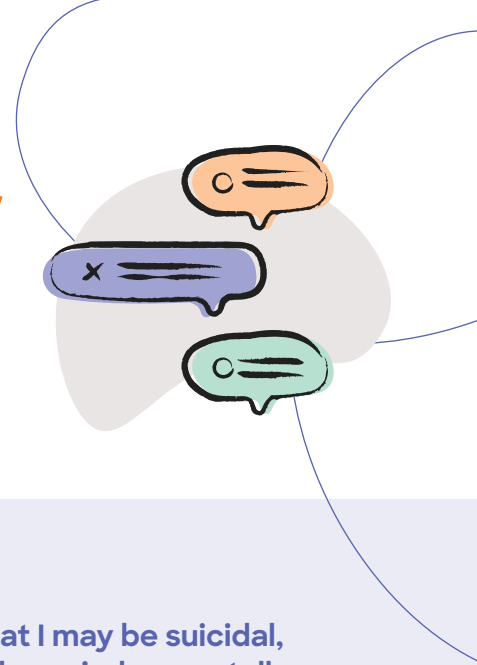


What young people want their parents and carers to know

We spoke with young people about what they want their parents and carers to know when talking about self-harm, suicide and social media. This is what they told us.



Keep an open mind

Social media isn't all bad, and in some ways, it can provide me with some refuge.

Sit down and listen

Take time to understand.

Validate my feelings

Don't minimise what I'm going through, even if I'm being emotional.

Don't force me to share before I'm ready

Don't panic!

It is much easier to share difficult things when I can feel that you are calm.

Build trust

If I trust you, I'm much more likely to reach out to you for help. Please do not secretly follow my activity online – if you have questions, ask me directly.

Remind me of my strengths

Encourage me to draw on them to help get through tough times.

You don't need to have all the answers or fix my problems

When I'm struggling, having you simply listen to me without judgment can be so nice.

If you're worried that I may be suicidal, ask me directly and non-judgementally

You might say, "Sometimes when people feel this way, they might think about suicide. Are you having thoughts of suicide?"

Help me to understand the risks and benefits of social media

Understand that removing my access to social media is removing an important part of my life

Point me towards helpful resources and let me know where to get professional help

If or when I need it – this might include online mental health services, such as eheadspace. Let me know about safe spaces, such as LGBTIQ+ affirmative community groups, or help me access a mental health professional or a general practitioner.

If you're unsure how you can help, ask me!

You might simply say, "Is there anything I can do to help you right now?"

Consider your own use of social media

We all struggle with the amount of time we spend on our phone. Instead of focusing only on my screen time, it helps if you can shift the conversation from, "You should do this" to "This has been really helpful for me, what do you think might help you?"