NaBITA K-12 Risk Rubric

D-SCALE

Life Stress and Emotional Health

OVERALL SUMMARY

In this stage, there is a serious risk of suicide, life-threatening self-injury, life-threatening risk-taking (ex. pressing on another student’s chest until they pass out, jumping from dangerous height on playground, playing pinting or bishop knife game). They may display racing thoughts, life-threatening substance use or dependence, intense anger, and/or perceived unfair treatment or grievance that has a major impact on the student’s academic, social, and peer interactions. The individual is clear through their goals or plans, includes suicide/self-harm plans/control of environment, or viewer’s unique perspective. They are struggling to manage their emotions or behaviors and may be displaying reckless or dangerous actions. This may be towards a teacher, coach, or other authority figures. Others may feel threatened around this individual, but any threat lacks depth, follow-through, or a narrowing against an individual, office, or community. More serious social, mental health, academic, and adjustment concerns occur, and the individual is in need of more timely support and resources to avoid further escalation. The individual may have a fixation and focus on a singular individual, group, or department; depersonalization of others; and gradual escalation of threats.

CRITICAL

Behavior at the elevated stage is increasingly disruptive (with multiple incidents) and involves multiple units such as student discipline, SRO/SAE enforcement, and counseling. The student may engage in suicidal talk, self-injury, and/or substance use or abuse. There may be acts of affective violence, often emerging as the first time an individual engages in such violence. Threats of violence and ultimatums may be vague but direct, or specific but indirect. A focus on a target often emerges (person, place, or system) and the individual continues to attack the target’s self-esteem, public image, and/or access to safety and support. This may be towards a teacher, coach, or other authority figures. Others may feel threatened around this individual, but any threat lacks depth, follow-through, or a narrowing against an individual, office, or community. More serious social, mental health, academic, and adjustment concerns occur, and the individual is in need of more timely support and resources to avoid further escalation. The individual may have a fixation and focus on a singular individual, group, or department; depersonalization of others; and gradual escalation of threats.

DECOMPENSATING

Behavior is severely disruptive, directly impacts others, and is actively dangerous. This may include life-threatening, self-injurious behaviors such as:

▲ Suicidal ideations or attempts, an attempted lethal plan, and/or hospitalization
▲ Extreme self-injury, life-threatening disordered eating, or other life-threatening risky behavior
▲ Profoundly disturbed, detached view of reality and at risk of egregious injury or death
▲ Lack of ability to regulate emotion, cognition, self, behavior, and relationships
▲ Actual affective/impulsive violence or serious threats of violence such as:
▲ Repeated severe attacks on others or an attack with weapon such as a pencil
▲ Extreme aggression such as beating or non-consensual choking
▲ Making threats that are concrete, consistent, and plausible
▲ Impulsive stalking behaviors that present a physical danger

DETERIORATING

Destructive actions, screaming or aggressive/harassing communications, rapid/odd speech, extreme isolation
▲ Responding to voices, extremely odd behavior, engagement in high risk behavior (ex: alcohol, drug, sex); troubling thoughts with paranoid delusional themes; increasingly medically dangerous binging/purging
▲ Suicidal thoughts that are not lethal/imminent or non-life-threatening self-injury
▲ Engaging in, or victim of, repetitive verbal aggression, social aggression, cyberagression, or bullying behaviors such as public humiliation or embarrassment, spreading rumors/lies to cause harm, demeaning words or actions, etc.
▲ New aggressive behavior against others seen not before, escalation in behaviors, harming animals outside of hunting or survival
▲ Threats of affective, impulsive, poorly-planned, and/or emotionally-driven violence
▲ Vague but direct threats or specific but indirect threats; explosive language
▲ Stalking behaviors that do not harm, but are disruptive and concerning
▲ Minor damage to property of others or theft of property
▲ Threatening to fight others
▲ Limited physical aggression (pinching, slapping, shoving, or kicking)

DISTRESSED

Behavior that concerns others or an impaired ability to manage emotions and actions. Possible presence of stressors such as:

▲ Managing mental illness, disordered eating, bed wetting, poor parental supervision, poor attendance or involvement at school, etc.
▲ Engaging in, or victim of, limited bullying behaviors, verbal aggression, social aggression, or cyberagression such as purposeful exclusion, teasing, or name-calling. Student has difficulty making friends or interacting socially or difficulty defending self
▲ Difficulty coping/adapting to situational stressors, parental conflict, housing/food instability, death in the family. Behavior may subside when stressor is removed, or trauma is addressed/processed
▲ If a threat is present, the threat is vague, indirect, implausible, and lacks detail or focus

DEVELOPING

Experiencing situational stressors but demonstrating appropriate coping skills
▲ Often first contact or referral to the BIT/CARE team
▲ Behavior is appropriate given the student’s age, circumstances, and context
▲ No threat made or present

BASELINE

OPPORTUNITIES TO INTERVENTION

TRAJECOARY?

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E-SCALE

Hostility and Violence to Others

EMERGENCE OF VIOLENCE

▲ Behavior is moving towards a plan of targeted violence, sense of hopelessness, and/or desperation in the attack plan; locked into an all-or-nothing mentality
▲ Increasing use of military and tactical language, acquisition of costume for attack
▲ Clear fixations on an individual target and goals justified in actions
▲ Attack plan is credible, repeated, and specific; may be shared, may be hidden
▲ Increased research on target and attack plan, possibly developing schematics or detailed floorplans employing counter-surveillance measures, access to lethal means; there is a sense of imminence to the plan
▲ Leakage of attack plan on social media or telling friends and others to avoid locations
▲ Killing of animals outside of hunting, displaying kills, practicing skills to cause lethal harm

ELABORATION OF THREAT

▲ Fixation and focus on a singular individual, group, or department; depersonalization of target, intimating target to lessen their ability to advocate for safety
▲ Seeking others to support and empower future threatening action; extremist peers or adults may exploit vulnerability and move them toward action; encouraging violence; further isolation and/or group forming
▲ Use of graffiti or other artistic, divisive writings or projects that can be seen as approach behaviors (with narrowing focusing to real life people or place they have connection)
▲ Harming or intimidating animals/training; increasingly adopting a limited, singular perspective
▲ Threats and ultimatums may be vague or direct, but are motivated by an abstractly hardened viewpoint; potential leakage around what should happen to fix grievances and injustices
▲ There is rarely physical violence here, but rather an escalation is dangerousness and lethality in the threats; they are more specific, targeted, and repeated

ESCALATING BEHAVIORS

▲ Driven by hardened thoughts or a grievance concerning past wrongs or perceived past wrongs; increasingly adopts a singular, limited perspective
▲ Increased isolation from others; joining a group with shared marginalization within the community (outliers)
▲ Writing in class assignments that highlights violence or negative themes that is incongruent with the assignments
▲ When frustrated, storms off, disengages, may create signs or trill on social media
▲ Frequent interruptions during class as they are vocal about their point of view
▲ Arrogant with others with intent to embarrass, shame, or shut-down
▲ Drawing or drafting violent themes or scenes that are shared more directly with others for a reaction
▲ Physical violence, if present, is impulsive, non-lethal, and brief; may seem similar to affective violence, but driven here by a hardened perspective rather than mental health and/or environmental stress (ex: throwing cell phone on ground or slamming lockers while storming off)
▲ Engages in and/or is victim of, verbal, social, or cyber aggression such as exclusion;

EMPOWERING THOUGHTS

▲ Passionate and hardened thoughts; typically related to religion, politics, academic progress, money/power, social justice, sports involvement, or relationships; may echo parents’ beliefs
▲ Expression of differences with others outside of normal, developmental thoughts and behaviors
▲ Drawing or drafting violent themes or scenes without specific reference to someone or someplace in their life
▲ Rejection of: alternative perspectives, critical thinking, empathy, or perspective-taking
▲ Narrowing on consumption news, social media, or friendships; seeking only those who share the same perspective
▲ No threats of violence

TRAJECDORY?