

# ASSESS FOR SAFETY AND SUICIDE RISK

\*\*\*If you need help call MO-CPAP @ (844) 538-2279 or BHR\*\*\*

**IS SUICIDAL IDEATION PRESENT?** Ask these 4 questions from ASQ:

1. In the past few weeks, have you wished you were dead?
2. In the past few weeks, have you felt that you or your family would be better off if you were dead?
3. In the past week, have you been having thoughts about killing yourself?
4. Have you ever tried to kill yourself?

If answers “No” to all 4 questions,  
No need to further assess suicide risk.

If answers “Yes” to any question, **ASSESS FOR SUICIDE RISK:**  
Ask: Are you having thoughts about killing yourself right now?

If **No** Further assess - suicidal **thoughts**—how often, last time, what helps  
**Intent:** Lately have you felt you wanted to act on your thoughts?  
**Plan:** details of plan, **Attempts:** prior attempts, **Risks:** substance use, no social support. For help call MO-CPAP at (844) 538-2279

If Yes,  
**REFER FOR MENTAL HEALTH INTAKE.**

If history is reassuring,  
**ENSURE SAFETY and F/U within a week.**

If concerns/red flags: Recent attempt, serious intent, detailed plan  
**REFER FOR MENTAL HEALTH INTAKE.**

## ENSURE SAFETY

Discuss coping strategies  
Secure/remove lethal means  
Ensure adequate adult supervision and support  
Emergency communication plan if feel unsafe  
Provide BHR number (314) 469-6644 or (800) 811-4760  
24/7 Crisis Text Line: Text “HOME” to 741-741

## MENTAL HEALTH INTAKE

*There is no shame in sending a patient to intake even if they don't get admitted.*  
SSM Health Behavioral Health Urgent Care, (314) 344-7200  
BHR (314) 469-6644 or (800) 811-4760  
Mercy Clinic Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, (314) 251-6898  
CenterPointe-Stepping Stones Behavioral Health for Adolescents, (800) 345-5407  
Hyland Behavioral Health Center, (314) 525-7275

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Sources:

\*Horowitz LM, Bridge JA, Teach SJ, Ballard E, Klima J, Rosenstein DL, Wharff EA, Ginnis K, Cannon E, Joshi P, Pao M. Ask Suicide-Screening Questions (ASQ): A Brief Instrument for the Pediatric Emergency Department. Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 2012;166(12):1170-1176.

[NIH asQ Suicide Risk Screening Tool](#)

Dr. Katie Plax, Division Chief of Adolescent Medicine, Washington University School of Medicine. Watch Dr. Plax demonstrate assessing for safety and suicide risk by accessing <https://wupaarc.wustl.edu/Resources> and clicking on videos “Addressing Suicidality” and “Addressing Suicidality and Referral”.