Having a friend who is feeling suicidal can be a pretty confronting thing to deal with. If you think they are in immediate danger, there are services you can call. Sometimes it can be tough if your friend needs your help, but there are always things you can do to help. Make sure you look after yourself first and if you feel like it's more than you can handle, talk to someone who can help.

**What you can do right now.** If you need help now please call Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800 or Lifeline on 13 11 14. If your friend is in immediate danger please call 000.
How can I be sure they need my help? If your friend tells you they are feeling suicidal or that they want to end their life, it’s important to take it seriously. It’s totally understandable that hearing your friend say this might make you feel overwhelmed or worried, especially if your friend is very upset or angry. However, if someone talks about wanting to die by suicide, the positive thing is that they are not keeping it to themselves; by telling someone they are most likely reaching out for help.

Things you can do

- Don't keep it a secret. Your friend may have asked you to keep it a secret or made you promise not to tell anyone. They might be frightened of what might happen if someone else knows. It is very important that you do tell someone - even if you have promised you would keep it a secret. Your friend might get mad at you – but it is better that they are alive and well.
- The situation puts a lot of pressure on you - so the best thing to do is to talk to a parent, counsellor or doctor.
- Encourage your friend to seek help. It’s important your friend seeks help from a parent, counsellor, lecturer or doctor, or one of the helplines mentioned above. Although it might seem hard, these people have training to help your friend move to a better, happier place.
- If your friend refuses to see someone. Keep encouraging them to see someone. If you feel able to, you might offer to go with your friend when they speak to someone about their suicidal thoughts. It might also be helpful to forward them information from the Beyond Blue website about suicidal thoughts.
- Offer your support. It’s probably really scary for your friend when they realise they need help. Let your friend know that you care and spend time with them. Just knowing that somebody cares about them can be reassuring because they may feel very alone and as if no one cares.
- Choosing when to talk. Timing can be an important part of talking to someone about sensitive stuff. If possible, and if they are not at immediate risk of harming themselves, try to choose a time when you’re both relaxed. If you’re not sure what to say, you might try saying 'I’m worried about you', ‘You told me the other day you felt like ending your life, do you still feel that way?’.
- Ask them to postpone the decision/create a toolkit. While your friend may feel like they have to act now, it’s worth encouraging them to postpone that decision. They can keep a list of other things they can do to distract themselves and might find that their suicidal thoughts go away over time.
- Thoughts don’t need to lead to action. Remind your friend that thoughts about taking their life are just thoughts and it doesn’t mean they have to act on them.
- Get informed. It might be helpful to have a general knowledge of suicide and depression. By doing this you may be able to better understand what your friend is going through and what might help. You can do that at Beyond Blue or at ReachOut.com.

Looking after yourself. When you are worried about a friend you might feel stressed or overwhelmed and forget to look after yourself. Speak to someone you trust, such as a family member, friend or counsellor and make sure you spend some time doing what you enjoy. You may want to play sport, hang out with other friends, listen to music, or go for a walk.

Finally, it’s also important to remember that even though you can offer support, you are not responsible for the actions or behaviour of your friend. If they are not willing to help themselves it is not your fault. Wanting to help your friend is understandable and really kind, but their actions are their own and you can’t control what they decide to do. If you need help now please call Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800 or Lifeline on 13 11 14.

Extract from Reach Out: https://au.reachout.com/my-friend-is-suicidal

Emergency Contacts: https://student.unsw.edu.au/emergency