



## **The importance of raising awareness of suicide during the Christmas holidays.**

As shops fill with festive foods and sparkly displays, it is important to remember that many people do not associate the season with joy, family gatherings, or celebration. For some, this time of year can be incredibly difficult. Feelings of isolation, financial pressure, grief, and heightened expectations can all intensify emotional distress. For individuals already facing mental health challenges, the holiday period may deepen feelings of hopelessness, increasing vulnerability to suicidal thoughts. This is why raising awareness about suicide during this season is not only important - it is lifesaving.

One of the biggest barriers to preventing suicide is stigma. Many individuals suffer in silence because they fear judgment or believe they must maintain a façade of happiness during the holidays. Awareness campaigns help break this stigma by encouraging open conversations about mental health and reminding people that it's okay to seek help. When communities normalise these discussions, they create safe spaces where individuals feel supported rather than isolated.

Practical support is equally vital. Promoting resources such as crisis helplines, mental health services, and peer support groups ensures that those in need know where to turn. Simple acts, like checking in on friends, reaching out to someone who seems withdrawn, or offering a listening ear - can make a profound difference. These gestures may seem small, but they can provide hope and connection at a time when many feel most alone.

**There is a range of [local and specialist suicide prevention services available to those living in Tower Hamlets](#).**

- 1) [James' Place](#) provides free, life-saving therapeutic support for men in suicidal crisis.
- 2) Mind's [Safe Connections](#) offers tailored guidance, navigation, and bereavement support for adults across the borough.
- 3) [Body & Soul](#) delivers compassionate support for young people and adults experiencing self-harm or suicidality.
- 4) [Papyrus](#) provides dedicated help for children and young people up to 35, including professional advice for anyone worried about them.
- 5) [The Listening Place](#) offers non-judgemental, face-to-face support for people experiencing suicidal thoughts.
- 6) [Grief in Pieces](#) is a specialist service that offers bereavement support for anyone who has been impacted by suicide. Together, these services help ensure residents can access timely, compassionate support when they need it most.

**Tower Hamlets Council have recently published a [Suicide Prevention webpage](#) designed to help residents, community groups, and frontline staff find the right support.**

The page includes dedicated resources for people in crisis, anyone experiencing suicidal thoughts, those bereaved by suicide, and wider mental health support. The resources include 24/7 helplines and text lines, in-person and online support, and include both local and national organisations, alongside clear information and guidance to help people understand where to turn. Along with accessing support, creating a safety plan can be an important step towards keeping yourself or a loved one safe during difficult times. It will help to recognise warning signs, identify coping strategies, and know who to reach out to for support. [A safety plan will only take around 30 minutes to complete.](#)