and **More personal experiences**

samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/how-our-service-helps/personal-experiences-contacting-samaritans/more-personal.

### **Samaritans – Signs you may be struggling to cope**

samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/what-speak-us-about/signs-you-may-be-struggling-cope

### and **How to start a difficult conversation**

samaritans.org/difficultconversations.

### **Unsuicide**

unsuicide.wikispaces.com

Wiki with list of self-help resources for someone experiencing suicidal thoughts.

### **With Help Comes Hope – 100 ways to get through the next 5 minutes**

lifelineforattemptssurvivors.org/100-ways-to-get-through-the-next-5-minutes/

Self-help tool with 100 ideas to help someone experiencing suicidal feelings right now.

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## **Apps for self-support**

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All of these apps are available free of charge from all major mobile phone app stores.

### **Crisis card**

Wellbeing information and support. Allows you to track how you are feeling and automatically contacts a designated person if you are in crisis.

### **Safety Plan**

Helps you develop and upload your own coping strategies. Has warning signs to look out for, distractions and contacts to use when in crisis.

### **Stay Alive**

A suicide prevention pocket resource with crisis resources and contacts, and lots of self-help ideas and information. Clinically-approved, with customisable safety plan and photo box.

### **Virtual Hope Box**

Distractions, inspirational quotes and relaxation activities. Also includes customisable coping cards and an activity planner.

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## Organisations for at risk groups

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### Age UK

[ageuk.org.uk](http://ageuk.org.uk)

Wellbeing information, practical support and advice line for older people.

### Association for Post Natal Illness

[apni.org](http://apni.org)

020 7386 0868 (10am-2pm Mon-Fri)

[info@apni.org](mailto:info@apni.org)

Information, helpline and email support for women with postnatal illness.

### Beat

[b-eat.co.uk](http://b-eat.co.uk)

For adults: 0845 634 1414;

[help@b-eat.co.uk](mailto:help@b-eat.co.uk)

For young people age 25 and under:

0845 634 7650; [fyp@b-eat.co.uk](mailto:fyp@b-eat.co.uk)

Support and information relating to eating disorders.

### CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably)

[thecalmzone.net](http://thecalmzone.net)

0800 58 58 58 (5pm-12am daily)

Helpline and webchat for men at risk of suicide.

### Carers UK

[carersuk.org](http://carersuk.org)

0808 808 7777 (10am-4pm Mon-Fri)

Helpline, information and online support forum for carers.

### Citizens Advice

[citizensadvice.org.uk](http://citizensadvice.org.uk)

Information and advice on a range of issues, including work, benefits, debt and money, housing and discrimination.

### Combat Stress

[combatstress.org.uk](http://combatstress.org.uk)

0800 138 1619 (24 hours)

[contactus@combatstress.org.uk](mailto:contactus@combatstress.org.uk)

Helpline and email support for veterans with mental health problems.

### Cruse Bereavement Care

[cruse.org.uk](http://cruse.org.uk)

0844 477 9400 (hours vary)

[helpline@cruse.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cruse.org.uk)

Helpline, information and email support for anyone who has been bereaved, including those bereaved by suicide.

### Depression Alliance

[depressionalliance.org](http://depressionalliance.org)

Information, local support and online support community for people with depression.

### Drinkline

T: 0300 123 1110 (hours vary)

National helpline for anyone concerned about their alcohol use or someone else's.

### Farming Community Network

[fcn.org.uk](http://fcn.org.uk)

03000 111 999 (7am-11pm daily)

[chris@fcn.org.uk](mailto:chris@fcn.org.uk)

Helpline and email support for people in farming and rural communities struggling to cope.

### FRANK

[talktofrank.com](http://talktofrank.com)

0300 123 6600

text: 82111

[frank@talktofrank.com](mailto:frank@talktofrank.com)

Confidential drugs advice, with 24-hour helpline, and email, text and instant messaging.

### Friends, Families and Travellers

[gypsy-traveller.org/your-family/health](http://gypsy-traveller.org/your-family/health)

Wellbeing information and support for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma.

### GamCare

[gamcare.org.uk](http://gamcare.org.uk)

0808 8020 133 (8am-midnight daily)

Information, advice, support and free counselling for the prevention and treatment of problem gambling.

### Harmless

[harmless.org.uk](http://harmless.org.uk)

[info@harmlessorg.uk](mailto:info@harmlessorg.uk)

Information and self-help resources for people who self-harm.

### HAVOCA – Help for Adult Victims of Child Abuse

[havoca.org](http://havoca.org)

Information and online support forum for adults affected by child abuse.

