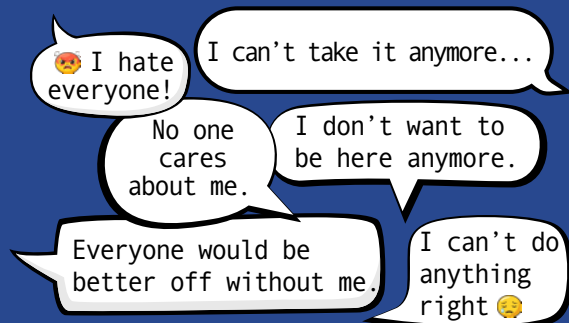


Common Warning Signs of Suicide Risk

Online Behaviours

Monitor their digital activity for concerning posts, comments, or reactions that suggest emotional distress or promote harmful behaviours, such as



Behavioural Changes

- Sudden impulsive or reckless behaviour
- Significant changes in appetite or sleep habits
- Unexpectedly giving away valued possessions
- Looking up information about self-harm or suicide methods online
- Social withdrawing from family, friends, and activities they once enjoyed
- Increasing use of alcohol or drugs
- Neglecting personal hygiene or self-care

Mood Changes



- Extreme mood swings or persistent irritability
- Feelings of hopelessness or despair
- Sudden changes in mood without clear reason

Crisis Intervention

In the event of a crisis, when the suicide urges become very intense or if you feel unsure if they can keep safe, you can do one of the following:

- In an emergency, call 999 or, if you can do so safely, bring them to the nearest hospital emergency department.
- If you suspect someone has attempted suicide, do not leave them alone, and call for immediate professional help:

Samaritans of Singapore (SOS)


 24-hour Hotline: 1767
 24-hour CareText: 9151 1767

Institute of Mental Health


10 Buangkok View
Buangkok Green Medical Park
Singapore 539747

General Enquiries: 6389 2000
Appointment Line: 6389 2200

 www.imh.com.sg

 Institute of Mental Health Singapore

 @imh.singapore

 Institute of Mental Health



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Mar 2026

Youth Suicide Prevention



Understanding Suicide Risk

Suicide is a leading cause of death among youths aged between 10 to 29 in Singapore from 2019 to 2024 – constituting 29.2% of all deaths within this age group in 2024¹.

Contrary to common misconceptions, people experiencing suicidal thoughts are in genuine emotional distress, not seeking attention. Suicidal feelings arise when psychological pain overwhelms their usual coping resources. When this emotional burden becomes too much to handle, individuals may feel hopeless and view suicide as the only escape from suffering. Anyone who expresses suicidal thoughts is at real risk of harm and should always be taken seriously and responded to with empathy.

Suicide Risk Factors

Suicide is rarely caused by a single factor but typically results from multiple contributing causes across three key areas²:

Individual Factors: Previous suicide attempts, mental health conditions, and substance abuse

Social Factors: Difficult childhood experiences, bullying, family or friend suicide history, relationship conflicts, and social isolation

Societal Factors: Harmful media portrayals of suicide, stigma associated with seeking help and discrimination

¹ Samaritans of Singapore (SOS) 2026

² The list highlights the main risk categories but is not exhaustive.

Help and Support Resources

1 Don't Keep Suicide a Secret

If someone you know is considering suicide, don't promise to keep it confidential. Let them know you would like to be there for them but explain that you need to involve trusted adults or professionals who can help.

2 Listen Without Judgement

What might seem minor to you can feel overwhelming to someone in crisis. Listen with empathy, take their concerns seriously, and avoid judging or minimising their feelings. Your supportive response can make the difference in whether they continue to seek help.

Helpful Response Example

I can see you're going through something really heavy right now, and I get that you just want the pain to stop.

But you don't have to face this alone. I'm here for you and we can get through this together. Want to talk about what's been happening? I'm listening. No judgement.

What to Avoid: Sometimes, even with your best intentions, trying too hard to give advice can be counterproductive. Don't call suicide "selfish" or emphasise how it would hurt family and friends. People considering suicide often already feel guilty about being a burden—adding shame or guilt will only make things worse, may stop them from opening up in future and is potentially harmful.

3 Stay Connected and Create Safe Spaces

Reach out through text or invite them to spend time together. Start by sharing your observations with care and let them know you are here to help.

Opening the Conversation

Hey, you've seemed pretty off lately. Is everything ok?

Encourage Help-seeking

No pressure if you're not ready to talk to me about it, but I genuinely care about you, and I don't want you going through this alone. Maybe we could find someone you'd feel more comfortable opening up to?

Offer Practical Support

Reassure them that seeking help shows strength, not weakness, and that everyone deserves support. Offer practical support such as accompanying them to appointments or researching options together.

4 Recognise Their Strength and Resources

Ask questions to help them see their resilience and available support systems, even during difficult times, such as:

What's been helping you get through everything so far?

What keeps you going even when things get really tough?

What's worked for you before when you've been in a tough spot?

How do you usually handle things when life gets messy?