#### Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRs): A Common Language for the Community

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#### **Objectives**

- Describe how and when to use the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS).
- Utilize assessment findings of the C-SSRS as a common language when discussing suicide with Psychiatric Intake Response Center (PIRC) and other community providers.



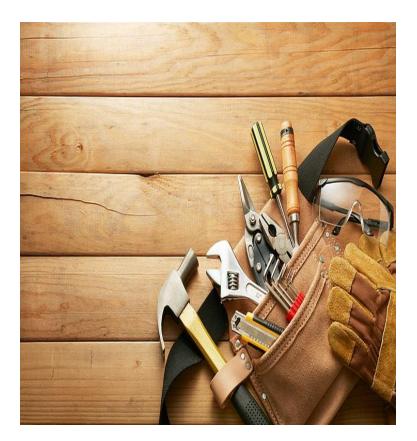
# Are you using the C-SSRs?





## **General Reminders**

- Follow your agency or school policies
- Follow your license's ethical guidelines
- Follow your "gut"
- These are just tools that we recommend to help you keep kids safe.





#### **Statistics on Suicide**

- 2021 survey reported 9% of high school students attempted suicide and almost 20% seriously considered attempting suicide.
- In 2018 suicide became the leading cause of death in Ohio for those ages 10 to14.
- Children 5 to 11 who died by suicide primary die by hanging or a firearm.



### **Breaking down the statistics**

- Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaskan Native (AI/AN) children have the highest rate of suicide.
- LGBTQ+ high school students attempt suicide at a rate approximately 4 times greater than non-LGBTQ+ youth.
- Suicide attempts among Black youth are rising faster than among any other racial or ethnic group, and Black children under age 13 are twice as likely to die by suicide as their White peers



## What is the C-SSRs

- A series of evidenced based question about suicidal thoughts and suicidal behaviors
- Provides information to laymen and clinical staff to identify next steps for an individual in crisis
- Developed in 2007 by Columbia University, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Pittsburgh as a screening tool for suicide.
- Today, the C-SSRS is used in clinical trials, public settings, and everyday situations, such as in schools, faith communities, hospitals, and the military, to identify who needs help — saving lives in 45 nations on six continents.

# **CCHMC and C-SSRs**

PIRC adopted the C-SSRs in January 2017 and it is now being used by PIRC, Social Work, and Inpatient psychiatry at CCHMC and in community mental health.

#### Why the C-SSRS?

Need for inter-rater reliability

- Documentation of medical necessity
- Common language
- Simple
- Efficient
- Evidence Supported
- Free



# Change in Language...Culture

#### ACCEPTABLE

- Attempted suicide
- Died by suicide



#### UNACCEPTABLE

- Completed or Committed suicide
- Successful or Failed attempt
- Non-fatal suicide
- Suicidal gesture or threat
- Manipulative suicide



## **Definitions to know**

- Suicidal Ideation any thought about not wanting to be alive
- Dead same as "Not Alive"
- Method answers the how
- **Plan** answer the when, where, and how
- Auditory Hallucinations same as Suicidal Ideation
- Frequency How often?
- **Duration** How long?
- **Controllability**: Can control your thoughts?
- **Deterrents**: What stops you from acting?



### **Definitions continued**

- Suicide Attempt potentially self-injurious act with at least some intent to die.
- Intent a wish to die; doesn't have to be100%
- Inferred Intent intent was denied, but clinically lethality is clear
- Self-Injurious Behavior self harm for reasons other than to kill oneself
- Interrupted Attempt a person take steps to end their life, but someone or something stops them
- Self-Aborted Attempt a person takes steps to end their life and they stop themselves
- **Preparatory Behaviors** any other planned behavior related to trying to end one's life



# **Type of C-SSRs**

- There are many various versions and formats to the C-SSRs include screener, triage and full scale versions.
- C-SSRs can be modified for different agency needs. Throughout this presentation we will discuss modifications used by PIRC.