### Macmillan

[macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support](http://macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support)

0808 808 00 00 (9am-8pm Mon-Fri)

Helpline, information and online support community for people diagnosed with cancer.

### **Mind**

mind.org.uk

0300 123 3393 (9am-6pm, Mon-Fri)

text: 86463

Information, legal and information lines, and local services for people with mental health problems.

### **Prison Reform Trust**

prisonreformtrust.org.uk/ForPrisonersFamilies

0808 802 0060 (3.30-5.30pm Mon, Tue & Thur)

Helpline and information for prisoners, young offenders and immigration detainees, and their families.

### **Relate**

relate.org.uk

0300 100 1234 (hours vary)

Counselling and workshops on relationships and family issues.

### **Scope**

scope.org.uk

0808 800 3333 (9am-5pm Mon-Fri)

helpline@scope.org.uk

Helpline, email support and online support community for people with disabilities.

### **Self injury Support**

selfinjurysupport.org.uk

0808 800 8088 (7-9pm Sun-Fri)

text: 0780 047 2908

Helpline, text and email support for women who self-harm.

### **Shelter**

shelter.org.uk

Information and legal advice for people who are homeless or have issues related to housing, such as tenancy problems, benefits or eviction.

### **The Silver Line**

thesilverline.org.uk

0808 800 8088

0800 4 70 80 90 (24 hours)

Free information, friendship and advice to older people.

### **StepChange Debt Charity**

stepchange.org

0800 138 1111 (8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 8am-4pm Sat)

Debt advice for people in the UK.

### **Stop it now!**

stopitnow.org.uk

0808 1000 900 (9am-9pm Mon-Thur and 9am-5pm Fri)

help@stopitnow.org.uk

Helpline available for adult perpetrators of child sexual abuse, and concerns about other adults abusing children.

### **Support after Suicide**

supportaftersuicide.org.uk

0808 800 8088

Help and support for people bereaved by suicide.

### **Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide (SOBS)**

uk-sobs.org.uk

0300 111 5065 (9am-9pm daily)

sobs.admin@care4free.net

Helpline, email support and local groups for people who have been bereaved by suicide.

### **The Survivors Trust**

thesurvivorstrust.org/national-helplines

List of helplines and support organisations for survivors of abuse and sexual violence.

### **Switchboard**

switchboard.lgbt

0300 330 0630 (10am-11pm daily)

chris@switchboard.lgbt

Helpline, instant messaging and email support for LGBT+ people.

### **Victim Support**

victimsupport.org.uk

0845 30 30 900 (8pm-8am Mon-Fri,

5pm-8am weekends)

supportlineemail@victimsupport.org.uk

Help for victims of crime, witnesses and their families and friends.

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## **For young people and under 18s**

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### **Childline**

childline.org.uk

0800 1111 (24 hours)

Helpline, forums, email and online chat for children and young people under 19.

### **PAPYRUS**

papyrus-uk.org

0800 068 41 41 (10am-10pm Mon-Fri, 2-10pm weekends, 2-5pm bank holidays)

text: 07786 209 697

pat@papyrus-uk.org

Information, helpline, email and text support for young people at risk of suicide.

### **Youthnet**

youthnet.org/looking-for-help

Information, self-help, online community and instant chat for people aged 16-25.

### **YoungMinds**

youngminds.org.uk

Information and self-help for children and young people with mental health problems.

## B. Resources for community moderators and managers

### About suicide and supporting someone else

See also [Information and self-help tools](#) in Signposting above.

#### **Conversations Matter**

[conversationsmatter.com.au](http://conversationsmatter.com.au)

Practical resources for supporting someone who is suicidal.

#### **National Suicide Prevention Alliance**

[nspa.org.uk/resources](http://nspa.org.uk/resources)

Resources and information on suicide prevention and supporting people affected by suicide.

#### **NHS Health Scotland – The Art of Conversation**

[healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/2842-The%20Art%20Of%20Conversation.pdf](http://healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/2842-The%20Art%20Of%20Conversation.pdf)  
Step-by-step guide to talking about suicide.

#### **PAPYRUS – I’m worried about someone**

[papyrus-uk.org/help-advice/im-worried-about-someone](http://papyrus-uk.org/help-advice/im-worried-about-someone)

Information about starting a conversation with someone about suicide.

#### **Samaritans – How to start a difficult conversation**

[samaritans.org/difficultconversations](http://samaritans.org/difficultconversations),

**Myths about Suicide** [samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/myths-about-suicide](http://samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/myths-about-suicide) and **Suicide**

**Facts and Figures** [samaritans.org/about-us/our-research/facts-and-figures-about-suicide](http://samaritans.org/about-us/our-research/facts-and-figures-about-suicide)

Information about starting a conversation with someone about suicide, myth-busting and statistics.

