



Making a 'safety' or 'crisis' plan

Starting the conversation...

It can help to make a plan

There are likely to be moments of crisis from time to time, and it is useful to feel you and your young person have a plan. If your young person is being seen by CAMHS it is likely that a safety plan will be discussed there, but it is worth checking. But you may not have good or immediate contacts with CAMHS, in which case this template gives you and your young person some ideas about what you might want to include.

Thoughts will pass

The first thing to say is that it is really important to realise that most thoughts will pass, and to reassure your young person that – with support – they can get through the tough times. Thoughts do not have to result in actions and planning can help.

The plan belongs to the young person

Try to make an agreement with your young person that they will not act on any suicidal thoughts without telling you or telling someone they trust or telling a helpline such as Samaritans or Young Minds. The plan however does not have to involve you and it is important that the young person comes up with the answers themselves. It may be very difficult even having this conversation, but it is important to remain calm and hold your own fear in check as much as you can. The important thing is to listen to your young person, and for this plan to belong to them.

What to do with the plan

Help your young person to keep the plan in a place where they can access it – on their phone for example – and reassure them that you do not even need to know when they use it, but just that you want to know it exists and that they believe in it.

What to include

There is no set way for how a crisis plan should look. Some plans also include sections to remind the young person of the good things in their life or things they are looking forward to, but the main thing is that it includes practical actions that they know they can take.

Below is an example of plan that you can support your young person to complete

IF YOU ARE IN CRISIS YOU CAN: Text YM to 85258 for crisis support from Young Minds OR Call the Samaritans on 116123

www.helpforparents.org.uk

My Crisis Plan

1. **List three people you can call if you are feeling in crisis.** A crisis can mean when you feel you can't cope, want to hurt yourself, feel very panicky or are feeling suicidal.

2. **List three (or more) things you can do to help yourself right now (for example, call Young Minds, go to a friend, go somewhere in public)**

3. **Where can you go where you feel safe?**

4. **What have you done before that worked?**

5. **What should you definitely not do right now, because it will make you feel worse?**

6. **What advice would you give to someone else who was in your situation? What can you tell yourself?** (This to will pass? My thoughts are real and valid but they are not actions? I need to take some steps to help myself?)

7. **If the feelings won't go away, or you have hurt yourself and you are scared, or you have taken an overdose, what should you do?**
 - Go to accident and emergency
 - Call 999, or ask someone to call for you
 - Call the CAMHS crisis team if you have access to one
 - Ask someone to call your parents?

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