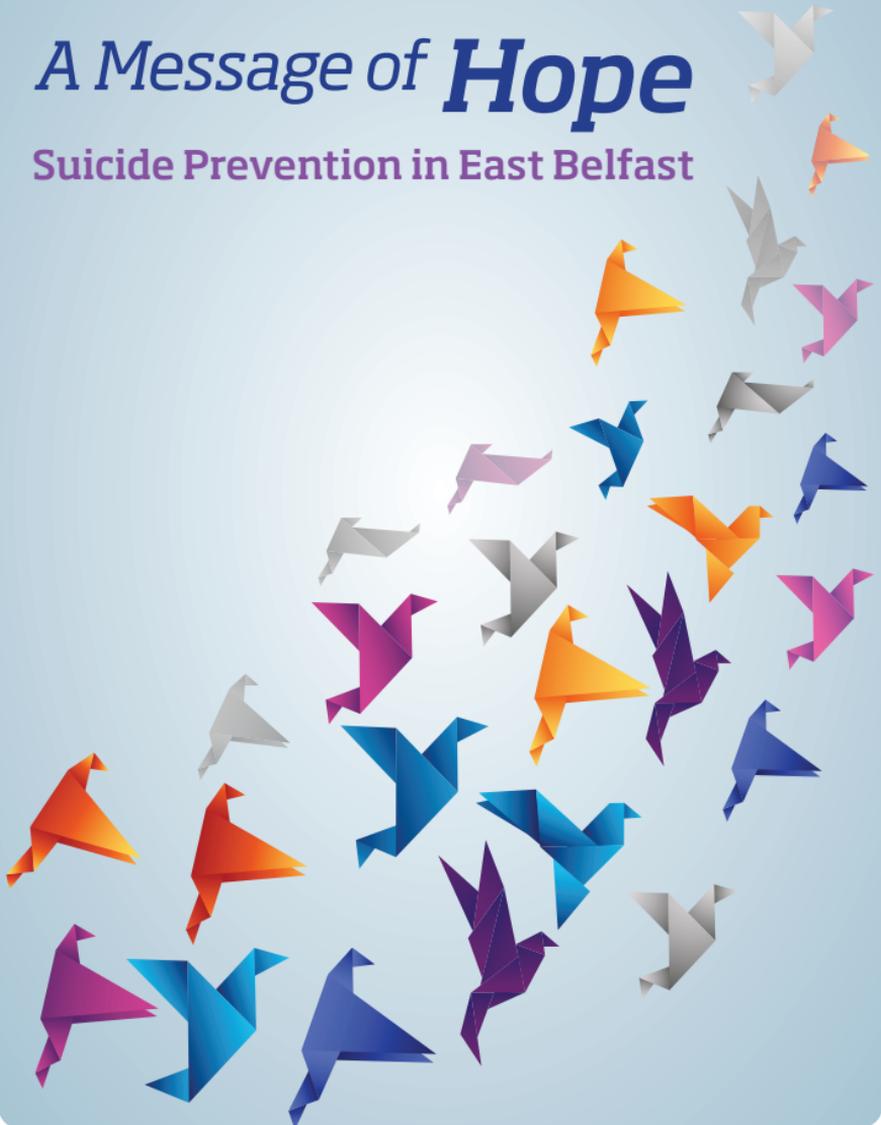


A Message of **Hope**

Suicide Prevention in East Belfast





Introduction

Suicide is something that we can all help to prevent. This booklet provides some basic information which could help to save the life of someone in crisis.

Please keep this booklet. Even if you don't think it is relevant to you there may be a time in the future when you, or someone you know, may need information on suicide prevention and support services.

It also provides information on the support that is available to anyone who has been bereaved by suicide.

2013 sees the launch of the Community Response Plan for East Belfast. The plan will help to support individuals, families and communities following a suicide.

To find out more about the Community Response Plan for East Belfast please visit:

www.ebcda.org or call **028 9045 1512**



Suicide - who is at risk?

Anyone can experience thoughts of suicide and it can happen at any stage in a person's life.

There are some times when people may be at higher risk of feeling suicidal, including:

- If they are experiencing a mental health issue such as depression or anxiety;
- If they are dealing with big changes in their life, e.g.: relationship breakup, moving home, redundancy or retirement;
- People who are abusing drugs and alcohol;
- People who are marginalised due to their sexuality, ethnic background or disability;
- If they are dealing with a traumatic event such as abuse, bullying or bereavement;
- If they have easy access to a means of attempting suicide such as firearms or large quantities of prescription drugs;
- If they are trying to cope with their problems on their own without asking for help or talking to someone about how they feel.



How do I know if someone is at risk of suicide?

People who are thinking about suicide may behave in very different ways.

Some will talk openly about how they are feeling and ask for help.

Others may try to hide the signs that they are feeling suicidal. If someone puts on a 'brave face' it can be more difficult to see the warning signs, but there may be clues in the things they say or do.

Make yourself aware of the warning signs and look out for them in the people around you. The more people in our community who are doing this, the more likely that we can identify those at risk of suicide and get them the support they need.

If you see one of these warning signs don't panic - it doesn't always mean that the person is suicidal but if you are concerned follow the advice on the next page.

If you are concerned that someone you know may be suicidal, you can call Lifeline for confidential advice and support on 0808 808 8000.

