

THE S.A.F.E. TOOL

SURVEY YOUR SURROUNDINGS



Do you have a son, daughter, relative, friend, student, or employee who is becoming increasingly distant and/or isolated? Is struggling with anxiety, depression, or other mental illness? Is threatening to commit suicide or harm others? Has stopped taking their medication? Has been suspended from school or fired from a job?

ASSESS FOR RISK



Ask the individual questions: How are you doing? Do you need support? Are you having thoughts of harming yourself? Ask yourself questions: Has this individual demonstrated a sudden or recent decline in social and/or emotional functioning? Is she/he harming her/himself in any way? Is this person feeling extreme anger or paranoia in regards to any organizations or individuals? Is his/her behavior becoming increasingly erratic? If you answer “yes” to any of the above questions, proceed to F.

FIND HELP



You shouldn't handle this on your own. Taking steps to connect the person of concern or their family to professional support is critical. Most communities have a crisis hotline that you can call and discuss your concerns. The majority of companies, schools and organizations have a risk assessment team that can process any issues with you. Ideally, you will want to assist the individual in getting appropriate help, which might be as simple as touching base with a mental health professional or as serious as hospitalization. Most individuals who are feeling desperate and alone respond positively to someone showing genuine concern.

EELIMINATE ACCESS TO FIREARMS AND WEAPONS



This is the most important step. The majority of people think: my relative/employee/student would never use a weapon to harm others. But an individual who is mentally unstable, or who is considering harming him or herself, might also be capable of harming others. When you eliminate access to weapons, you also greatly reduce the risk of the weapons being used in a moment of impulsivity or psychosis. All firearms and knives should be securely locked up or completely removed from the home. If the individual does not live with you, you can ask them directly if they have access to any weapons and express your concern for their safety. If they are a minor, you can address your concerns to their parents.

IF WE WORK TOGETHER, WE CAN KEEP EVERYONE IN OUR COMMUNITY

S.A.F.E.!