

WISCONSIN YOUTH FUTURES

Technical Report #21

Community Self-Assessment Tools

Youth Support Inventory For Preventing Youth Suicide



University of Wisconsin-Madison/Extension
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Technical Report #21 Community Self Assessment Tools:

Youth Support Inventory For Preventing Youth Suicide

Instructions

The purpose of the inventory is to identify areas where support for youth in this community is strong as well as areas where it could improve. Each item has been selected because scientific studies have found it to be related to risky behaviors among young people. While no community has all of the supports listed, it is often possible to develop supports when citizens like you think they are important.

In order to begin thinking about the resources available in your community, please rate each item to the best of your knowledge; leave blank any questions you do not have enough information to complete on your own. Several items of the inventory labeled *community data* are completed with the data from the TAP survey or other local information sources. For those items labeled *citizen rating*, fill in the blanks by marking "Extensive", "Limited", "Does Not Exist", or "?". Also note by each statement the specific supports or resources available in the community.

The inventory is usually completed by a committee or coalition, first in small groups and then in the large group. After you have rated the items in the assigned section, discuss each item with your small group. Agree on a small group rating of "Extensive", "Limited", "Does Not Exist", or "?". The "?" means you are not sure whether this support is present or available and your group will need to gather further information to find out. Ratings of "Limited" or "Does Not Exist" are gaps that exist in your community and are areas that may need attention. Select a spokesperson from the small group to report back your ratings to the large group. The members of the large group can accept the ratings of the small group or make changes. The consensus reached by the group assesses the community's strengths and shortcomings in preventing youth suicide.

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Individual Factors

- _____ % 1. Percent of youth who report drinking beer, wine or hard liquor once a week or more
- _____ % 2. Percent of youth who report having 5 or more drinks in a row in the past month
- _____ % 3. Percent of youth who report that they feel they are a failure

Exten- -sive	Lim- -ited	Does Not Exist	?		
_____	_____	_____	_____	4.	Youth in this community refrain from excessive alcohol and other drug use
_____	_____	_____	_____	5.	Youth in this community feel they are capable

Family Support

Parenting Practices

- _____ % 6. Percent of youth who would like to talk more frequently with their parents about things that are important to them
- _____ % 7. Percent of youth who report their mother cares about them
- _____ % 8. Percent of youth who report their father cares about them
- _____ % 9. Percent of youth who report they never, rarely, or sometimes discuss personal problems with their mother
- _____ % 10. Percent of youth who report they never, rarely or sometimes discuss personal problems with their mother

Exten- -sive	Lim- -ited	Does Not Exist	?		
_____	_____	_____	_____	11.	Parents spend time trying to communicate with children and be supportive
_____	_____	_____	_____	12.	Parents talk to their children about things important to them in an educational, helpful way

_____ 13. Parents help their children develop friendships and sources of social support

Parent Education Opportunities

_____ 14. Parent education classes are available and accessible for parents of children of all ages

_____ 15. Books and pamphlets on suicide are available

_____ 16. Newsletters on child development and parenting are provided

_____ 17. Home visitor programs exist for high-risk families

Support for Families in Transition

_____ % 18. Percent of single parent families

_____ % 19. Percent of marriages during the teen years

Exten- -sive	Lim- -ited	Does Not Exist	?	
_____	_____	_____	_____	20. Educational programs/support groups to help parents and children adjust to divorce and remarriage are available and accessible
_____	_____	_____	_____	21. Marital enrichment programs are available for youth that marry

Community Support of Parents

Parents support each other and the community supports parents:

_____ % 22. Percent of youth reporting physical abuse by an adult

_____ % 23. Percent of youth reporting sexual abuse by an adult

_____ % 24. Percent of youth who report neighbors would tell their parents if they saw them doing something wrong

_____ % 25. Percent of youth who report their parents know the parents of their friends

Exten- -sive	Lim- -ited	Does Not Exist	?	
_____	_____	_____	_____	26. Neighbors and other adults in the community assist parents in monitoring youth
_____	_____	_____	_____	27. Parents have opportunities to meet, share and talk with other parents
_____	_____	_____	_____	28. Community has widely known, generally agreed upon norms and standards regarding issues such as alcohol use, curfews, age of dating, and disapproval of suicide.
_____	_____	_____	_____	29. Services are available and accessible for victims of child sexual/physical abuse

School Support

Support During School Transitions

_____ % 30. Percent of eight graders who report thinking about killing themselves during the past month

_____ % 31. Percent of ninth graders who report thinking about killing themselves during the past month

Exten- -sive	Lim- -ited	Does Not Exist	?	
_____	_____	_____	_____	32. Suicidal thoughts increase when students enter high school
_____	_____	_____	_____	33. The school and community have formal means of supporting students during changes from one school building to another

Student Academic Performance

- _____ % 34. Percent of students who believe they are getting a good and high quality education
- _____ % 35. Percent of students who report they worry quite a bit or very much about getting good grades
- _____ % 36. Percent of students behind the appropriate grade
- _____ % 37. Percent of students who report they will probably drop out before finishing high school
- _____ % 38. Percent of unexcused absences from school