Look for these warning signs

Saying they feel suicidal

Saying they feel hopeless about the future

Saying they feel helpless and can't see a solution to problems

Talking about, or showing an interest in death or suicide methods

Change in personality, e.g.: quieter and more withdrawn or more angry and irritable

Increased use of alcohol or other drugs

Losing interest in things that they used to enjoy and do regularly

Not taking care of themselves, e.g.: not washing or eating properly

Not able to sleep or concentrate as normal

Sudden change in religious views and beliefs

Giving things away, especially things of importance or value to that person

Sorting out financial affairs such as making a will or planning funeral expenses

Looking for ways to harm themselves such as collecting large amounts of tablets or other items which would be used in a suicide attempt

Self-harming such as cutting or burning themselves (this doesn't always mean that the person is suicidal but it can be a sign that they are finding it difficult to cope)



How can I help?

If you think that someone may be at risk of suicide it's important that you speak to them about your concerns.

Tell them that you are worried about them and that you would like to help.

Some simple tips when helping someone who may be at risk of suicide:

Do	Don't
Take it seriously	Assume they are attention seeking
Stay calm and use a calm tone of voice	Panic
Tell them that you are concerned and want to help	Assume that someone else will deal with it
Listen	Judge the person or their feelings
Support them to seek help	Promise to keep it a secret
Talk through the options of where to get help	Impose choices on them
Get help as soon as possible	Try to deal with it on your own

Talk to someone about your concerns

Many people consider suicide at some point in their lives, but given time and the right help and support they can feel better. If you are concerned about someone take the time to talk to them and show them that you care. If they don't want to talk that's ok – just tell them that you will be there in the future if they change their mind. Sometimes it only takes a small gesture to save a life.

Even if someone is not suicidal, they should still seek help if:

- **They have been feeling down and unable to enjoy life for more than two or three weeks;**
- **They have problems with sleeping or going about their everyday life;**
- **They are having difficulties coping with problems or worries in their life.**

These are common signs of depression and anxiety. Your GP and the other services on the next page can help.

You can also find tips on looking after your mental health at: www.mindingyourhead.info



Support for suicidal crisis

The following organisations offer crisis support for people across Belfast:

Lifeline	0808 808 8000
free 24/7 helpline for those in crisis and their carers	
GP Out of Hours South & East Belfast	028 9079 6220
Or call your GP if during opening hours	
FASA	028 9080 3040
Crisis drop in at 178 - 180 Shankill Road Monday to Saturday 9.00am - 5.00pm	
PIPS	0800 088 6042
Crisis drop in at 279-281 Antrim Road Monday to Friday 9.00am - 5.00pm	
Lighthouse	028 9075 5070
Crisis drop in at 187 Duncairn Gardens Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.30pm	
West Belfast Suicide Awareness & Support	028 9023 9967
Crisis drop in at 209 Falls Road Monday to Friday 9.00am - 5.00pm	
Belfast Branch Samaritans	028 9066 4422
Free 24/7 helpline Crisis drop in at 5 Wellesley Avenue. Every day from 9.00am to 10.00pm text service 07725 90 90 90 or email jo@samaritans.org	



Counselling services in East Belfast

Counselling gives you the opportunity to talk about difficulties in your life. Sometimes it is easier to talk to someone you don't know and who will not judge you. Your counsellor is trained to listen and help you find ways to move on.

The organisations below offer free, confidential counselling on a range of issues.

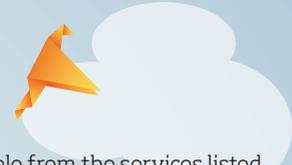
East Belfast Community Counselling	028 9046 0489
Counselling delivered at several locations across East Belfast including bereaved by suicide counselling	
New Life Counselling	028 9074 6184
Counselling delivered at Skainos Building, 240 Newtownards Road	
East Belfast Mission	028 9045 8560
Counselling delivered at Skainos Building, 240 Newtownards Road and Short Strand Community Centre	
Pathways to Health and Peace Counselling	028 9045 9458
Counselling service for ex-prisoners, ex-combatants and their families at Charter NI, 352 Newtownards Road	





Support for issues related to suicide

Aware Defeat Depression	08451 202 961
Helpline available 9.00am to 1.00pm Support Group at Holywood Arches every other Tuesday at 7.00pm	
OASIS Imago	028 9087 2277
Befriending service for those with common mental health issues	
Addiction NI	028 9073 1602
Treatment and advice on drug and alcohol problems	
East Belfast Independent Advice Centre	028 9073 5690
Advice on benefits, housing, employment, debt, etc.	
Rainbow Project	028 9031 9030
Support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people	
NICEM at Belfast Migrant Centre	028 9043 8962
Support for ethnic minorities	
Relate NI	028 9032 3454
Support for relationship and family issues.	
For more services and tips on looking after your mental health visit: www.mindingyourhead.info	



After a suicide

Bereavement counselling is available from the services listed on the previous page. There are also several support groups for families bereaved by suicide across Belfast:

SOS (Survivors of Suicide)	079 2829 1466
Monthly Family Support Group at Connswater Community Centre	
PIPS Families	0800 088 6042
Group Support at Lighthouse	028 9075 5070
Safe Together at FASA	028 9080 3040
Barnardo's Child Bereavement Service	028 9066 8333
A service for children and young people	

"When our son Greig took his own life there was a huge void in our family and we were all impacted emotionally, mentally and physically. It's a love that doesn't diminish, but the hurt DOES ease and the mental fog has cleared enough to let us function and love the family that we have. We have been involved with the SOS group for the past few years. To us the group has been a friend, a 'family' and a strength that we have been able to lean on when needed, helping us in our survival after suicide. If you have been impacted by the loss of a loved one through suicide there is support out there. Please take that step... WE DID."

Robert & Dorothy



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**East Belfast
Community
Development
Agency**



0808 808 8000



**Survivors
of Suicide**



**Public Health
Agency**