

Assessment of Suicide Risk & Self-Harm

Purpose

These learning activities can be incorporated into pediatric mental health education sessions for individuals or groups.

Learning Objectives

1. Present information on suicide risk screening and assessment
2. Discuss the difference between self-harm and suicide ideation
3. Identify factors that can contribute to increased risk, as well as those that build resilience
4. Explore protective factors in children, youth & communities

Learning Activities

Activities: Suicide Risk Screening and Assessment

Time	Target Audience	Activity	Outcome
60 minutes	Individual	Complete the activities and self-assessment in the Compass Toolkit: Suicide Risk Assessment	Learner can demonstrate how to access and utilize an appropriate tool to screen a pediatric patient for suicidal risk and support safety planning.
15 minutes	Individual	Review the: TREKK Bottom Line Recommendations: Suicidal Risk Screening & Assessment	Learner can demonstrate how to access and utilize an appropriate tool screen a pediatric patient for suicidal risk.
45 minutes	Group	<p>Explore the following tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of Suicide and Risk Inventory (ASARI) • Ask Suicide-Screening Questions (ASQ) • Columbia – Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS) • Tool for Assessment of Suicide Risk Adolescent (TASR-A) <p>(Small Group) Review the suicide risk screening tools used in your setting. Practice filling out the tools, role playing and asking the questions with each other. Discuss steps you would take based on different results.</p>	Learner can demonstrate how to screen a pediatric patient for suicidal risk and support safety planning.

60 minutes	Group or Individual	<p>Watch webinar: True Suicide Prevention Demedicalizing Youth Suicide</p> <p>(Individual) Complete a reflective journal entry on three items from this presentation that surprised you, and identify some ways your practice could support demedicalizing youth suicide.</p> <p>(Group) Think/Pair/Share - discuss your thoughts with a partner, and share with group for more discussion.</p>	Learner can reflect on the impact of suicide for youth in Canada, and identify ways their practice can support demedicalizing suicide.
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Activities: Self-Harm Behaviours Assessment and Intervention

Time	Target Audience	Activity	Outcome
120 minutes	Group or Individual	<p>Watch webinar #1: Understanding Non-suicidal Self-injury in Children and Youth (Compass, 2021)</p> <p>Watch webinar #2: Treating Self-harm in Children and Youth (Compass 2021)</p> <p>(Individual) After each webinar, complete a reflective journal entry to identify some examples of self-harm behaviours, risk assessments and possible interventions that you could incorporate into your practice.</p> <p>(Group) Think/Pair/Share - discuss your thoughts with a partner, and share with group for more discussion.</p>	Learner can identify self-harm behaviours in children and you, and describe how to assess risk and possible interventions to utilize.
60 minutes	Group or Individuals in Primary Care Settings	<p>Watch webinar: Non-Suicidal Self-Injurious Behaviours in Children and Adolescents (Compass, 2022)</p> <p>(Individual) Complete a reflective journal entry to identify some examples of self-harm behaviours, risk assessments and possible interventions that you could incorporate into your practice.</p> <p>(Group) Think/Pair/Share - discuss your thoughts with a partner, and share with group for more discussion.</p>	Learner can identify self-harm behaviours in children and you, and describe how to assess risk and possible interventions to utilize.

30 minutes	Group	<p>Review this parent resource: Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre – Self-injury Webpage for Parents and Caregivers</p> <p>With a partner or in small groups role play how you might share information with a parent or caregiver who is concerned that a child or youth in their life is self-harming.</p>	Learner can demonstrate how to support caregivers who are caring for a child or youth who engages in self-harm behaviors.
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Activities: Self-Awareness, Power/Privilege, Intersectionality and Cultural Considerations

Time	Target Audience	Activity	Outcome
30 minutes	Group or Individual	<p>Review the following First Nations Health Authority Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Promotion (image) • Recognizing Risk (image) • Self-Care as Resistance (image) • Suicide: Responding and Keeping People Safe (FNHA info sheet) <p>(Individual) Complete a reflective journal entry identifying three areas of strength or resiliency that were highlighted in the above resources. Identify some ways your practice could incorporate these areas of strength into supporting Indigenous youth at risk of suicide or self-harm.</p> <p>(Group) Think/Pair/Share - discuss your thoughts with a partner, and share with group for more discussion.</p>	Learner initiates actionable goals to support culturally safe, trauma informed therapeutic interactions with pediatric patients when screening for risk of suicide and/or self harm
60 minutes	Individual	<p>Explore Life Promotion Toolkit and its embedded videos. Consider the importance of spirituality for many Indigenous children and youth. Create a SMART goal to incorporate consideration of spirituality into your assessments and care planning with children and youth.</p>	Learner initiates actionable goals to support culturally safe, trauma informed therapeutic interactions with pediatric patients when screening for risk of suicide and/or self harm

Additional Resources to Explore

- Canadian Pediatric Society. (June 2021). *Indigenous child and youth health*. Canadian Pediatric Society, Strategic Priorities. <https://cps.ca/en/indigenoushealth>
- CHEO. (October 2019). *Helping children and youth who self-harm*. CHEO, Ottawa. [Helping Children and Youth Who Self-Harm \(CHEO\)](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (November 2021) *Resilience and transgender youth*. Division of Adolescent and School Health, National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention – CDC. [Resilience and Transgender Youth | DASH | CDC](#)
- Centre for Suicide Prevention. (n.d.). *A suicide prevention toolkit: Sexual minorities and suicide*. Centre for Suicide Prevention, Canadian Mental Health Association. [Sexual minorities and suicide prevention - Centre for Suicide Prevention \(suicideinfo.ca\)](#)
- Duran, Eduardo. (December 2020). *Healing Indigenous people*. Podcast: Understand suicide. https://youtu.be/C-xZfk_Sawo
- First Nations Health Authority. (2015). *Hope, help and healing: A planning toolkit for First Nations and Aboriginal communities to prevent and respond to suicide*. First Nations Health Authority. [Hope, Help and Healing: A Planning Toolkit for First Nations and Aboriginal Communities to Prevent and Respond to Suicide \(FNHA toolkit\)](#)
- Government of Alberta. (2023). *Indigenous youth suicide prevention: Graphic novels and videos for First Nations and Metis youth to help with suicide prevention*. Alberta.ca. [Indigenous youth suicide prevention | Alberta.ca](#)
- Health Canada. (n.d.). *Suicide prevention in Indigenous communities*. Government of Canada. [Suicide prevention in Indigenous communities \(sac-isc.gc.ca\)](#)
- Northern Health Authority. (June 2022). *CYMHSU lunch and learn: Suicide risk assessment in children and youth (webinar)*. Northern Health Authority – Child and Youth Health. [CYMHSU Lunch & Learn - Assessing Suicide Risk - YouTube](#)
- The Trevor Project. (2022). *National survey on LGBTQ youth mental health (report)*. www.thetrevorproject.org. (report) [trevor01_2022survey_final.pdf \(thetrevorproject.org\)](#)
- Thira, D. (2014). *Aboriginal youth suicide prevention: A post-colonial community based approach*. *International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies*, 5(1): 158–179. [Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention \(Thira.ca\)](#)