

Tips Using the ACE Card

Ask

If someone is suicidal it is helpful to:

- Interact in a way that shows concern
- Try to talk about the subject directly

The most difficult step is asking:

- Say: You look upset. Have you thought of hurting yourself?
- Do you wish you were dead?

Always ask when you think someone may be a danger to him or her self.

Care

- Show that you are not judging what he or she is thinking or feeling
- Actively listen to what they say
- Encourage her or him to keep talking
- Accept that their situation is serious

Engage

Do all you can to get her or him to seek help

- Say that professionals are available to help
- Suggest that treatment might help
- Urge the person to get help even if past efforts did not yield results desired

Safety Guidelines

Call 911 IMMEDIATELY:

- If on phone or online with someone who expresses intent to harm self or others
- If someone is threatening with a weapon or object that can be used as a weapon
- If someone mentions an overdose on pills or drugs or shows signs of a physical injury

In Montgomery County Call:

MCES Crisis Center

610-279-6100 (24/7)



Adapted collaboratively with permission from materials developed by :



Please visit www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/ for Veteran and family resources



A.C.E. Program

Tools for:

Recognizing Suicide Risk

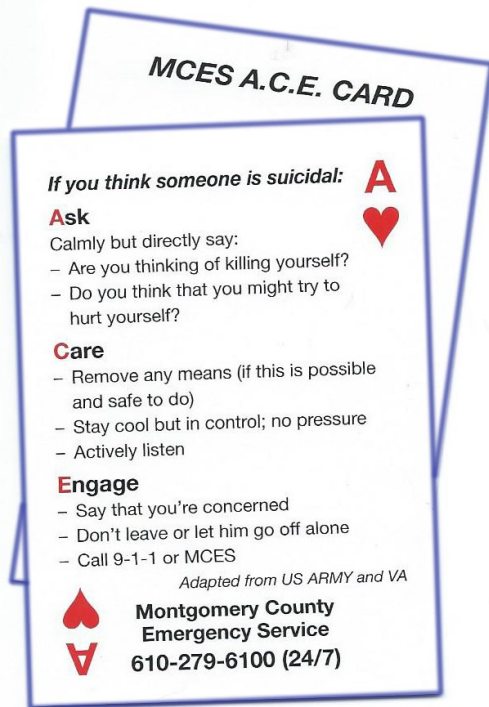
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Dealing with suicidal thoughts or behavior

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Giving or getting appropriate help

The acronym ACE (Ask, Care, Engage) summarizes the steps you may take to play an active and valuable role in suicide prevention.



What You Should Know About Suicide

Asking about suicide does not create suicidal thoughts or behavior

- *Asking may give the person permission to talk about thoughts or feelings*

Many who die by suicide have communicated some intent, wish or desire to kill themselves

- *Talking about suicide gives a chance to intervene before suicidal behaviors occur*

Suicidal ideas may be linked with treatable conditions (e.g., mental illness, substance use, traumatic brain injury, etc.)

- *Treatment can reduce risk and save a life*
- *Helping with the immediate crisis so that the person can seek help is vital*

Suicidal thinking can overwhelm even the strongest, most rational person

- *Protective factors may not keep the person safe during periods of crisis*

Anyone experiencing serious suicidal thoughts should be referred to a mental health provider who can evaluate her/his condition and provide treatment as appropriate.

Additional Warning Signs

Professional help is needed when:

- Inability to sleep or sleeping all the time
- Withdrawing from friends, family
- Acting recklessly/risky behavior
- Rage, anger, seeking revenge
- Avoiding things, reliving past experiences
- Anxiety, agitation
- Dramatic changes in mood
- No reason for living or purpose in life
- Feeling hopeless or trapped, having no way out

Recognize Suicide Warning Signs

Some Danger Signs

- Thoughts of hurting or killing self
- Voicing a plan to kill self
- Seeking pills, weapons, other means
- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide
- Seeing self as burden to others
- Believing others would be better off if you were dead

Protective Factors

These are some reasons to live that can deter suicidal behavior:

- Family, friends, social supports, close relationships, pets, battle buddy
- Good coping/problem solving skills
- Ongoing health and mental health care
- Beliefs that support life and living
- Activities that give life meaning