#### COMMUNITY CARD



Ask your friends Care for your friends Embrace your friends

See Reverse for Questions that Can Save a Life

	Past Month
<ol> <li>Have you wished you were dead or wished you could go to sleep and not wake up?</li> </ol>	
2) Have you actually had any thoughts about killing yourself?	
If <b>YES</b> to 2, answer questions 3, 4, 5 and 6 If <b>NO</b> to 2, go directly to question 6	
3) Have you thought about how you might do this?	
4) Have you had any intention of acting on these thoughts of killing yourself, as opposed to you have the thoughts but you definitely would not act on them?	High Risk
5) Have you started to work out or worked out the details of how to kill yourself? Do you intend to carry out this plan?	High Risk
Always Ask Question 6	Past 3 Months
6) Have you done anything, started to do anything, or prepared to do anything to end your life?	High
Examples: Collected pills, obtained a gun, gave away valuables, wrote a will or suicide note, held a gun but changed your mind, cut yourself, tried to hang yourself, etc.	Risk

Any YES must be taken seriously. Seek help from friends, family If the answer to 4, 5 or 6 is YES, immediately ESCORT to Emergency Personnel for care or call 1-800-273-8255 or text 741741 or call 911



DON'T LEAVE THE PERSON ALONE STAY ENGAGED UNTIL YOU MAKE A WARM HAND OFF TO SOMEONE WHO CAN HELP



# **C-SSRS and Youth**

• Full form has successfully been used with children 6 and older.

- The very young children form is designed for age 4 to 5.
  - Not alive
  - Did you think this is something you might do.

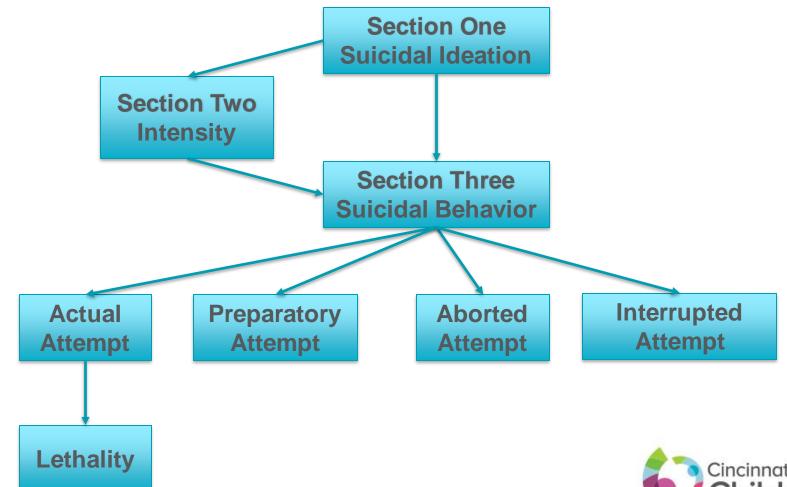


# Using the C-SSRs virtually

- You need the location of the student.
- Ask if there are adults in the home or at their location.
- Try to ensure child has privacy when answering questions.
- If you can use a visual platform to do the assessment. (non-verbal communication)
- Then follow up with parent.

