



APS GUIDE • FOR PROFESSIONALS

Spot It, Ask, Refer

A screening grid and action protocol for frontline professionals

A guide from the Suicide Prevention Association — Réunion Island

Free helpline, 24/7 — 0800 62 01 62

This guide is for professionals in contact with the public — healthcare workers, teachers, social workers, HR staff, law enforcement — who may encounter someone in suicidal crisis. Your role is that of a sentinel: notice, assess, refer — not to replace clinical care.

① Screening grid

Vulnerability factors (context):

- Personal history of a suicide attempt (a major risk factor).
- Social isolation, recent breakup, bereavement, financial hardship, job loss.
- Known psychiatric condition, addiction, disabling chronic illness.

Warning signs (observable behavior):

- Direct or indirect statements (“I can’t take it anymore”, “it would be better if I weren’t here”).
- Sudden disengagement, giving away personal belongings, getting affairs in order.
- Abrupt behavior change, unexplained calm after a period of crisis.

② Asking the direct question

In a conversation

“Are you having suicidal thoughts right now?”

Asked calmly and directly, this question does not trigger an attempt — it opens space to talk and helps assess the danger.

③ Assessing urgency

Three questions help gauge the level of danger:

- Plan: does the person have a specific plan?
- Means: do they have access to a lethal means (medication, weapon, etc.)?
- Timeline: are they considering acting soon (today, this week)?

The more precise and affirmative the answers, the higher the danger. In that case, don't leave the person alone and refer urgently (emergency services, psychiatric emergency room, or the Vigilans follow-up program).

④ Referral protocol

- Immediate danger: stay with the person, call emergency services, consider the ER.
- Identified risk without immediate danger: refer to APS (0800 62 01 62), the French national line 3114, or the Vigilans program run by EPSMR in Réunion.
- Document the conversation and share information in line with the shared professional confidentiality rules of your field.

⑤ Training and peer support

APS offers awareness sessions and can point you toward “sentinel” suicide-prevention training. Talking things through as a team and getting supervision also helps you hold up over time when facing difficult situations.

Numbers to know

In case of immediate danger to life

15 (SAMU/ambulance) • 18 (Fire dept.) • 112 (European emergency number)

APS — Suicide Prevention Association, Réunion

0800 62 01 62 — free helpline, 24/7, staffed by trained volunteer listeners.

3114 — French national suicide prevention line

Free, confidential, 24/7. For the person in crisis, their loved ones, or professionals.

Kozé Jeunes (ages 12-25)

0801 901 974 — A listening and referral line dedicated to teenagers and young adults in Réunion.

