

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Starting the Conversation:

How to Support Someone Thinking
About Suicide

Talking saves lives.

Offering an opportunity to talk may reduce the risk of acting on suicidal thoughts.

But it is important to know how to start the conversation about suicide, what to say during the conversation, and where to seek support.

Starting the Conversation

First find a private place to talk where there will not be any distractions. If you do not know what to say, try one of these opening lines:

- "I'm feeling worried about you, do you want to talk about anything? Maybe I can help."
- "It seems like something might be bothering you, do you want to talk about what's going on?"
- "Seems like you haven't been yourself lately. What's up?"

During the Conversation

It is important to give full attention to the individual when they are being open about how they are feeling.

Remember to:

- Keep it casual and relaxed.
- Think of the conversation as a chat, not a therapy session.
- Listen carefully.
- Avoid fixing the problem for them.
- Ask open-ended questions to help them talk instead of responding with "yes" and "no."
- Let them open up at their own speed. Do not demand answers or force them to say anything that they are not ready to.

For more tips on how to start the conversation and connect to resources visit our CAST Hub at www.novascotia.cmha.ca/cast-program/ or scan below.