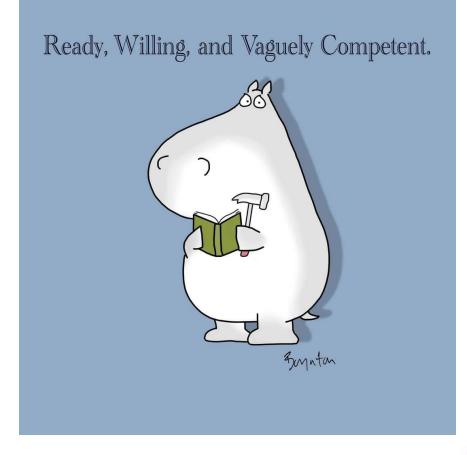


### Lifetime/Recent Structure





# Role Play w/ Susie





#### SUICIDAL IDEATION

Ask questions 1 and 2. If both are negative, proceed to "Suicidal Behavior" section. If the answer to question 2 is "yes", ask questions 3, 4 and 5. If the answer to question 1 and/or 2 is "yes", complete "Intensity of Ideation" section below.	Lifetime: Time He/She Felt Most Suicidal	Past 1 month
<ol> <li>Wish to be Dead</li> <li>Subject endorses thoughts about a wish to be dead or not alive anymore, or wish to fall asleep and not wake up.</li> <li>Have you wished you were dead or wished you could go to sleep and not wake up?</li> <li>If yes, describe:</li> </ol>	Yes No	Yes No
<ul> <li>2. Non-Specific Active Suicidal Thoughts General non-specific thoughts of wanting to end one's life/die by suicide (e.g., "I've thought about killing myself") without thoughts of ways to kill oneself/associated methods, intent, or plan during the assessment period. Have you actually had any thoughts of killing yourself?</li> <li>If yes, describe:</li> </ul>	Yes No	Yes No



- Ask questions 1 & 2. If the answer is NO to both, STOP do not ask questions 3-5, GO to Section 3: Suicide Behavior.
- If the answer to both or only question 2 is yes, continue to ask questions 3-5. Then continue to Section 2: Suicidal Intensity
- Auditory hallucination saying "Kill yourself" = Ideation
- For young Children (under 12), instead of "dead" use "not alive." They need to have a concept of death.



<ul> <li>3. Active Suicidal Ideation with Any Methods (Not Plan) without Intent to Act Subject endorses thoughts of suicide and has thought of at least one method during the assessment period. This is different than a specific plan with time, place or method details worked out (e.g., thought of method to kill self but not a specific plan). Includes person who would say, "I thought about taking an overdose but I never made a specific plan as to when, where or how I would actually do itand I would never go through with it." Have you been thinking about how you might do this?</li> <li>If yes, describe:</li> </ul>	Yes No	Yes No
<ul> <li>4. Active Suicidal Ideation with Some Intent to Act, without Specific Plan Active suicidal thoughts of killing oneself and subject reports having <u>some intent to act on</u> <u>such thoughts</u>, as opposed to "I have the thoughts but I definitely will not do anything about them." Have you had these thoughts and had some intention of acting on them?</li> <li>If yes, describe:</li> </ul>	Yes No	Yes No
<ul> <li>5. Active Suicidal Ideation with Specific Plan and Intent</li> <li>Thoughts of killing oneself with details of plan fully or partially worked out and subject has some intent to carry it out.</li> <li>Have you started to work out or worked out the details of how to kill yourself? Do you intend to carry out this plan?</li> </ul>	Yes No	Yes No
If yes, describe:		arens

#### • Definition: Method

- "Have you been thinking about how you might do this?"
- Has the client thought about different ways
  - Hanging, overdosing, jumping off at tall building
  - Definition: Plan
- "Have you started to work out the details of how to kill yourself?"
- Client has answered the questions of how, when, where in their response.
  - After school I would take the pills that I have been hiding in my room before anyone else is home.



#### For each questions

- Select the correct way to complete question 1 and 2 on the C-SSRs
- Select which questions on the C-SSRs should be asked next



Andy, a ten year old male, presents with anxiety. He says that he is afraid to go asleep after his grandfather died in his sleep. Pt denies wanting to die or thoughts about killing himself ever.



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	Lifetime	Past month
Question 1:	No	No
Question 2:	No	No

Next CSSRs questions to ask: Suicidal Behaviors



Violet, 17 year old female, reports that three months ago she wished she could die in her sleep, but denies these thoughts in the last month. She also denies ever thinking about killing herself.



Violet, 17 year old female, reports that three months ago she wished she could die in her sleep, but denies these thoughts in the last month. She also denies ever thinking about killing herself.

	Lifetime	Past month
Question 1:	Yes	No
Question 2:	No	No

Next CSSRs questions to ask: Intensity of Ideation Section



Olaf, 13 year old male, reports that every day for the past 3 months he wishes he was dead and in the past week has started to have thoughts about killing himself.



