

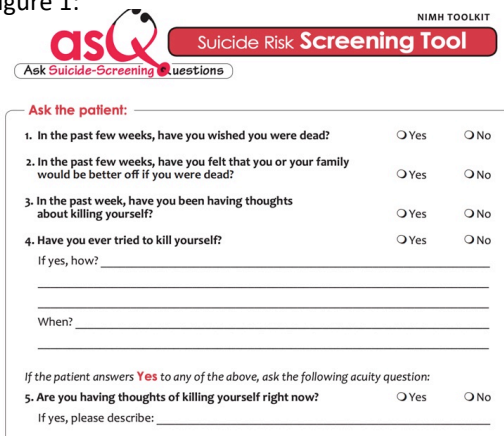
Suicidality and The Role of a School-Based Mental Health Clinic

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Background

- Suicide is the second most common cause of mortality in the child and adolescent population [1]. Each year, approximately one in six high school students report experiencing suicidal ideation [2].
- Current school-based programs for suicide prevention recommend identifying youth at risk of suicide, screening the at-risk youth, and partnering with a mental health provider for treatment [3].
- In 2008, NIMH led a multisite study to develop and validate a suicide risk screening tool for youth in the medical setting, Ask Suicide-Screening Questions (ASQ) [fig 1].
- At the LSU-CHNOLA school-based mental health clinic, we recognized a need for a quality improvement project to better identify those students at risk for suicidal ideation and suicide attempts.

Figure 1:



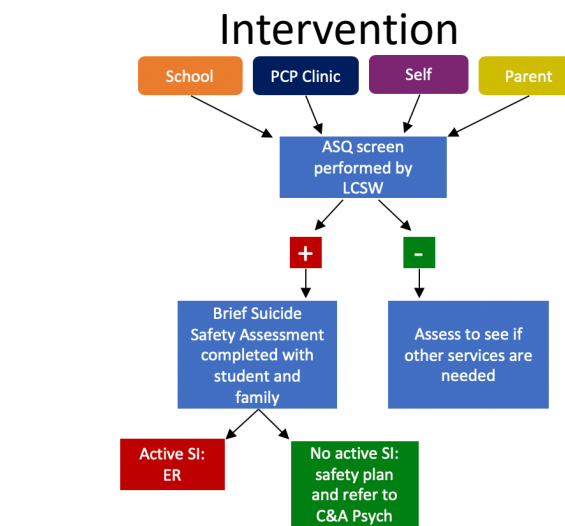
ASQ Suicide Risk Screening Tool
NIMH TOOLKIT
Ask Suicide-Screening Questions

Ask the patient:

1. In the past few weeks, have you wished you were dead? Yes No
2. In the past few weeks, have you felt that you or your family would be better off if you were dead? Yes No
3. In the past week, have you been having thoughts about killing yourself? Yes No
4. Have you ever tried to kill yourself? Yes No
If yes, how? _____
When? _____

If the patient answers **Yes** to any of the above, ask the following acuity question:

5. Are you having thoughts of killing yourself right now? Yes No
If yes, please describe: _____



Results

- Data collected from 45 clinic enrollees ages 14-18 at a New Orleans high school revealed that 69% had experienced previous suicidal ideation [fig 2] with 20% having at least one previous suicide attempt [fig 3].
- Every student within the 69% who had previously experienced suicidal ideation met criteria for at least one DSM 5 diagnosis which could be addressed by the psychiatric team.

Figure 2:
Previous Suicidal Ideation

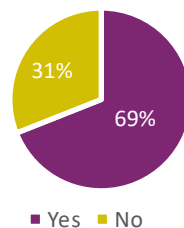
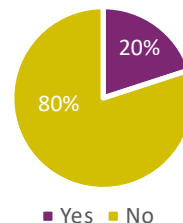


Figure 3:
Previous Suicide Attempt



Discussion

- Providing psychiatric services on the school's campus allows for better continuity of care and assures more at-risk students can receive treatment.
- The school-based mental health clinic also benefits many families who struggle with making traditional outpatient follow-up appointments due to a variety of circumstances.
- A future direction of this project is to coordinate with the school to perform universal screening of the student body to better identify students in need of service.
- Additional plans include multi-disciplinary collaboration with teachers, social workers, and administrators in the form of consultations, lectures, and workshops. This stands to improve professional development and adolescent mental health.



References

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3. Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools. Rockville, MD, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2012. Available online: <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Preventing-Suicide-A-Toolkit-for-High-Schools/SMA12-4669>

