From managing risks to developing a life worth living
HOW CAN WE HELP OUR PATIENTS AND FAMILY IMPROVE HEALTH AND WELLNESS

So far we have discussed:

- The importance of sleep hygiene and adequate sleep
- The importance of a family media plan and some age-appropriate constraints on electronics and media for children and teens
- How to empathically support the need for more structured parenting to improve functioning after pandemic regression.

Our last virtual drop-in topic is “The Safety Net”, how to manage behavioral crises as we raise expectations.

We will discuss safety planning for suicidal thoughts and threats, self-injury and behavioral outbursts. We will learn about a tool that can help determine when and how to use local crisis supports.
THE FEAR

100% Rigid Expectations

100% Accommodations

distress
acting out
impairment

distress
acting out
impairment

The Terribles
MANAGING RISK

• Assess risk, risk stratification
• Build hope and reasons for living
• Connect, strengthen connections with protective adults
• Develop safety plan

ASSESS RISK

Assessments:
- PHQ-9
- CSSRS
- ASQ

Risks:
- Previous attempt (rehearsal)
- Family history of suicide attempt
- Access to firearms
- Traumatic stress
- Untreated mental health problems & substance use
ASK SUICIDE-SCREEN QUESTIONS (ASQ)

NIMH: Youth ASQ Toolkit

Some pearls:
• Praise patient for positive screen. ”These are hard things to talk about…”
• Assess suicidal thoughts in more depth.
• Interview with patient alone and then together with parent/guardian.
• Create a safety plan.
ASK SUICIDE-SCREEN QUESTIONS

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? How? When?
5. Are you having thoughts of killing yourself right now?
COVID-19: YOUTH SUICIDE RISK SCREENING PATHWAY

Who: New patient, existing patient not screened in last 30 days, history of positive screen, clinical judgement suggests screen

Results: 5 no’s, negative screen
   Any yes, 1-4 or refuses to answer – positive screen
   Yes to answer 5 – imminent risk, safety precautions and planning, ?ED

Brief Suicide Safety Assessment (BSSA) (Share)
Low Risk - non-urgent MH follow up, primary care follow up and safety plan
Medium Risk – safety plan, urgent MH intake, primary care follow up in 72 hours
High Risk – Parent precautions and observation and urgent MH follow-up vs ER
SAFETY PLAN

• Child/teen participation
• What are my warning signs?
• What I can do to stay safe.
• Who can I reach out to.
• Who/what are my resources.
• (Share template)

Parent safety response:
Example:
1. safety sweep child/teen’s room
2. check in frequently
3. direct observation/supervision
4. call the primary care office for advice
5. go to the emergency room

https://projectteachny.org/covid/
Connect to protective adults.
  Who is one adult you can turn to when feeling distressed?

Can we practice how you might discuss Suicidal Thoughts together?
  How might your parent respond if you were to express Suicidal Thoughts?

Example: Using 0-5 scale to monitor.
  0 - no suicidal thoughts
  1 - passive suicidal thoughts
  2 - passive, more distressing suicidal thoughts.
  3 - active plans, no intent.
  4 - very active planning, more detail.
  5 - active plan & intent.
Developing life worth living goals.
Use these goals to motivate youth towards healthy steps forward.

What makes your life worth living?
What is really important to you?
What is one goal that you are working towards?
This is a moment of suffering. This hurts. Ouch.

Everyone is suffering some. I’m not alone.

May I can be kind to myself. Or what do I need to hear right now to express kindness to myself?

Dr. Kristin Neff

DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILL

T – Temperature
Change your body temperature using cold water or ice.

I – Intense exercise

P – Paced breathing
Breathe in to the count of 5, hold then breath out to the count of 7.

P – Paired muscle relaxation
Tense your muscles when breathing in and relax them when breathing out.
REFERENCES & RESOURCES

1. AAP Mental Health Minute: https://services.aap.org/en/patient-care/mental-health-minute/


SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOURCES

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
Spanish/Español: 1-888-628-9454

**Crisis Text Line**
Text HOME to 741-741

**Suicide Prevention Resource Center**

**National Institute of Mental Health**

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**