

This toolkit was taken from Mental Health at Work - website closed June 2024. Mental Health at Work was curated by Mind and supported by the Mental Health At Work Leadership Council. We are also proud to work with the Mental Health & Productivity Pilot

Helping your organisation prevent suicide

Suicide can be a really difficult topic to talk about – but we do know talking can help. Starting a conversation at work about our mental wellbeing can make a huge difference for someone going through a difficult time, and providing support when they reach out can literally be lifesaving.

World Suicide Prevention Day 2023 is Sunday 10th of September, and we want to encourage you to think about the ways you, as a colleague or employer, can support your teams. We've collected some of the best resources on our site for starting the conversation, providing support if someone tells you they need help, and combating some of the reasons why someone may be having suicidal thoughts.

Suicide can affect anyone – but according to [CALM](#), there are some factors that make someone more likely to take their own life:

- Being male
- Identifying as [LGBTQ+](#)
- Being black, Asian or from a minority ethnic background
- Being an ex prisoner
- Previous [bereavement](#) by suicide
- Trauma or abuse
- Drug and alcohol [addiction](#)

And, they estimate that one suicide directly affects 135 people – leaving a lasting impact on family, friends, colleagues, neighbours and acquaintances.

Alice Hendy lost her brother to suicide in 2020. He was just 21 years old.

“Josh was a fun loving, happy brother on the outside,” she says. “We were extremely close and shared a love of travel, food, football and festivals. But he had suffered with his mental health for a number of years, and unfortunately didn't share the fact that he was struggling, so on the inside he was in a very dark place. Everyone loved Josh. He was kind, thoughtful and would do anything to help others. **We miss him every second of every day.**”

After he died, Alice found he had been using the internet to search for information about how to take his own life. This spurred her into action, creating a browser extension called [R;pple](#). “Once downloaded, if an individual were to search for harmful material online relating to self-harm and suicide, **my piece of tech would interrupt their search,**” Alice explains.

“Instead, they will be presented with a short [breathing exercise](#) followed by a message of hope that things will get better. They will then be signposted to one of the many suitable mental health resources that can give them the help and hope that they deserve.”

R;pple is free for individuals, parents and guardians, schools, colleges, sixth forms, universities and charities. Businesses and corporate clients can use R;pple for a price per machine, per month.

As well as installing R;pple, Alice suggests building your organisation's confidence in talking about mental health. “I would ensure that [mental health first aid](#) training was available to the staff to **raise awareness on what to do and say**, as well as what [not to do and say](#), if a

colleague is struggling,” she says. “Don’t be afraid to ask the staff member how they are and check in with them regularly using an open dialogue.”

Here’s some of the best resources on the Mental Health at Work website aimed at preventing a suicide in your organisation.

Resources in this toolkit:

[Supporting someone with suicidal thoughts | Samaritans](#)

It can be difficult to know what to do if a colleague tells you they are having suicidal thoughts. This guide from Samaritans outlines the steps you can take to help. Reading it now means you'll be prepared before it may happen.

[How to talk to your employer about your mental health](#)

You may be experiencing these feelings yourself, and wish to disclose them. While many organisations are working hard to break the stigmas around mental health, disclosing your own concerns can make you feel vulnerable. This guide from Nuffield Health can help you to plan who to speak to, what to say, and how to progress.

[Reducing the risk of suicide: a toolkit for employers](#)

This is a toolkit to support senior leadership, line managers, HR and occupational health and safety professionals to develop strategies to reduce the risk of a suicide that impacts the workplace, identify staff who may have suicidal feelings, and deal with crises.

[Suicide prevention training from the Zero Suicide Alliance](#)

This free online training shows how you can help people who might be contemplating suicide by bringing up the subject and offering support. The course is available to everyone and is accessible without any kind of registration or login.

[Responding to suicide risk in the workplace: A guide for line managers](#)

This guide can help managers to talk about suicide, spot the warning signs that someone might be at risk, and support their teams if someone takes their own life.

[Approaching a sensitive conversation around mental ill health](#)

If you're worried about someone's wellbeing, then talking to them can help. But every conversation a manager has with a colleague who may be experiencing mental ill health will be different. This PDF guide from Acas has tips for managers to think about when approaching such a conversation

[Coping with the rising cost of living](#)

We know money problems are linked to suicidal thoughts. This web page from Step Change offers advice about managing debt, as well as explaining what benefits you might be entitled to.

[Samaritans helpline](#)

The Samaritans helpline is available 24 hours a day, providing a one-to-one listening service for anyone experiencing distress. Sharing this helpline with your staff means they'll have somewhere to turn if they would like someone to listen to their problems.

[Guide for colleagues: what can you do to help a colleague returning to work?](#)

Sometimes, a colleague may need time off as a result of their mental health. This guide is designed to help you to support a colleague who is returning to work after a mental health-related absence. It's based on the IGLOO model, looking at the Individual, Group, Leader and Organisation's parts to play.

[Support after a Suicide](#)

Sadly, your organisation might still be affected by a suicide. This guide from SoBS, 'Support after a Suicide', contains information about coping with what comes afterwards, offering support and practical help.