

Please feel free to contact any of your Health Champions for help, advice or with suggestions of how to promote health and wellbeing in our school.

To email the whole team use:

healthchampions@wadebridge.cornwall.sch.uk

Individual emails and where to find us:

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Suicide Awareness

Your Health Champions will be holding a Pinnies next week at break time on



Tuesday 7th July



We would like to raise funds and awareness for **The Samaritans** who provide an invaluable 24 hour service to anyone and everyone who needs a listening ear. You do not have to be suicidal to get in touch with them, however, if someone is considering ending their life, Samaritans are the organisation to call - 24hours, 365 days a year!

Truro Branch: 01872 277277 National 08457 90 90 90 www.samaritans.org

Why is it important to talk about suicide? Research shows that talking about suicide prevents suicide. Statistics are shocking and in this sometimes chaotic and stressful modern world we would like to make sure that you all know about the support that is available inside and outside school. In 2013 suicides in the UK rose by 4% - in total, 6233 suicides were registered in the UK: a rate of 11.9 per 100,000 (19 per 100,000 for men and 5.1 per 100,000 for women). Suicide is the biggest single killer of men in the UK with men three times more likely to take their own life than women and of these, most will be between the ages of 25-55. The male suicide rate is the highest since 2001 and suicides among middle aged men aged 45-59 are at 25.1 per 100,000 which is the highest rate for this group since 1981.

One in five of us will have suicidal thoughts at some point in our lives. If you had broken your leg you wouldn't hesitate to seek help. We need to talk about it.

Why do people take their own lives? Suicide is very complex and there is not always one single reason that leads a person to decide to kill themselves. Everyone is different. There may be lots of reasons that have been building up over time and a person can see no other way out. Sometimes when a person feels suicidal it is not necessarily that they want to die, they just want the situation or the painful emotions they feel to end. Men are more likely to take their own life because of pressure to be in control and being ashamed to show any sign of weakness.

How can Samaritans Help? Samaritans are there to listen and will talk through a person's worries with them, focusing on their thoughts and feelings. Details are not important, but they may ask the caller questions to help them explore their feelings. Hopefully by talking things through the caller will begin to see their situation more clearly and will be able to think about what options they have. Sometimes callers may cry or will get angry at how unfair life is; they may need to go over things several times to make sense of them; Samaritans will be there to listen for as long as the caller needs them to be. Samaritans is completely confidential, the caller doesn't even have to give their name if they don't want to; they won't judge, they won't make decisions for the caller or tell them what to do. They will just be there to listen and offer support when callers need them. It's important to note that not everyone who calls Samaritan's is suicidal, in fact only one in five callers have thoughts of suicide.

Signs that you, or someone that you know may be struggling to cope:

- Lacking energy or feeling tired
- Feeling restless and agitated
- Feeling tearful
- Not wanting to talk to or be with people, becoming withdrawn
- Not wanting to do things you usually enjoy
- Finding it hard to cope with everyday things
- Using alcohol or drugs to cope with feelings. Alcohol and drugs can often make things worse. It might be tempting to “drown your sorrows” but it may make you more likely to act on suicidal thoughts.

What Might help?

- By talking to someone, hopefully you'll get to a place where you see your situation in a different light
- Connect with others / ask for help - family, friends, Health Champions, colleagues
- Visit your GP / Join a support group / Take up a new hobby
- Be kind to yourself / Relax / Have fun / Try Mindfulness
- Exercise regularly - exercise can be as effective as antidepressant medication in reducing depressive symptoms
- Eat healthily - as important for mental health as it is for protecting against physical health problems.
- Balanced sleep - important for both physical and mental health
- See the bigger picture

Suicide can feel like a really difficult thing to talk about, but every year thousands of people go through times where they have suicidal thoughts. Not everyone who has thoughts about killing themselves will end up taking their life, but some people who do will. Always remember, suicidal thoughts are nothing to be ashamed of and you don't have to face it alone. It's not always possible to prevent suicidal thoughts but keeping your mind healthy with regular exercise, healthy eating and maintaining friendships can help you cope better with stressful or upsetting situations.

The most important thing you can do if you do feel suicidal is talk to someone you trust about how you are feeling and try to share with them what you are going through. This can feel really hard sometimes, especially if we worry that we may upset or worry them by telling them how we feel but if you can talk about it you will find that there are people out there who can help. Sharing your feelings with someone else can make them seem less overwhelming and can help you to feel less isolated. No problem is ever impossible to overcome, it just might feel like that sometimes. If you don't feel you can talk to someone close to you see your GP or call a helpline, e.g. Samaritans.

If you're worried that someone you know may be considering suicide, let them you know that you care and that they are not alone. Try to encourage them to talk about how they are feeling, listening is the best way to help. Try to avoid offering solutions and try not to judge, criticise or blame. Ask questions to encourage them to talk about how they're feeling while allowing them to remain in control. Use open ended questions such as "Where did that happen?" or "How did that feel?". Avoid statements such as "I know how you feel" or "Try not to worry about it" as these won't encourage conversation. Talking to a friend, relative or trusted colleague can be very comforting but the feelings might not go away so you might need to encourage them to contact a professional who can help deal with the underlying issues behind their suicidal thoughts. You might also need some support for yourself - you might feel upset, confused or scared, all perfectly normal responses. Supporting someone who is suicidal can be very stressful and a time when you may need the support of others around you. If someone close to you says they want to end their life now:

- be supportive and accept what they are telling you;
- ask whether they are thinking about ending their life now or soon;
- try and get a better understanding of why;
- ask about their reasons for living and dying, exploring their reasons for living in more detail;
- ask whether they have tried to kill themselves before;
- ask if they have a plan for how they would do it in the future;
- try to make them safe and be open to making reasonable steps to help them keep safe for now;
- follow up any commitments that you agree to.