Olaf, 13 year old male, reports that every day for the past 3 months he wishes he was dead and in the past week has started to have thoughts about killing himself.

		Lifetime	Past month
Question	1:	Yes	Yes
Question	2:	Yes	Yes

Next CSSRs questions to ask: Question 3-5 followed Intensity of Ideation and Suicidal Behaviors



#### INTENSITY OF IDEATION

			_	
The following features should be rated with respect to the most severe type of ideation (i.e., 1-5 from above, with 1 being the least severe and 5 being the most severe). Ask about time he/she was feeling the most suicidal.			Most	Most
	Type # (1-5)	Description of Ideation	Severe	Severe
<u>Recent</u> - Most Severe Id	leation: Type # (1-5)	Description of Ideation		
Frequency How many times have y (1) Less than once a we (5) Many times each day	ek (2) Once a week (3) 2-5	? 5 times in week (4) Daily or almost daily		
	e of the time	last? (4) 4-8 hours/most of day (5) More than 8 hours/persistent or continuous		



- Once it has been determined patient has suicide ideation, follow-up questions are necessary to help inform your clinical judgement.
- Top part of this section is just bringing down the data from suicidal ideation or what was the last question the child said yes to for each time period.

#### For very young children/cognitively delayed

- Only ask "How many times have you had these thoughts?"
- Options are, "Only one time," "A few times," "A lot," "All the time" and "Don't know/Not Applicable."



- Intensity Questions:
  - Frequency: How many times have you had these thoughts? (Only one question for the very young child version)
  - Duration: When you have these thoughts how long do they last? (studies have shown that teenagers with higher duration of the suicidal ideation are at higher risk compared to other questions in this section.)



ControllabilityCould/can you stop thinking about killing(1) Easily able to control thoughts(2) Can control thoughts with little difficulty(3) Can control thoughts with some difficulty	 
DeterrentsAre there things - anyone or anything (e.g., family, religion, pain of death) - thatstopped you from wanting to die or acting on thoughts of suicide?(1) Deterrents definitely stopped you(4) Deterrents most likely did not stop you(2) Deterrents probably stopped you(5) Deterrents definitely did not stop you(3) Uncertain that deterrents stopped you(0) Does not apply	 
<ul> <li>Reasons for Ideation What sort of reasons did you have for thinking about wanting to die or killing yourself? Was it to end the pain or stop the way you were feeling (in other words you couldn't go on living with this pain or how you were feeling) or was it to get attention, revenge or a reaction from others? Or both?</li> <li>(1) Completely to get attention, revenge or a reaction from others</li> <li>(2) Mostly to get attention, revenge or a reaction from others</li> <li>(3) Equally to get attention, revenge or a reaction from others</li> <li>(4) Mostly to end or stop the pain (you couldn't go on living with the pain or how you were feeling)</li> <li>(5) Completely to end or stop the pain (you couldn't go on and to end/stop the pain living with the pain or how you were feeling)</li> <li>(6) Does not apply</li> </ul>	 



- Intensity Questions
  - Controllability: Can you stop thinking about killing yourself or wanting to die if you want to?
  - Deterrents: Are there thigs anyone or anything that stopped you from wanting to die or acting on thoughts of committing suicide?
  - Reasons for ideation: What reasons did you have for thinking about wanting to die or killing yourself?
     To end the pain or stop the way you were feeling? To get attention, revenge or a reaction from others?



