Do you know someone who may be considering suicide?

It’s not uncommon to think about taking your own life. If you’re worried about someone, read on...

What you should know

• It’s OK to talk about suicide.

• Asking someone if they are thinking about suicide does not make them act on their feelings. In fact, it often reduces anxiety and helps people feel understood.

Warning signs

• Severe mood changes.

• Social withdrawal.

• Expressing thoughts, feelings or plans about ending their life.

• Saying things like “No-one will miss me when I’m gone.” or “I’ve got no reason to live.”

• Looking for ways to kill themselves.

• Saying goodbye to close family members and friends.

• Giving away valued possessions.

Who is at risk?

• People who have tried to take their own life before.

• People in acute emotional distress or with depression.

• Someone who’s socially isolated.

• Someone with alcohol or drug problems.

• People living with chronic pain or illness.

• People who have experienced violence, abuse or other trauma.

• People from groups of society that are marginalized or discriminated against.

What you can do

• Find an appropriate time and a quiet place to talk with the person you are worried about. Let them know that you are there to listen.

• Encourage them to seek help from a health worker, such as a doctor or mental health professional, or a counsellor or social worker. And offer to accompany them to an appointment.

• If you think someone is in immediate danger, don’t leave them alone. Contact the emergency services, a crisis line, a health worker or a family member.

• If the person you’re worried about lives with you, make sure they don’t have access to means of self-harm at home.

• Check in regularly to see how they’re doing.

REMEMBER: If you know someone who may be considering suicide, talk to them about it. Listen with an open mind and offer your support.