



# Suicide prevention policy.

## EEB1

This document is in line with the EEB1 welfare policy, based on the concept of welfare as a state of comfort, health or happiness in itself. This principle is set out in the official document of the European Schools Central Office, *Well-Being Policy for Pupils in European Schools. 2022-01-D-6-en-2*.

As a school, we are committed to ensuring the safety and health of all students. Aware that adolescence is a challenging period marked by ups and downs, we aim to educate and empower students to face difficult issues with confidence, while seeking outside help when needed. Similarly, we strive to cultivate a caring and supportive school environment where students can rely on the trusting cooperation of staff for appropriate help and support in any mental health-related situation.

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### 1. Key facts about suicide

In Belgium, five people commit suicide every day. Research highlights the importance of follow-up and support, given the recidivism rate of 15% after the first attempt and 35% after the second. Vulnerability and stress factors can lead to suicidal thoughts, creating a sense of tunnel vision where alternative solutions are hard to see. This state of despair gives the impression that the pain is permanent. However, there is often ambivalence - the desire for change and relief may outweigh the desire for death. Suicide is rarely caused by a single factor; rather, it results from a complex interplay of causes accumulated over time.

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### 2. Guidelines

Suicide doesn't happen without warning. Generally, suicidal people give messages and clues about their intentions to alert those around them. These may be cries for help, vestiges of hope, or expressions of ambivalence. These warning signs can be classified into different categories.

Faced with a person in a suicidal crisis, who is directly or indirectly expressing thoughts of suicide, each person will act according to his or her own sensitivity, responsibilities and limits. We must avoid putting ourselves in difficulty or danger by providing support and assistance to someone in a suicidal crisis. The aim is that, by adopting the right reflexes and attitudes, we can break the isolation in which the person in a suicidal crisis finds himself, and also enable the person to feel better understood in his own suffering.



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Early warning signs can be used to risks and then guide the conversation or questions, enabling the person to open up about their suicidal thoughts and recognize the suffering they are experiencing.

Once warning signs have been detected, it's important to intervene if you're concerned about a person's well-being. You are encouraged to discuss the person's problems and emotions with them, in order to assess the level of urgency and dangerousness. In order to provide the necessary help and prevent the person from acting out, we recommend that you adopt the right attitudes and reflexes

### For students with suicidal ideation (for details see Appendices I, II and III)

1. **Recognize the signs:** behavioral changes such as insufficient sleep, withdrawal from others, difficulty concentrating, excessive rumination, increased alcohol and drug use, neglect of self-care, may indicate suicidal thoughts.
2. **Communicate with parents:** if possible, discuss your feelings and needs with your parents.
3. **Reach out to someone you trust:** share your feelings with a family member, friend, teacher or school counselor for support.
4. **Seek professional medical and psychological help:** the school's nurses and psychologists are there to help you. Outside the school, specialized medical and therapeutic care can provide additional support.
5. **Give priority to yourself and your personal care:** make sure you get enough sleep, eat a healthy diet and engage in activities that bring you joy and satisfaction.

### For students who support a classmate with suicidal thoughts (for details see Appendices I, II and III)

1. **Recognize the signs and take them seriously** (for details see Annex I and II): comments such as "I'd like to sleep forever" or "It doesn't matter anymore" should not be ignored.
2. **Listening without judging:** approach your peer with empathy and respect for his or her autonomy.
3. **Engage in conversation:** ask open-ended questions such as "Are you really thinking of ending your life?" or "Are you having suicidal thoughts?".
4. **Normalize help-seeking:** dark thoughts should be seen as problems to be solved with the right support, rather than as shameful secrets that are difficult to share (although it's a very positive first step to do so).
5. **Encourage professional support:** suggest talking to an adult such as a school nurse, psychologist, teacher or guidance counselor, and offer to accompany them.
6. **Share responsibility:** don't try to handle the situation alone. Inform a trusted adult to ensure proper follow-up.
7. **Respect privacy:** respect confidentiality, but don't promise secrecy. Professional help is essential for your peer's safety.
8. **Seek support for yourself:** discuss your feelings and concerns with an adult you trust.