#### Role Play – Ideation and Intensity

- Role play 1st side of C-SSR's
- Group will create scenario in which either or both questions 1 and 2 are yes
- 4 to 5 people in a room and each has a role
  - Child, Counselor, and other are observers



### **Section 3: Suicidal Behavior**

SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR (Check all that apply, so long as these are separate events; must ask about all types)	Lifetime	Past 3 months
Actual Attempt: A potentially self-injurious act committed with at least some wish to die, as a result of act. Behavior was in part thought of as meth-od to kill oneself. Intent does not have to be 100%. If there is any intent/desire to die associated with the act, then it can be considered an actual suicide attempt. There does not have to be any	Yes No	Yes No
injury or harm, just the potential for injury or harm. If person pulls trigger while gun is in mouth but gun is broken so no injury results, this is considered an attempt. Inferring Intent: Even if an individual denies intent/wish to die, it may be inferred clinically from the behavior		
or circumstances. For example, a highly lethal act that is clearly not an accident so no other intent but suicide can be inferred (e.g., gunshot to head, jumping from window of a high floor/story). Also, if someone denies intent to die, but they thought that what they did could be lethal, intent may be inferred.	Total # of	Total # of
Have you made a suicide attempt? Have you done anything to harm yourself? Have you done anything dangerous where you could have died?	Attempts	Attempts
What did you do? Did you as a way to end your life? Did you want to die (even a little) when you?		
Were you trying to end your life when you? Or Did you think it was possible you could have died from? Or did you do it purely for other reasons / without ANY intention of killing yourself (like to relieve stress, feel	Yes No	Yes No
better, get sympathy, or get something else to happen)? (Self-Injurious Behavior without suicidal intent) If yes, describe:		
Has subject engaged in Non-Suicidal Self-Injurious Behavior?		



# **Section 3: Suicidal Behavior**

- Definition: Suicide attempt
  - "potentially self-injurious act with at least some intent to die"
  - Actual harm is not needed, just **potential** for injury
  - A suicide attempt begins with the first pill swallowed or scratch with a knife



### Intent is of primary importance

#### • Definition: Intent

- "Wish to die" Client does not have to endorse 100% wanting to die, if any part of them wanted to die then the act would be considered an attempt
- Helps determine if act was a suicide attempt or self harm
- Definition: Inferred Intent
  - A client does not respond or denies intent/plan to die, but the behavior and potential for being lethal is evident.
  - A client denies intent to die, but they thought that what they did could be lethal.
  - "Clinically impressive" circumstances highly lethal act where no other intent but suicide can be inferred



## How to ask the questions

- Have you made a suicide attempt?
- Have you done anything to harm yourself?
- Have you done anything dangerous where you could have died?
- What did you do?
- Did you \_\_\_\_\_ as a way to end your life?
- Did you want to die (even a little) when you\_\_\_\_\_
- Were you trying to end your life when you \_\_\_\_\_
- Or Did you think it was possible you could have died from\_\_\_\_?



- Definition: Self injurious behavior
  - Self harming for other reasons than to kill oneself
  - No intention of death
  - Purpose of action was to relieve stress, feel better get sympathy or get sympathy, attention, make someone angry



Interrupted Attempt:	Yes No	Yes No
When the person is interrupted (by an outside circumstance) from starting the potentially self-injurious act (if not for that, actual attempt would have occurred).		
Overdose: Person has pills in hand but is stopped from ingesting. Once they ingest any pills, this becomes an attempt rather than an interrupted attempt. Shooting: Person has gun pointed toward self, gun is taken away by someone else, or is somehow prevented from pulling trigger. Once they pull the trigger, even if the gun fails to fire, it is an attempt. Jumping: Person is poised to jump, is grabbed and taken down from ledge. Hanging: Person has noose around neck but has not yet started to hang - is stopped from doing so. Has there been a time when you started to do something to end your life but someone or something stopped you before you actually did anything? If yes, describe:	Total # of interrupted	Total # of interrupted
Aborted or Self-Interrupted Attempt:	Yes No	Yes No
When person begins to take steps toward making a suicide attempt, but stops themselves before they actually have engaged in any self-destructive behavior. Examples are similar to interrupted attempts,		
except that the individual stops him/herself, instead of being stopped by something else. Has there been a time when you started to do something to try to end your life but you stopped yourself	Total # of	Total # of
before you actually did anything?	aborted or	aborted or
If yes, describe:	self-	self-
	interrupted	interrupted



- Definition: Interrupted Attempt
  - When person starts to take steps to end their life, but someone or something stops them. Bottle of pills or gun in hand but someone grabs it. On ledge poised to jump, but police stop them.
  - "Has there been a time when you started to do something to end our life, but someone or something stopped you before you actually did anything?"



