

# Responding to suicide and self-harm content on social media – when a person may be at risk of suicide or engaging in self-harm



### Signs to look out for

A self-disclosure of suicide (including suicide thoughts, plans and attempts) or self-harm on social media.

A change in behaviour or the presence of entirely new behaviours. For example:

Vaguebooking, i.e., posting unclear but alarming sounding posts, e.g., 'Don't know what to do anymore, wondering if life is worth it'.

Deletion of a social media account or wiping an account of content. This may be a sign of an individual withdrawing from social interaction and 'putting their affairs in order' during plans of suicide.

Viewing harmful content from pro-suicide and pro-self-harm communities, sometimes on less accessible areas of the internet such as the Deep web or Dark web. In these areas, content can be more explicit, and contain pro-self-harm, or pro-suicide information, forums or communities.



### What to do

Take action – do not assume that someone else will intervene.

Always respond in private message.

Look at the person's posts to acknowledge their feelings and specify why you are worried.

Ask the person directly if they are thinking of suicide.

Reassure the person that support is available and encourage them to seek professional help.



### If you do not feel comfortable responding

Inform a trusted individual.

Seek professional advice (for example, a phone or online service, or health professional).

Report the content to the social media platform. ➡



### For parents/concerned adults

Take an interest in young people's internet use and discuss content with them. This can help to support young people to learn how to manage their social media use safely.

To learn more, see. ➡

If a parent/guardian is concerned about a child or young person's use of the Dark Web. ➡

### If you cannot reach the individual

Contact the person's family or someone in their social network who may be able to check on them.

Report the content to the Gardaí or Emergency Services.

Report the content to the social media platform.