

Suicide Risk TextSafe®

A lifeline for missing people in crisis

In partnership with Samaritans, Missing People has launched Suicide Risk TextSafe®. This vital service is designed to offer immediate and confidential support to missing adults who are believed to be at high risk of suicide. Through the expert support of both organisations, Suicide Risk TextSafe® provides a crucial lifeline that can save lives.

**missing
people**

Registered charity in England and Wales (1020419)
and in Scotland (SC047419)

SAMARITANS

Why Suicide Risk TextSafe® Matters

When a person goes missing, their emotional and mental wellbeing is a significant concern. This is especially true for those who may be experiencing suicidal thoughts. During such critical times, having a safe space to explore their thoughts and feelings to find a positive way forward can make all the difference. That's where Suicide Risk TextSafe® comes in.

How Suicide Risk TextSafe® Works

The process begins with a referral from a police force. Once a referral is made, a text message is sent to the missing person's mobile phone, explaining how they can contact Missing People or Samaritans for free and in confidence. The text message also informs the person that a Samaritans volunteer will be calling them shortly from a withheld number.

An example of what the text says:

"For free confidential support from the charity Missing People call/text 116000 or from Samaritans call 116123. Samaritans will try calling you soon from a withheld number."

As well as both charities telephone numbers, Samaritans also follows up the text with a call from one of their trained volunteers offering emotional and non-judgmental listening support. This approach ensures that even those who are hesitant to contact the police have access to a neutral and confidential source of assistance.

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I [Samaritan] spoke to a very distraught man sitting in his car seriously contemplating taking his own life. We spoke for a fairly short time during which he described a picture of despair. The fact that the people he thought he had failed had reached out to Missing People really resonated with him and he terminated our call in order to contact his wife.

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Thank you for letting me feel that I'm not alone

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This level of cooperation between the Police, Missing People and The Samaritans is like a beacon that brings me hope for other cooperative work – the Suicide Text Safe facility is an example of a concept that is simple, but with many moving parts, involving so many real humans along the way to work successfully



Confidentiality is key

Both Missing People and Samaritans operate under strict confidentiality. They will not share any details about the missing person's location or circumstances unless explicitly asked to do so by the individual or when it's believed someone's life is in immediate danger. This confidentiality encourages more people to seek help, knowing that their privacy will be respected.

Effectiveness of the initiative

Monitoring has shown that as many as 8 in 10 recipients of a Suicide Risk TextSafe® engage with either Missing People or answer the call from Samaritans. This high response rate underscores the effectiveness of the service.

One poignant example comes from our helpline:

A person who was reported missing was sitting on a bridge and received the text message from Missing People just as he was thinking of jumping. He told the Samaritans volunteer that when he received that text message he saw it as a sign and got safely off the bridge. Samaritans followed up with another call a few days later and he said he's doing okay and getting the help he needs.

Partnership with UK Police forces and other agencies

The success of Suicide Risk TextSafe® is built on the strong partnership between Missing People, UK police forces, and other statutory agencies. This collaborative effort ensures that the most vulnerable individuals receive timely and appropriate support.

So why use Suicide Risk TextSafe®?

Suicide Risk TextSafe® is more than just a service; it is a lifeline for those in crisis. By offering confidential and immediate support, it provides hope and help when it is needed most. If you or someone you know is missing and at risk of suicide, this initiative can make all the difference.

For more information about Missing People's services, visit our dedicated Police webpage www.missingpeople.org.uk/police.

By understanding and utilizing the resources available through Suicide Risk TextSafe® we can work together to save lives and support those in their darkest moments.

How to request a Suicide Risk TextSafe®?

For COMPACT forces the request will usually be automated upon completion of a risk assessment on a missing report. In forces where this is not automated you can request by clicking the TextSafe® button on the missing report found in the Tasks & Narrative tab.

For all other systems or when there is no COMPACT record yet created follow the link on our website www.missingpeople.org.uk/make-a-referral/request-suicide-risk-textsafe which will generate an email template where you will need to add the person's first name and mobile number.