### For employees



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1. **Recognizing warning signs:** (for more details, see Appendices I, II and III)
  - Behavior: sudden increase in absences, drop in performance, neglect of personal care, substance abuse or eating disorders.
  - Emotional: crying, mood swings, irritability, anxiety or low energy.
  - Social: isolation, withdrawal from leisure activities or reduced interaction.
  - Verbal: expressions of despair, such as "It's all pointless" or "I'm fed up".
2. **Approach with care:** If you think a student is struggling, you need to engage them in a non-judgmental, empathetic conversation. Create a safe space for them to share their feelings. (see Annex II)
3. **Activate support at school level:**
  - Inform the school counselor or school psychologist to involve the CARE team (made up of the school counselor, nurse, school psychologist and vice-principal).
  - For immediate risks, accompany the student to the infirmary.
  - Refer the student to the school psychologist for coordination of outpatient care.
4. **Encourage outside help:** Ask for specialized care outside school.
5. **Involve the family:** The CARE team will invite parents/caregivers to collaborate on a support plan, with an emphasis on professional intervention.
6. **Demonstrate transparency:** Clearly inform the student of the people who will be involved in his or her case.
7. **Keeping in touch:** Combating social isolation by fostering constant communication and links.
8. **Respect confidentiality:** Share information only with the CARE team and key stakeholders, while balancing privacy and security considerations.

By adhering to these guidelines, EEB1 seeks to create an environment in which students feel supported, understood and equipped to deal effectively with mental health issues. Together, we can foster resilience and safeguard the well-being of our school community.

### Contacts at EEB1

Medical team / school nurses : [UCC-INFIRMARY@eursc.eu](mailto:UCC-INFIRMARY@eursc.eu)

02/373.86.35

School psychologists :

- Tel. 02/37 38 687

- Tel. 02/37 38 750

Education advisors :

S1 : 02 /37 38 637

S1 : 02/37 38 720



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S2 : 02/ 37 38 644

S3 : 02/ 37 38 761

S4 : 02/ 37 38 660

S5 : 02/ 37 38 662

S6 : 02/ 37 38 645

S7 : 02/ 37 38 629

School Life: 669

Versatile S2-S3-S4: 02 / 37 38 758

Versatile S5-S6-S7: 02/ 37 38 722

Secondary Cycle Assistant Manager: 02/ 37 38 639

### **ANNEX I: Warning signs**

Signs of depression:

- Sleep disorders (insomnia/hypersomnia)
- Appetite disorder (anorexia/bulimia)
- Lack of energy, extreme fatigue or restlessness at times
- Inability to enjoy anything
- Sadness, tears, discouragement
- Indecision
- Irritability, anger, rage
- Devaluation, low self-esteem
- Increased anxiety.

Social isolation:



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- Loss of interest and pleasure in activities
- Withdrawal, seeking solitude
- Cutting off contact with family and friends...
- Mutism, withdrawal, refusal to communicate
- Lack of emotion

### Behaviors :

- Lack of attention, poor concentration, absences
- Dropping out of work or school
- Hyperactivity or extreme slowness
- General disinterest
- Attraction and preoccupation with the subject of death and reincarnation
- Change in appearance, negligence
- Excessive use of alcohol, drugs and medication
- Self-injurious and dangerous behavior
- Preparing for a departure, final arrangements, farewell letters, gifts of objects of great personal value
- Drawings or artworks about death
- Sudden attraction to firearms or toxic products

### Direct messages :

- It's no longer worth living
- I'd be better off dead
- I'm afraid of killing myself
- I want to die
- I'm going to kill myself

### Indirect messages :

- I'm useless
- You'll be better off without me
- You won't see me much longer
- I'm going on a long trip
- Soon I'll have peace
- I think he was brave to kill himself

## **ANNEX II: Attitudes and behavior**

- Take any expression of intent to commit suicide seriously
- Identify and dare to go to the person who seems to be in trouble
- Establishing a bond of trust with the person in distress



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- Create and respect a framework of caring relationships that fosters security and trust
- Practicing active listening
- Invite the person to confide in you, respecting his or her rhythm
- Daring to talk about suicidal thoughts
- Being empathetic
- Stay calm, speak quietly, respect silences
- Don't judge
- Encourage people to express their emotions
- Accepting that you can't understand everything
- Welcoming the person's emotions, suffering, values and opinions
- Keeping your distance
- Be sincere and honest
- Respect your limits and ensure consistency between what you say and what you do
- Inform the person in distress about available resources
- Encourage the person in distress to contact a help or emergency service (see List and Contact Details of Competent Organizations).
- Accompany the person in distress to make an appointment with a support service (psychologist, psychotherapist, psychiatrist, doctor, Suicide Prevention Center).