- Definition: Aborted or Self Interrupted Attempt
  - When a person begins to take steps towards making a suicide attempt, but stops themselves before they actually have engaged in any selfdestructive behavior.
  - "Has there been a time when you started to do something to end your life, but you stopped yourself before you actually did anything?"



Preparatory Acts or Behavior:	Yes No	Yes No
Acts or preparation towards imminently making a suicide attempt. This can include		
anything beyond a verbalization or thought, such as assembling a specific method (e.g.,	Total # of	Total # of
buying pills, purchasing a gun) or preparing for one's death by suicide (e.g., giving	preparatory	preparatory
things away, writing a suicide note).	acts	acts
Have you taken any steps towards making a suicide attempt or preparing to kill yourself		
(such as collecting pills, getting a gun, giving valuables away or writing a suicide note)?		
If yes, describe:		

- Definition: Preparatory Acts or Behavior
  - Any other behavior beyond saying something with suicide intent. Not impulsive, but planned. Collecting or buying pills; Purchasing a gun; Writing a will or suicide note
  - "Have you taken any steps towards making a suicide attempt or preparing to kill yourself such as, collecting pills, getting a gun, giving valuables away, writing a suicide note?"



	Most Recent Attempt Date:	Most Lethal Attempt Date:	Initial/ First Attempt Date:
<ul> <li>Actual Lethality/Medical Damage:</li> <li>No physical damage or very minor physical damage (e.g., surface scratches).</li> <li>Minor physical damage (e.g., lethargic speech; first-degree burns; mild bleeding; sprains).</li> <li>Moderate physical damage; medical attention needed (e.g., conscious but sleepy,</li> </ul>	Enter Code	Enter Code	Enter Code
<ol> <li>Moderate physical damage; medical attention needed (e.g., conscious but sleepy, somewhat responsive; second-degree burns; bleeding of major vessel).</li> <li>Moderately severe physical damage; medical hospitalization and likely intensive care required (e.g., comatose with reflexes intact; third-degree burns less than 20% of body; extensive blood loss but can recover; major fractures).</li> <li>Severe physical damage; medical hospitalization with intensive care required (e.g., comatose with-degree burns over 20% of body; extensive blood loss with unstable vital signs; major damage to a vital area).</li> <li>Death</li> </ol>			
Potential Lethality: Only Answer if Actual Lethality=0 Likely lethality of actual attempt if no medical damage (the following examples, while having no actual medical damage, had potential for very serious lethality: put gun in mouth and pulled the trigger but gun fails to fire so no medical damage; laying on train tracks with oncoming train but pulled away before run over).	Enter Code	Enter Code	Enter Code
0 = Behavior not likely to result in injury 1 = Behavior likely to result in injury but not likely to cause death 2 = Behavior likely to result in death despite available medical care			dron's



#### Actual Lethality/ Medical Damage

- 0. <u>No physical damage or very minor physical damage (i.e., surface scratches)</u>
- 1. <u>Minor physical damage (i.e., lethargic speech; 1<sup>st</sup> degree burns; mild bleeding;</u> sprain)
- 2. <u>Moderate physical damage/medical attention needed (i.e., conscious, but sleepy;</u> somewhat responsive; 2<sup>nd</sup> degree burns; bleeding of major vessel)
- 3. <u>Moderately severe physical damage/medical hospitalization and likely intensive</u> <u>care required (i.e., comatose with reflexes intact; 3<sup>rd</sup> degree burns less than 20% of</u> body; extensive blood loss but can recover; major fractures).
- 4. <u>Severe physical damage/medical hospitalization with intensive care required (i.e.,</u> comatose without reflexes; 3<sup>rd</sup> degree burns over 20% of body; extensive blood loss with unstable vital signs; major damage to a vital area).
- 5. Death

