



SUICIDE AWARENESS & PREVENTION

Know the *Right* Words to Say

How to Talk — and Listen — with Care

Starting the Conversation

Talking to someone about suicide is not easy, but your support could save a life. Choose a time when you're not in a rush, and find a quiet, private place to talk without distractions.

Be Present and Listen

Once the conversation begins, focus on listening. Each person's experience is unique — they may express deep emotional pain, or they may not feel ready to open up. Either response is okay.

- Avoid minimizing their feelings
- Avoid trying to “fix” things right away
- Ask open, gentle questions when appropriate
- Let them know you're there, no matter what

Ensure Immediate Safety

If someone talks about wanting to harm themselves or shares a specific plan, don't leave them alone.

- Stay with them
- Offer to contact a family member, counselor, or emergency services
- Remain calm, compassionate, and reassuring
- Share the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline — 988
- Offer to help them find additional resources

You Are Not Alone in Helping

You don't have to handle everything on your own. The USPS Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is here to support you and your colleagues — 24/7 — offering free, confidential* support any time you need it.

*EAP counselors have master's degrees and are licensed professionals. Your privacy is protected by strict federal and state confidentiality laws and regulations and by professional ethical standards for counselors. Information you share with the EAP may not be released to anyone without your prior written consent, except as required by law (e.g. when a person's emotional condition is a threat to him or herself or others, or there is suspected child or elder abuse) or the issuance of a court order upon a showing of good cause.