

STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A Supporting Document to The Idaho Guidelines for School-Based Suicide Intervention

This document is for use by trained student services personnel for interviewing students at risk for suicide. This is a recommended list of questions to ask a student in crisis and is not all-inclusive. This is not a risk assessment tool. If you need help with a further risk assessment, refer to someone trained in risk assessment or a clinician.

It is important to build a rapport with the student. You may want to use these questions as a guide. You do not need to ask them word for word, but can put them in your own words. You do not necessarily need to ask every question. Use what is helpful to assess the situation. ***Be sure to warn the student about the limits of confidentiality.***

Warm Up/Rapport

1. I/others have noticed lately that you seem__ (different, down, tired, to be dressing differently, etc.).
Or,
You look (sad, mad, angry, upset) today. Tell me about how you are feeling.
2. How are you feeling right now?
3. Your (parents, teacher, friends) are concerned about you. Why do you think they are?

Ideation

1. Have you thought of hurting yourself or someone else?
2. Have you thought about suicide?
3. Do you have any of these thoughts/ideas right now?
4. Have you ever attempted suicide? When? How? (within last 3 months?) (history)

Other Risk Factors

1. Do you feel
 - o hopeless?
 - o helpless?
 - o like you are a burden on others?
 - o trapped?
2. Are you having trouble sleeping or sleeping too much?
3. Have you been eating more or not eating enough? Have you been eating nutritious food?
4. Are you being bullied? Are you bullying anybody?
5. Are you feeling really angry now or in the past?
6. Have you been involved in any violent acts now or in the past? Has anything violent happened to you either recently or in the past?
7. What risky behaviors have you been involved in now or in the past? (drinking, using drugs, speeding, fighting, unprotected sex or sex with multiple partners, etc.?)
8. Do you feel depressed? Have you been diagnosed with depression, bipolar disorder, or anxiety? Does your mood change frequently?
9. Are you hanging out with friends? Getting along with family? Participating in school/church/community activities?
10. Who do you talk to about how you are feeling? Who have you confided in about this latest sadness?

11. Have you ever witnessed/seen/been exposed to someone else's suicide attempt or death by suicide?
12. Have you given away or are you planning to give away any of your belongings?
13. Are you experiencing agitation or anxiety?
14. Have you attempted suicide? When? How?

Lethality

1. Do you have a plan of suicide? [If yes], what is your plan to kill yourself?
2. When do you plan to do this?
3. How do you plan to do this? Where is the means (guns, pills, rope, etc.)?

Protective Factors

1. Who is available and willing to talk to you and help you? Which family members? Which friends? Other adults like teachers?
2. Who can help you in a crisis? Who do you admire?
3. What do you want to be/what do you want to do in the future?
4. What are your strengths? What are you good at? (If negative response, ask what would your mom/dad/friend say you are good at?)
5. What do you believe in? What would you stand up for?
6. What do you do after school?
7. What are your hobbies? Are you part of any teams, clubs, etc.?
8. Are you seeing a counselor outside of school? Are you taking any medications?