

Mental health resources: How to help and find help

Anyone between ages 15 and 25 can submit a film before Aug. 31, and films cannot be longer than 10 minutes.



*Community Access, a non-profit that connects people with mental health concerns with housing, 24-hour support and other resources, is one of many places New Yorkers can go to for support.
Photo Credit: Community Access*

The suicides last week of two prominent New Yorkers — the fashion designer [Kate Spade](#) and celebrity chef [Anthony Bourdain](#) — have sparked a national conversation about mental health needs.

A new report from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has also found that suicide rates increased nationwide from 1999 to 2016.

For tips on how to best deal with mental health crises, amNY spoke with Carla Rabinowitz, the advocacy coordinator for [Community Access](#), a nonprofit that connects people with mental health concerns with housing, 24-hour support and other resources.

What to do if someone you know is considering suicide

Foremost, Rabinowitz recommended taking all concerns seriously.

“Treat all feelings seriously,” she said. “You can’t be judgmental of feelings.”

Rabinowitz also advised making yourself completely available to the person in crisis.

“If someone is suicidal, you can’t say, call me until 10 or 11 — you have to be an unconditional offer to help them out through it,” she said.

You should also get a commitment from the person not to commit suicide, “even if it’s short-term,” she said.

If weapons are around, “take action if you see anything like that — remove those opportunities,” she added.

What to do if you are considering suicide

Rabinowitz knows firsthand what it’s like to struggle with depression.

“I was really depressed after my first manic episode in 1994, and the thing is to reach out to people and talk to people,” she said. “Try to have hope, because I was in the depths of despair and things really worked out for me. I’m doing very well in life now. You just have to have hope and reach out.”

Ready resources

For those seeking support, Rabinowitz recommended NYC Well, a confidential, 24/7 hotline that provides crisis counseling in more than 200 languages. To chat with a counselor, you can call 1-888-692-9355, text “WELL” to 65173 or visit nyc.gov/nycwell. You can also contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8255.