

# Child Protection in Education Spotlight Briefing

## Suicide

**Suicide is defined as a deliberate self-harm which results in death. A death resulting from an intentional, self-inflicted act.**

**Suicidal Behaviour is an act of self-harm which may have a fatal outcome with/without suicidal intent**

**Self-Harm is the self-poisoning or self-injury, irrespective of the apparent purpose of the act.**

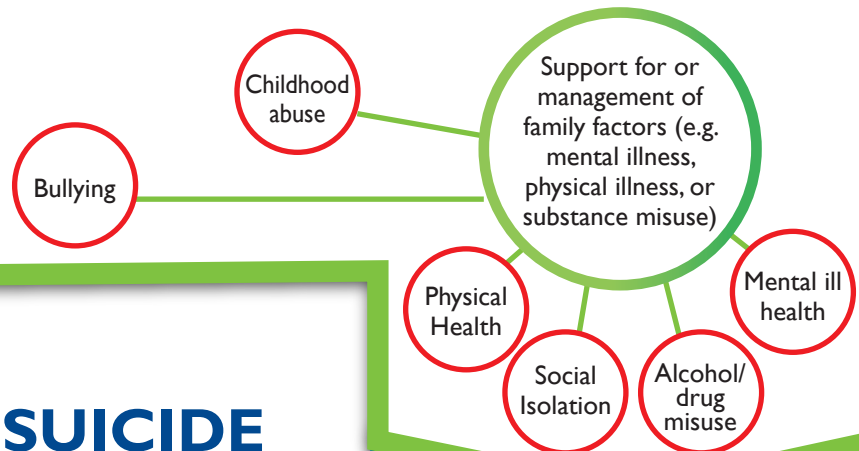
## Why it matters

In the UK, suicide is a leading cause of death in young people, accounting for 14% of deaths in 10-19 year olds. Children and young people at risk of suicide may be in contact with a range of services including primary care, mental health, social care and the justice system. However, they may find it hard to access the services they need or fall between agencies.

## Causes

Suicide in young people is rarely caused by one thing; it usually follows a combination of previous vulnerability and recent events.

**Important themes for suicide prevention are -**



## Further Information and Resources

Working with Children and Young People at Risk of Suicide Guidance  
Aberdeenshire GIRFEC Website - Child Protection

Suicide Prevention Awareness e-learning module, ALDO

Prevent Suicide (App)

Help for Suicidal Thoughts (NHS)

Coping with Suicidal Thoughts

8 in the moment things you should remember if someone opens up about suicide

Call 116 123 anytime or email

jo@samaritans.org for a reply within 24 hours

# SUICIDE PREVENTION

## Risk Factors

Although suicidal thoughts can affect anyone, there are certain factors which can make an individual more susceptible. Some of these risk factors are:

- Those with poor mental health
- Those from low socio-economic groups
- Those who have been bereaved (especially by suicide)
- Those who have self-harmed
- Those who have experienced trauma, including abuse
- Those who suffer prejudice, including LGBT+ young people who may also have fears over disclosure of their gender identity and may face bullying conditions

## Common signs that someone may be at risk of suicide

- They talk about wanting to die, and don't see the point in life
- Recently experienced stressful, significant life events
- They give away prized possessions
- They comment on no one noticing or caring if they are around anymore
- They show marked changes in behaviour, appearance, mood; distracted, sad, distant, lacking concentration
- After a period of significant distress, look out for a sudden uplift in mood or calmness
- They have had previous suicide attempts

## What to do?

**A**

**ASK** if they are thinking about suicide

Don't be afraid to use the words "suicide" or "death". Be direct in a caring and supportive way

**L**

**LISTEN** and show you care

Let the child or young person talk about their feelings and listen carefully to what they have to say. Don't judge them, try to understand why they are feeling this way

**E**

**ENCOURAGE** them to get help and support them to do so

Asking and listening are the first steps in developing a sense of hope. Encourage the child or young person to make an appointment with their GP or to call Samaritans or Breathing Space

**R**

**RIGHT** now

If the child or young person has an immediate suicide plan and means to carry it out, do not leave them alone

**T**

**TELL** someone

Never promise secrecy. Follow Child Protection procedures. Dealing with suicide can be difficult, find someone to talk to about your own feelings