

Assessment of Risk for Suicide – A School’s Response: Be Informed.



As with any critical incident that might affect a school, having educated, prepared and interculturally competent personnel are recommended for suicide prevention. All school personnel need to learn about suicide.

School personnel are often the first contact for students having thoughts of suicide. All school personnel need to understand the process for referring to staff who have certified training for completing an assessment of risk for suicide (i.e., ASIST).



An assessment of risk for suicide includes gathering information and asking about:

- The student’s story
- Current thoughts or plan for suicide
- Access to the means to carry out a plan
- Prior suicidal ideation, plan, or attempt

After the certified trained staff has completed the assessment of risk for suicide, they can refer students with thoughts of suicide to the appropriate mental health professionals (i.e., Child and Youth Team, counsellor, social worker) for further safety planning.

If a student is assessed and has a plan to complete suicide, the following steps should be taken by the certified trained staff:

- If there is immediate risk, call 911.
- Do not leave the student alone. Remain with the student in a safe and visible place until help can be obtained. Remove any weapons, pills, etc.
- Reassure the student that you are there to support.
- Develop a safety plan with the student to keep safe for now.
- Contact parents, caregivers, or guardians. Use Multilingual Community Interpretation Services (MCIS) as needed for language interpretations.
- If parents, caregivers, or guardians are unavailable to drive the student to a place of help, contact appropriate emergency services or call 911.
- Collaborate with local Mental Health, Social Development, police, or hospital, as needed, to develop a safety plan.
- Maintain communication with the student and family.
- Co-develop a transition plan with the student and family for their return to school.

If a student is assessed and has no current suicide plan but has displayed or verbalized suicidal ideations, the following steps should be taken:

- Inform the parents, caregivers, or guardians of the concern.
- Assist parents, caregivers, or guardians in arranging for intervention for the student, including medical assistance and counselling.
- Develop a risk-reducing safety plan.
- Maintain communication with the student to monitor progress.



Students are likely to confide their suicidal thoughts to a friend more readily than adults. Students should receive positive mental health and suicide prevention education to recognize when a friend may be having thoughts of suicide to help them get the appropriate adult support. Ongoing education about suicide moves us closer to the common goal of improving and saving lives.

For further inquiries about *Assessment of Risk for Suicide - A School's Response. Be Informed.*, contact the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development at 506-453-3678.



To access direct mental health services related to suicide, call or text 9-8-8 or visit: <https://988.ca>



ADDITIONAL SERVICES



[Canadian Mental Health Association of New Brunswick](#)

506-455-5231



[Kids Helpline](#)

1-800-667-5005



[Bridge the Gapp](#)

1-800-667-5005



[Addictions and Mental Health Support and Services for Children and Youth in New Brunswick](#)

1-800-667-5005