Some Practical Self Help Tips

- Remove any means of killing yourself – this is important while you learn how to cope with suicidal feelings. For example, make sure that you have only small quantities of medication in the house; if you are no longer driving carefully, hand over your car keys to a friend.
- Make a distraction box – fill a box with memories and items that can provide comfort and help lift your mood when you feel down. The box can contain anything that is meaningful and helpful to you - a CD you like listening to, a book, photos, letters, poems, notes to yourself, a cuddly toy, a perfume, jokes etc.
- Give yourself a break – and take a break from yourself. If your attention is focused mainly on your distress, try instead to notice the world around you. Like any new habit, it may take effort at first, especially if you feel cut off and disconnected.
- Be kind to your body – regular exercise like walking, running or swimming can lift your mood and make it easier to sleep better. Yoga and meditation can energise you and help to reduce tension. A healthy diet can help you feel stronger and may help you feel better. When you feel well, it might help if you put together a list of meals that are easy to prepare. If you have been misusing alcohol and drugs, cutting down on these will make your mind clearer and better able to focus on how to help yourself.
- Express yourself – you might like to write down your thoughts, feelings and achievements (however small) in a daily diary. Alternatively, creating artworks based on your feelings can also be a powerful tool. Over time, this can help you see what you are thinking and feeling.
- Learn from others – reading about how other people have managed difficult times is usually inspiring. Self-help books can suggest ways to improve your self-esteem and take you through practical problem-solving exercises.
- Learn 'distress tolerance' skills – do this when you are well. These can help you cope when in crisis and support your ongoing mental health - <http://www.getselfhelp.co.uk/distresstolerance.htm>
- Make a wellness recovery action plan (WRAP) – write down what helps you to feel better about yourself. It can include things like going for a walk or talking to someone you trust. Think about the kind of help you need from others when you need support.

Watch the U Can Cope vimeo to see their message on how overcoming suicidal thoughts is possible
<https://vimeo.com/48721158>

Visit the website at
<http://www.connectingwithpeople.org/ucancope>

Useful Numbers

Samaritans

24 hours a day 365 days a year

For anyone experiencing distress, despair or suicidal thoughts.

Truro Branch: 01872 277277

National 08457 90 90 90

Calls cost 2p per minute plus your telephone company's access charge

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Website: www.samaritans.org

CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably)

5pm - midnight 365 days a year

Aiming to prevent male suicide in the UK

0800 58 58 58

**Samaritans' Vision is that
fewer people die by suicide.**

*If you don't talk, nobody
knows*

*If nobody knows, no one
can help*

WELCOME TO SAMARITANS OF CORNWALL AT TRURO

If something's troubling you, get in touch:



01872 277277
08457 909090



jo@samaritans.org
(UK and ROI)



19 Treyew Road
Truro
Cornwall
TR1 2BY

Usual hours open to receive callers at the door:

We are open from 9am to 9pm every day of the year.
You don't need to make an appointment.



Some information on Cornwall Samaritans

Cornwall Samaritans took its first call over 40 years ago in March 1970. The service is needed as much today as it was all those years ago, as a listening ear for our local community, with ordinary people supporting those struggling to cope, round the clock, every single day of the year.

As a branch we are always looking for support locally so that we can be there, providing a safe place for people to be themselves and talk to us off the record about whatever is getting to them. As well as offering emotional support to people by telephone, email and face to face, we also reach out to support people within the community.

Each week we provide valuable emotional support within Treliske Hospitals A&E unit. We support patients, their friends and families as well as the staff within the department. We also provide fortnightly support at Camborne's Food Bank.

Being a volunteer can help change lives and we are always looking for people to help us provide this vital listening service. Why not pop along to an information session to learn more about [becoming a volunteer](#), what we do, and ways you could help? Our next information evening is on **Tuesday 7th July at 7pm** (you are welcome to bring a friend with you if you like).

Not everyone wants to be a listening volunteer, but there are so many ways to support Samaritans such as administration, [fundraising](#), joining our Friends groups or helping to look after the building. There is something for everyone so do come along and find out more!

If you would like to talk to us off the record about how you're feeling, and would like emotional support please call our helpline on [01872 277277](tel:01872277277)/ [08457 909090](tel:08457909090) or email jo@samaritans.org

If you would like to speak to someone about supporting Cornwall Samaritans at Truro please ring 01872 277277 - please check you are talking to Truro.

Our Registered Charity Number: 262105

*You can't magic away feelings of depression
and despair, but you can talk to Samaritans.
Whatever you're going through, we're there.
On 08457 90 90 90, 24 hours a day.*

SAMARITANS