

Some experiences and vulnerabilities which may increase risk of self-harm or suicide in young people include:

- Past or current Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's)
- Diagnosed with a mental or physical health disorder
- Recent history of repeated self-harm presentations to services (eg to hospital A&E departments)
- Bullying in childhood including cyberbullying (especially for individuals who are, or perceived to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTQ+))
- Neurodiverse or Learning Difficulties status
- In times of additional stress such as academic pressures & exams
- Bereavement
- Feeling isolated or 'different' (eg fluid gender identity status; Autism status)

Situations that might **trigger** an episode of self-harm or suicide in young people include:

- difficulties at home
- arguments or problems with friends or intimate relationships
- school pressures
- bullying
- transitions and changes, such as changing schools
- Increased risk in the presence of alcohol or substance use

Remember to use the 'Be **CLEAR**' steps

Check for suicidal thoughts and intentions – let them know you are concerned about them and **ask them directly** if they are having any thoughts about suicide. If yes - **check** whether they have made any plans and do not leave the young person alone.

Listen to their story – It's important to listen to a young person non-judgmentally, give them time to communicate how they feel and let you know what's been going on for them.

Empathise and inform – reassure them that they do not have to cope with this alone – that you are there to help and to get them the right support

Apply self-help techniques – ask about their support network and if there is not an immediate crisis - help them make a plan of what has helped in the past and what could help now

Reduce access to common methods of suicide - and also to places where suicide may be more likely to occur. This can be an effective way of preventing suicide. An assessment of clinical and inpatient environments and review of methods of medication provision should be regularly carried out to ensure that opportunities for prevention are systematically identified and acted on.

Prompts to consider:

Try to remain calm and don't act shocked when engaging with the young person. It might be hard for them to communicate so be ready to help them with prompts such as:

'It sounds as though things are really difficult at the moment - can you tell me a bit more?'

"It's not unusual to have thoughts of suicide. With help and support people work through these thoughts and stay safe. - there is help available and we can find it together"

Sometimes when people are feeling the way you are they think about suicide – is that what you're thinking about?

It sounds like you're thinking about suicide – is that right?

Things must be so painful for you to feel there is no way out I want to listen and help..

...Take your time and tell me what is happening for you at the moment..

...There is hope, there is help available and we can find it together

Listening to a young person talk about suicide is difficult and it's not uncommon to be reflecting on the conversation long after it has taken place. **Remember to think about *your own* support networks.**

Everyone has a role to play in suicide prevention - and while there is no perfect way of dealing with every situation, by sharing good practice - we can do all that we can to prevent suicide occurring

Useful resources for CYP suicide prevention

- **Childline** has advice for children having [suicidal thoughts](#) and information and tips for dealing with [self-harm](#)
- [PAPYRUS Prevention of Young Suicide](#) is a UK charity dedicated to the prevention of suicide and the promotion of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in young people
- [Ripple Suicide Prevention Tool](#) is free browser extension that signposts people who have searched for suicide or self-harm content to mental health support and advice. You should consider adding this extension to any computers your child has access to
- [Samaritans](#) is for anyone who's struggling to cope or who needs someone to listen without judgement or pressure
- The [OLLIE Foundation](#) provides advice on how to talk about suicide

Useful APPS for CYP self-harm / suicide prevention (as recommended by Papyrus helpline users)

- **Stay Alive** app is packed full of features with a mini safety plan, helpful resources, phone numbers, breathing techniques and strategies for staying safe from suicide.
- **Calm Harm** is developed by a Clinical Psychologist and is designed to help people to resist or manage the urge to self-harm. As with lots of apps, it is password protected making sure that all information can be kept private. It can help you to express feelings in a different way and provides safe alternatives to self-injury.
- **Mood Panda** is an interactive mood diary. It enables users to update and track their moods, helping young people to understand what's happening and what has an effect on their mood. It even has a feature to print out personal weekly and monthly mood history for use in therapy sessions or for self-care.
- **MoodGYM** is an interactive program to help young people with low mood. Based on cognitive behaviour and interpersonal therapy, it consists of five modules which help to explore why you feel the way you do. The app helps you to recognise what makes you upset and helps you to change the way you think. It also features interpersonal and assertiveness training skills.
- **Voda.co** is an LGBTQIA+ mental wellness app developed with leading NHS LGBTQIA+ psychotherapists: it provides self-guided digital therapy programmes derived from mindfulness and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)
- **Pacifica**: - more than a meditation app was recommended by Papyrus helpline advisors for young people