#### **Suicide Bereavement Support Partnership (SBSP)**

[supportaftersuicide.org.uk](http://supportaftersuicide.org.uk)

Information for people supporting someone bereaved by suicide, with downloadable Help is at Hand report.

#### **Suicide is preventable**

[suicideispreventable.org](http://suicideispreventable.org)

US-based online tool for talking about suicide.

### Talking about suicide online

#### **Mind – How to stay safe online**

[mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/online-safety-and-support/overview/#.VmWqHLiyOko](http://mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/online-safety-and-support/overview/#.VmWqHLiyOko) and **How to improve and maintain your mental wellbeing** [mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/wellbeing/about-mental-wellbeing/?o=10321#.VmWjGriLTIU](http://mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/wellbeing/about-mental-wellbeing/?o=10321#.VmWjGriLTIU).

Information about looking after your mental wellbeing online and offline.

#### **Prevent the Attempt**

[preventtheattempt.com](http://preventtheattempt.com)

US-based guidelines for responding to suicidal content online, with links to examples of good practice.

#### **Samaritans Media Guidelines**

[samaritans.org/media-centre/media-guidelines-reporting-suicide](http://samaritans.org/media-centre/media-guidelines-reporting-suicide)

Guidelines for talking about suicide in the media.

#### **Time to Change Media Guidelines**

[time-to-change.org.uk/sites/default/files/TtC%20Media%20Leaflet%20NEWS.pdf](http://time-to-change.org.uk/sites/default/files/TtC%20Media%20Leaflet%20NEWS.pdf)

Guidelines for talking about mental health in the media.

### Data protection, sharing and confidentiality

#### **Data Protection Act 1998**

[legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/contents](http://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/contents)

Outlines legal requirements for collecting and protecting an individual's personal data.

#### **Department of Constitutional Affairs – Mental Capacity Act 2005: Code of Practice**

[gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/224660/Mental\\_Capacity\\_Act\\_code\\_of\\_practice.pdf](http://gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/224660/Mental_Capacity_Act_code_of_practice.pdf)

Information about mental capacity and how it applies to data sharing and safeguarding.

#### **Health & Social Care Information Centre – A Guide to Confidentiality in Health and Social Care**

[hscic.gov.uk/media/12822/Guide-to-confidentiality-in-health-and-social-care/pdf/HSCIC-guide-to-confidentiality.pdf](http://hscic.gov.uk/media/12822/Guide-to-confidentiality-in-health-and-social-care/pdf/HSCIC-guide-to-confidentiality.pdf)

Useful guide to confidentiality in the health and social care sector to help inform a best-practice approach.

### **HM Government – Data Protection and Sharing: Guidance for Emergency Planners and Responders**

[gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/60970/dataprotection.pdf](https://gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/60970/dataprotection.pdf)  
Guidance on key issues related to data protection and sharing in emergency situations.

### **Information Commissioner’s Office – Guide to Data Protection**

[ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection)  
Legal requirements for data protection, including information about **online data** [ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/online-and-apps](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/online-and-apps), and **data sharing** [ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/data-sharing](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/data-sharing), with **useful checklists** [ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1067/data\\_sharing\\_checklists.pdf](https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1067/data_sharing_checklists.pdf).

### **Information Commissioner’s Office – Guide to Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations**

[ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-pecr/](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-pecr/)  
Regulations that sit alongside the Data Protection Act and give people specific privacy rights in relation to electronic communications.

### **The Information Governance Review**

[gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/192572/2900774\\_InfoGovernance\\_accv2.pdf](https://gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/192572/2900774_InfoGovernance_accv2.pdf)  
Information about data protection and confidentiality in the health and social care sector. See The Caldicott principles on p.118 for overarching principles about data protection and confidentiality that are followed by many organisations outside the statutory sector as best-practice.

### **The New Savoy Partnership – Delivering Mental Well-being Services Online**

[newsavoypartnership.org/2011presentations/ramp\\_guide.pdf](https://newsavoypartnership.org/2011presentations/ramp_guide.pdf)  
Good practice guide, including information about data protection and personal information, privacy and informed consent.

## **Safeguarding and duty of care**

The following resources mainly relate to statutory organisations and charities, but are a good template for everyone who works with potentially vulnerable people.