### **ANNEX III: Attitudes and behavior to avoid**

- Minimizing suffering and trivializing the person's experience
- Judging the person in suicidal crisis
- Quickly propose solutions
- Preventing the expression of emotions
- Lecturing him
- Encourage him to live out his duty to those closest to him (children, spouses, parents, etc.).
- Making the person in distress feel guilty
- Follow on from one question to the next
- Seeking to understand at all costs
- Be positive at all costs
- Giving him false hope
- A challenge



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- Committing oneself beyond one's responsibilities and capabilities
- Ignoring your limits
- Let yourself be locked in secrecy

## Contacts outside school

☎ 1813	<a href="mailto:mail@zelfmoordlijn.be">mail@zelfmoordlijn.be</a> chat via <a href="https://www.zelfmoord1813.be/">https://www.zelfmoord1813.be/</a>	Suicide line (NL)
☎ 0800 32 123	<a href="https://www.preventionsuicide.be/">https://www.preventionsuicide.be/</a> Anonymous online forum: <a href="https://www.preventionsuicide.be/forum">www.preventionsuicide.be/forum</a>	Suicide prevention center (FR)
☎ 02 648 40 14	<a href="https://www.chsbelgium.org/">https://www.chsbelgium.org/</a>	CHS Community Help Line (ENG)
☎ 103	<a href="https://www.103ecoute.be/">https://www.103ecoute.be/</a>	Ecoute Enfants (for children), young people and parents)



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		(FR)
☎ 107	<a href="https://tele-accueil.be/">https://tele-accueil.be/</a>	Télé-accueil (FR)
☎ 112	<a href="https://112.be/">https://112.be/</a>	Emergency number (NL)

Students can also install applications on their phones. These apps contain various tools that can help you overcome a crisis or prevent the next one. Plus, if you want to be there for someone else, you can start using these apps.

App NL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Backup</u> <a href="https://apps.apple.com/be/app/backup-door-zelfmoord-1813/id999043318">https://apps.apple.com/be/app/backup-door-zelfmoord-1813/id999043318</a> <a href="https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=be.zelfmoord1813.backup">https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=be.zelfmoord1813.backup</a></li> <li>▪ <u>Red Cross - Hold-up application</u> <a href="https://apps.apple.com/us/app/houvast/id1533784893">https://apps.apple.com/us/app/houvast/id1533784893</a> <a href="https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=be.rodekruis.houvast">https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=be.rodekruis.houvast</a></li> </ul>
App FR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Panic pass</u> <a href="https://apps.apple.com/fr/app/panique-pas/id1459513911">https://apps.apple.com/fr/app/panique-pas/id1459513911</a> <a href="https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.dontpanic&amp;hl=fr">https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.dontpanic&amp;hl=fr</a></li> </ul>
ENG App	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>StayAlive</u> <a href="https://www.stayalive.app/">https://www.stayalive.app/</a> <a href="https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.org.suicideprevention.stayalive&amp;hl=en_GB">https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.org.suicideprevention.stayalive&amp;hl=en_GB</a></li> <li>▪ <u>Suicide in complete safety</u> <a href="https://apps.apple.com/us/app/suicide-safe-by-samhsa/id968468139">https://apps.apple.com/us/app/suicide-safe-by-samhsa/id968468139</a> <a href="https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gov.hhs.samhsa.app.spa&amp;hl=en_US">https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gov.hhs.samhsa.app.spa&amp;hl=en_US</a></li> <li>▪ <u>Virtual Box of Hope</u></li> </ul>





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	<a href="https://apps.apple.com/us/app/virtual-hope-box/id825099621">https://apps.apple.com/us/app/virtual-hope-box/id825099621</a>  <a href="https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=mil.dha.vhb&amp;hl=en_US">https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=mil.dha.vhb&amp;hl=en_US</a>
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### Find out more

FR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="https://www.zelfmoord1813.be/?gad_source=1&amp;gclid=EAlaQobChMlyleejqdHgMV66hoCR06zwCREAAYASAAEglAjvD_BwE">https://www.zelfmoord1813.be/?gad_source=1&amp;gclid=EAlaQobChMlyleejqdHgMV66hoCR06zwCREAAYASAAEglAjvD_BwE</a></li> </ul>
FR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="https://www.preventionsuicide.be/">https://www.preventionsuicide.be/</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="https://www.preventionsuicide.be/sites/default/files/publication/CPS-GuidePreventionSuicide.pdf">https://www.preventionsuicide.be/sites/default/files/publication/CPS-GuidePreventionSuicide.pdf</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="https://un-pass.be/">https://un-pass.be/</a></li> </ul>
ENG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="https://www.chsbelgium.org/">https://www.chsbelgium.org/</a></li> </ul>

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