

# SUICIDE INTERVENTION FLOW CHART

## ALS

Empathy builds rapport & trust

## IDENTIFY SUICIDE CLUES

**VERBAL:** “It doesn’t matter anymore...” “I won’t have this problem much longer...”  
“I just can’t take it any longer...” Voice is weak, words are slurred...

**SITUATIONAL:** Expressions of hopelessness, helplessness, self-loathing, isolation, mental anguish, perceived absence of alternatives other than suicide, belief that death represents an escape

**BEHAVIORAL:** Giving away possessions, inappropriate calmness or absence of emotion; making a will; saying “good-byes;” behavioral rehearsal; past attempt(s)

## ESTABLISH SUICIDE INTENT

Ask direct & specific questions about intent:

***“Are you planning to commit suicide?”***

**“NO”**



No harm done

**“YES”**

**CONTINUE**

Proceed down chart

## IDENTIFY PLAN & MEANS

Ask direct & specific questions about plan; identify whether means are available:

*“How do you plan to kill yourself?”*



## IDENTIFY HARM DONE

Identify method, severity & consequences of harmful act(s):

*“What have you done already?”*



## DISABLE PLAN & MITIGATE HARM

**REDUCE IMMEDIATE LETHALITY:** Distance person from means: put down knife/gun; unload weapon; stop/turn off gas or CO<sub>2</sub>; flush pills...

**MITIGATE ANY HARM DONE:** For pills & other toxins, consult medical professional for antidote; stop bleeding; treat wound; get fresh air; stay awake...



## IDENTIFY PROBLEM SUICIDE SOLVES

What real, anticipated or *perceived* event has created the anguish & agitation? Identify, give voice to & empathize with the underlying emotion; understand the reason for dying



## **INSTILL HOPE**

Identify the “hooks” and support these reasons for living; provide hope for a different and more tolerable future; reassure that anguish is temporary & endurable



## **EXPAND PERCEIVED ALTERNATIVES**

Widen the scope of view; collaborate to identify acceptable alternatives to suicide; reduce “either-or” and “black & white” thinking by exploring middle ground and identifying alternatives to suicide



## **IDENTIFY RESOURCES**

Identify internal resources and support positive coping skills to combat sense of helplessness; identify external resources to decrease isolation & support resolution of crisis



## **CONTINUE TO ASSESS & MITIGATE RISK**