

## HOW TO ASK: TALKING TO SOMEONE YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT

Starting a conversation about suicide can feel intimidating. You may worry about saying the wrong thing or making the situation worse. A calm, direct, caring conversation can create space for someone to share what they are carrying.

### What to do:

- Start with what you have noticed: "You haven't seemed like yourself lately, and I wanted to check in."
- Ask an open question: "How are things really going?" Then allow silence instead of filling it immediately.
- If you are concerned about suicide, be direct: "Are you thinking about suicide?" Asking clearly does not create suicidal thoughts.
- Listen more than you speak. Reflect what you hear and avoid debating, lecturing, minimizing, or trying to solve everything at once.
- Move toward support: "I'm glad you told me. Let's figure out who we can contact together."



**Keep in mind:** Try to replace reassurance that closes the conversation, such as "Everything will be fine," with language that keeps connection open: "That sounds incredibly hard. I'm here with you."

If the person says they are thinking about suicide, take it seriously. Do not promise secrecy. Ask whether they are in immediate danger and help them connect with a mental health professional, trusted support person, or crisis service.