

HOW CAN I TELL IF SOMEONE MIGHT BE SUICIDAL?

Warning Signs

Speech - If a person talks about:

- Killing themselves
- Feeling hopeless
- Having no reason to live
- Being a burden to others
- Feeling trapped
- Unbearable pain

Behaviors

- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Looking for a way to end their lives, such as searching online for materials or means
- Withdrawing from activities
- Isolating from family and friends
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Visiting or calling people to say goodbye
- Giving away prized possessions
- Aggression
- Fatigue

Other Factors

- **Overall health:** Any mental health issues, prolonged lack of sleep/insomnia, terminal illness, new diagnosis
- **Environment:** Access to firearms, prolonged stress, traumatic event, exposure to suicide
- **History:** Previous attempts, family history, abuse, or trauma

WHAT DO I DO IF I NOTICE THESE SIGNS?

Ask the Question

- Are you thinking about killing yourself?
- Are you thinking about suicide?
- Have you had thoughts about taking your own life?

DO ask if you've identified the warning signs.

DO ask the question in a way that is natural and flows with the conversation.

DON'T ask the question as if you are looking for a "no" answer.

DON'T wait to ask until they are halfway out of the door.

WHAT IF THEY SAY YES?

Listen. Validate. Offer Hope.

Stay

- Stay with the person or have someone stay with them – do not leave them alone, even briefly

Support

- Provide support
- Don't judge or act angry

Get Help

- Determine if they can be safe
- Involve others in their support system
- Consider getting professional help
- If they cannot be safe:
 - Community Crisis Center open 24/7 walk-in or call 660-7500
 - Local emergency department
 - Call 911 – ask for CIT Officer