Recognizing the Risk:
Tools for Screening and Safety for Youth at Risk of Suicide

Sheila Nelson
8/16/2019

Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey

Assessing Risk

Currently...

How do you identify young people at risk for suicide?

Once identified, how do you determine their level of risk?

Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS)

Ask questions that are in bold and underlined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Have you wished you were dead or wished you could go to sleep and not wake up?

2) Have you had any actual thoughts of killing yourself?

If YES to 2, ask questions 3, 4, 5, and 6. If NO to 2, go directly to question 6.
**Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS)**

3) **Have you been thinking about how you might do this?**
e.g., "I thought about taking an overdose but I never made a specific plan as to when where or how I would actually do it...and I would never go through with it."

4) **Have you had these thoughts and had some intention of acting on them?**
as opposed to "I have the thoughts but I definitely will not do anything about them."

5) **Have you started to work out or worked out the details of how to kill yourself? Do you intend to carry out this plan?**

---

**Plan Ahead**

Before you ask them, ask yourself...

- What is our response for each level of risk?
- When/how do we contact parents/guardians?
- What is our process for making behavioral health referrals and following up to ensure that care is received?
- When and how do we involve local crisis service providers?
- How do we plan for a return to school after treatment?

---

**Questions?**

Sheila Nelson  
Program Manager, Adolescent Health, Injury and Suicide Prevention

sheila.nelson@maine.gov  
(207) 287-3856

---