### **The Charity Commission**

[gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission](https://gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission)  
Information for charities about safeguarding [gov.uk/guidance/charities-how-to-protect-vulnerable-groups-including-children](https://gov.uk/guidance/charities-how-to-protect-vulnerable-groups-including-children), risk management [gov.uk/guidance/how-to-manage-risks-in-your-charity](https://gov.uk/guidance/how-to-manage-risks-in-your-charity), using volunteers [gov.uk/guidance/how-to-manage-your-charity-volunteers](https://gov.uk/guidance/how-to-manage-your-charity-volunteers) and reporting serious incidents [gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity](https://gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity).

### **Department of Health – Safeguarding Adults: The Role of Health Service Practitioners**

[gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/215714/dh\\_125233.pdf](https://gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/215714/dh_125233.pdf)  
Explains key concepts and safeguarding in the statutory health sector to help inform a best-practice approach.

### **GOV.UK – DBS checks: guidance for employers**

[gov.uk/guidance/dbs-check-requests-guidance-for-employers](https://gov.uk/guidance/dbs-check-requests-guidance-for-employers)  
Information about DBS checks, including for employees and volunteers.

### **Small Charities Coalition**

[smallcharities.org.uk/resources](https://smallcharities.org.uk/resources)  
Practical information on safeguarding, risk management and getting legal advice. For charities with an annual income of less than £1 million.

### **Social Care Institute for Excellence – Adult safeguarding**

[scie.org.uk/adults/safeguarding](https://scie.org.uk/adults/safeguarding)  
Information about adult safeguarding and data sharing, including resources and training.

## Training

The following providers run training on a national, regional and local level. This list is not exhaustive and there are other organisations that also offer these types of training. The National Suicide Prevention Alliance does not endorse any particular one. Cost and availability of courses may vary depending on provider.

### **Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)**

[livingworks.net/programs/asist](http://livingworks.net/programs/asist)

World's leading suicide prevention training course, offered by a range of training providers in the UK.

### **Charlie Waller Memorial Trust**

[cwmt.org.uk/training/the-training-we-offer](http://cwmt.org.uk/training/the-training-we-offer)

Offers training on mental wellbeing and Mental Health First Aid.

### **Connecting with People**

[connectingwithpeople.org/courses](http://connectingwithpeople.org/courses)

Evidence-based training and tools. Offers a range of 2-hour modules in suicide awareness, prevention and emotional resilience/resourcefulness. Also offers a specialist 2-hour training for helplines.

### **Golden Tree CIC**

[goldentreecic.co.uk](http://goldentreecic.co.uk)

Runs a range of courses, including Mental Health First Aid, safeTALK and emotional resilience.

### **Grassroots Suicide Prevention**

[prevent-suicide.org.uk/suicide\\_prevention\\_mental\\_health\\_training\\_courses.html](http://prevent-suicide.org.uk/suicide_prevention_mental_health_training_courses.html)

Provides a range of suicide awareness and prevention trainings, including ASIST, Mental Health First Aid and safeTALK.

### **Local Minds**

[mind.org.uk/information-support/local-minds.aspx](http://mind.org.uk/information-support/local-minds.aspx)

Many local Minds run Mental Health First Aid and ASIST courses. Use the tool to find your local Mind.

### **Mental Health First Aid England**

[mhfaengland.org](http://mhfaengland.org)

Internationally recognised educational course, designed to help people recognise warning signs of mental ill health.

### **PAPYRUS**

[papyrus-uk.org/training](http://papyrus-uk.org/training)

Offers a range of training suicide awareness and prevention trainings, including ASIST.

### **Samaritans**

[samaritans.org/your-community/workplace-staff-training](http://samaritans.org/your-community/workplace-staff-training)

Offers workplace training, including conversations with vulnerable people and managing suicidal contacts, as well as bespoke options.

### **STORM**

[stormskillstraining.com](http://stormskillstraining.com)

Provides suicide prevention and postvention (after a suicide attempt) training.

### **Suicide Safer London**

[suicidesaferlondon.org.uk](http://suicidesaferlondon.org.uk)

Offers range of training, including ASIST, safeTALK, suicideTALK and bespoke training in London.

# Thanks and acknowledgments

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	 @BPDFFS		
			
			
			
			
			
			

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The National Suicide Prevention Alliance is a cross-sector, England-wide coalition committed to reducing the number of suicides in England, and improving support to those bereaved or affected by suicide.

**For more information on the National Suicide Prevention Alliance, and for details of partner organisations, please visit [www.nspa.org.uk](http://www.nspa.org.uk)**

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To give feedback on this booklet, email us at [info@nspa.org.uk](mailto:info@nspa.org.uk)

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