

Terms Related to Suicide, Severity & Notable Information

S.I.B. = Self Injurious Behavior

- Typically a cry for help
- Not always an attempt at suicide
- Poor coping strategy, but does serve as a release of emotion, stress, etc.
- Person struggling with SIB needs effective coping skills
- Warning signs include wearing long sleeves frequently and/or in hot weather in attempt to hide cutting
- Cutting often on inside of wrist, forearm, and can be present on upper thighs as well

P.D.W. = Passive Death Wish

- Often reflected in statements like, “I just wish I was dead” or “I wish I wasn’t around anymore.”
- Can be reflective of desire to commit suicide if person making statement has specific plan
As a result, should be followed up with questions asking about severity of thought:
“What do you mean you wish you were dead?”
- Can be a way to express desire to see current circumstances/struggles go away (especially for kids)
Person doesn’t want to die, but they don’t want to keep feeling like they do

Can help person reframe statement; instead of “I wish I was dead,” help person say,
“I wish the pain I am experiencing would end.”
- Can be attention seeking (individuals will at times seek even negative attention)

S.I. = Suicidal Ideation

- Person expresses a desire to die and also states a specific plan
“I wish I were dead, and I just want to overdose on my medication.”
“I want to just go home and shoot myself.”

If person states a desire to die, ask follow up question; you may need to directly if there is a plan if person does not openly say there is
- Immediate intervention should be taken in this case
Inform parents if working with child under 18 immediately
(confidentiality NOT a concern as person is a threat to themselves)

Inform crisis line or family member/friend if working with someone over 18;
Confidentiality still NOT a concern as person is threat to themselves

If person has access to stated method of killing self, ensure it is removed from home
(remove pills, guns, lock up knives, etc)

Contact Crisis Lines listed or National Suicide Hotline, which will provide further direction
Be sure to inform person on phone that individual has active plan to commit suicide
- Make every effort to ensure that patient DOES NOT leave alone; if they refuse any Crisis Intervention, at least contact family, friend, or police – DO NOT KEEP INFORMATION TO YOURSELF!