Potential Lethality:

Only answer if actual lethality is 0

- 1. Behavior not likely to result in injury
- 2. Behavior likely to result in injury but not likely to cause death
- 3. Behavior likely to result in death despite available medical care



Rapunzel wanted to escape from her mother's home. She researched lethal doses of ibuprofen. She took 6 ibuprofen pills and said she felt certain from her research that this amount was not enough to kill her. She stated she did not want to die, only to escape from her mother's home. She was taken to the emergency department where her stomach was pumped and she was admitted to a psychiatric unit.

Was this a suicide attempt?

○ Yes ○ No ○ Not enough information



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Was this a suicide attempt?

No - She never wanted to die. No intent



Anna, age 15, following a fight with her boyfriend, felt like she wanted to die, impulsively took a kitchen knife and made a superficial scratch to her wrist. Before she actually punctured the skin or bled, she changed her mind and stopped.



Anna, age 15, following a fight with her boyfriend, felt like she wanted to die, impulsively took a kitchen knife and made a superficial scratch to her wrist. Before she actually punctured the skin or bled, she changed her mind and stopped.

Was this a suicide attempt?

Yes – She wanted to die. There was intent.



Ralph was feeling ignored. He went into the kitchen where mother and sister were talking. He took a knife out of the drawer and made a cut on his arm. He denied that he wanted to die, but just wanted them to pay attention.

Was this a suicide attempt? Yes ONO ONot enough information



Ralph was feeling ignored. He went into the family kitchen where mother and sister were talking. He took a knife out of the drawer and made a cut on his arm. He denied that he wanted to die, but just wanted them to pay attention.

Was this a suicide attempt?

No – He didn't want to die. There was no intent



Sally cut her wrist after an argument with her boyfriend.



Sally cut her wrist after an argument with her boyfriend.

#### Was this a suicide attempt?

Not enough information



Wendy stated that she experienced heartbreak over the "loss of her boyfriend" a week ago. She stated that she took 4 clonazepam, called a girlfriend, and talked/cried it out while on the phone. She was dismissive of the seriousness of the attempt, but indicated that she wanted to die at the time she took the overdose.

Was this a:

Suicide attempt
 Interrupted attempt
 Aborted attempt



Wendy stated that she experienced heartbreak over the "loss of her boyfriend" a week ago. She stated that she took 4 clonazepam, called a girlfriend, and talked/cried it out while on the phone. She was dismissive of the seriousness of the attempt, but indicated that she wanted to die at the time she took the overdose.

This was a:

Suicide attempt – There was intent and she actually took pills. It does not matter that it was not a lethal dose.



### What's next?

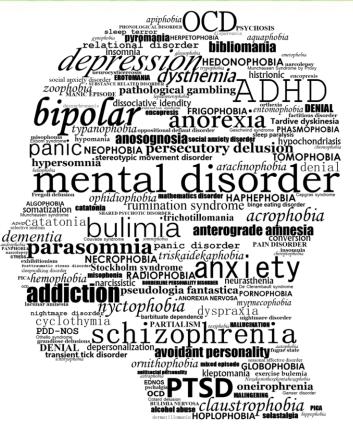
- Complete a crisis management plan.
- Connect the student to their mental health provider or primary care physician.
- Call PIRC 513-636-4124 if further assessment is needed either through Bridge Clinic or the Emergency Department.



PIRC

Psychiatric Intake Response Center

#### 513-636-4124





#### **Questions?**

For more information on suicide and C-SSRs: <u>The Lighthouse Project The Columbia Lighthouse</u> <u>Project</u>

Lifeline (988lifeline.org)

For further trainings on C-SSRs:

<u>Center for Practice Innovations > Resources ></u> <u>SCORM > CSSRS</u>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xfddz\_Yfnc4

