

# R.A.C.E. for Suicide Prevention

Recognize warning signs  
Ask directly about suicide  
Care  
Encourage them to seek help

If you think someone may be contemplating suicide, the following recommendations have been shown to reduce the risk.

- Find a time to privately let the person know what you have observed and express your concern. Stay calm and listen carefully to learn what they are thinking and feeling.
- Be supportive but direct; ask them if they are considering taking their own life. If they express a sense of hopelessness or suicidal thoughts, be sympathetic, but realize the person needs professional help. Do not leave them alone or promise confidentiality.
- Attempt to reach agreement on a safety plan that may include the following:
  - Offer to eliminate access to lethal means, firearms, pills, etc.
  - Convince them to seek professional help and be willing to accompany them.
  - Convey to them a sense of hope and remind them that suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem.
- Talk to a family member to ensure they are aware of the risk.
- Once the person is safe, follow up to see how they are doing.

Studies and experts in the field generally agree these recommendations tend to reduce the risk of suicide.

Please visit our [website](#) for resources, suicide prevention trainings and webinars, and to use the SAMHSA Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator.



Sources:

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

[jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2778234](http://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2778234)