



Suicide Prevention

Any reference to suicide must be taken seriously.

As part of your volunteer commitment, you do not have the mandate to intervene or replace a professional, but you must quickly refer the elder to a suicide prevention service if the situation requires it. This will ensure a professional intervention adapted to the person's needs.

During your companionship, you may notice warning signals such as mood changes, or behaviors and comments that may raise concerns regarding this sensitive topic.

It is normal to question what you can do to help.

If you believe that the person is truly thinking of suicide, don't be afraid to ask if they are thinking about taking their own life

- If the person answers yes, attempt to establish a verbal contract with them, by saying, for example, "Promise me you will call Suicide Action if you are thinking about doing it."
- If the person refuses, you have a duty to bear witness, alert and inform professionals, and share information.

In this tip sheet, you will find useful resources and references to provide you with immediate, respectful, and confidential support.

We wish you a good companionship journey,

Little Brothers

What you should know

According to Suicide Action Montréal, most people who attempt or think about suicide do not necessarily want to die. They want to end their suffering first and foremost. When they are in a crisis situation, they see no solution or way out other than suicide.

It is therefore crucial to:

- Identify and act on these signs of distress;
- Take these signals seriously;
- Refer to professionals in the person's entourage as soon as possible.



Good practices

- Listen attentively and show empathy;
- Be aware of distress signals
- Ask directly: Are you currently thinking about suicide? Let them know they can talk to you and that you are a person of trust;

Note: the more details are precise, the greater the risk;

- Show an interest in what the person is experiencing, be sensitive to what they share with you;
- Highlight their strengths to foster satisfaction, pride and hope;
- Offer to help them seek help;
- Promptly inform specialized organizations and services;
- Clearly outline the companionship limitations.

As a witness, never hesitate to report the situation and ask for help.

Attitudes to adopt



- Keep in mind the guidelines of your companionship and refer the person to specialized organizations when necessary.
- As a volunteer, speak with your coordinator to take action. You are never alone: share your observations immediately, especially if you are worried.
- As a caregiver in an emergency situation, you may speak about it without the person's consent. If you are genuinely concerned, contact emergency assistance resources directly.
- Take care of yourself, focus on what gives you energy and brings you serenity.



Things to avoid

- Judging the person or the situation;
- Telling them to stop thinking about death;
- Spacing out your visits, detaching yourself;
- Remaining silent, keeping it a secret.

Additional resources

Telephone

In case of immediate danger: 9-1-1

Quebec suicide prevention hotline:

1 866 APPELLE (277-3553), 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, anywhere in Quebec

TELAÎNÉ : 514-353-2463

L'Appui: 1- 855 852-7784

or <https://www.lappui.org/en/>

Interligne (formerly Gai-Écoute): 1 888 505-1010

Online

Suicide Action Montreal,

<https://suicideactionmontreal.org/en/>

Suicide.ca, <https://suicide.ca/en>

- *I'm worried about a loved one*, <https://suicide.ca/en/im-worried-about-someone>
- *Suicide Prevention Week in Quebec: 5 things to know*, <https://suicide.ca/en/lets-talk-about-suicide/news-and-suicide/suicide-prevention-week-in-quebec-5-things-to-know>

Association québécoise de prévention du suicide (AQPS), *Comprendre*, <https://www.aqps.info/comprendre/> (In French only)