Exten- -sive	Lim- -ited	Does Not Exist	?	
_____	_____	_____	_____	39. Most students find their education relevant and high quality
_____	_____	_____	_____	40. Schools work with students who find school irrelevant or experience academic difficulties
_____	_____	_____	_____	41. Summer programs are available for students experiencing academic difficulties
_____	_____	_____	_____	42. Efforts are made to challenge gifted students

Student Commitment to School

- _____ % 43. Percent of students who report they enjoy going to school
- _____ % 44. Percent of students who agree or strongly agree that the rules in school are enforced fairly
- _____ _____ _____ _____ 45. Most students enjoy school
- _____ _____ _____ _____ 46. Students are involved in making decisions about school life (i.e., rules for behavior, extracurricular activities, school beautification)
- _____ _____ _____ _____ 47. Students are given the opportunity to learn skills necessary for successful involvement in school activities
- _____ _____ _____ _____ 48. Students are recognized and rewarded for their involvement in school

Teaching and School Practices

_____ % 49. Percent of students who agree or strongly agree that if they were having a serious personal problem, there is an adult in the school who they would fee OK talking to

Exten- -sive	Lim- -ited	Does Not Exist	?	
_____	_____	_____	_____	50. The school/teacher has clear rules and expectations for students (i.e. academic performance; drug and alcohol use; what to do if you encounter a problem)
_____	_____	_____	_____	51. Students have frequent opportunities to meet with advisors or teachers
_____	_____	_____	_____	52. Schools make an effort to work with students who are antisocial, depressed, withdrawn, isolated, or rejected
_____	_____	_____	_____	53. The school takes special steps to welcome new students (e.g. support groups exist for new students)

Peer Climate

_____ % 54. Percent of youth who report being forced to do something sexual by another teen

_____ % 55. Grade(s) at which students report worrying most about being pressured into having sex

_____ % 56. Percent of students who worry quite a bit or very much about not fitting in with other kids at school

_____	_____	_____	_____	57. Youth in my community make an effort to include kids who don't seem to fit in
_____	_____	_____	_____	58. School and community campaigns attempt to change peer norms that encourage sexuality and drug abuse, and discourage achievement
_____	_____	_____	_____	59. Clubs exist that encourage academic, athletic, artistic, or other pursuits

- _____ 60. Youth who do are not sexually active, and who do well in school are visible, supported, and rewarded
- _____ 38. Older youth interact with and serve as positive role models for youth (e.g., peer counseling, tutoring programs, or mentoring programs)

Community Support

Economic Conditions

- _____ % 40. Percent of families with children living in poverty
- _____ % 41. Percent of children eligible for Head Start who are not being served
- % 62. Unemployment rate in the community
- % 63. Percent of families with children living in poverty
- % 64. Percent of children eligible for Head Start who are not being served
65. Opportunities exist for poor children in the community
66. If needed, efforts exist to increase employment opportunities in the community

- | Exten-
-sive | Lim-
-ited | Does
Not
Exist | ? | |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 42. Opportunities exist for poor children in the community |

Neighborliness

- _____ 43. People know each other and help each other out

Community Norms/Policies

- _____ % 44. Percent of students who think youth drink because people admire or look up to make it seem like a “cool” thing to do
- _____ 45. Efforts exist to counteract the media portrayal of alcohol

use, sexual activity and other unhealthy behaviors as attractive and widespread

- | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|---|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 46. | Adults in the community consistently discourage use of alcohol |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 47. | Adults in the community provide positive role models regarding alcohol use |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 48. | Laws regarding underage drinking are consistently and fairly enforced |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 49. | Laws regarding selling alcohol to minors are consistently and fairly enforced |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 50. | Efforts exist to counteract the media portrayal of alcohol as attractive and widespread |

Community Prevention Efforts

_____ % 51. Percent of seventh graders who report consuming alcohol at least once a month

Exten- -sive	Lim- -ited	Does Not Exist	?	
_____	_____	_____	_____	52. Clubs or efforts exist to encourage academic, athletic, artistic, or other interests
_____	_____	_____	_____	53. Prevention programs for students begin early before students begin using alcohol

Meaningful Youth Roles

_____ % 54. Percent of young people in the community who report involvement in community activities (i.e., dances, sporting events, and clubs)

Recreational/Educational Opportunities

_____	_____	_____	_____	55. Opportunities exist for high-risk youth to have fun without alcohol
_____	_____	_____	_____	56. Recreational activities exist that involve risk and are incompatible with alcohol use (i.e., wilderness treks, rope climbing, water skiing, etc.)
_____	_____	_____	_____	57. Positive ways exist for youth to show their independence and demonstrate their maturity
_____	_____	_____	_____	58. Students have the opportunity to learn such skills as decision-making, assertiveness, stress management, and refusal skills

Preparation for Adult Roles

_____	_____	_____	_____	59. Youth develop meaningful personal relationships with adults in the community
_____	_____	_____	_____	60. Youth have the opportunity to engage in community service that they perceive as useful and important
_____	_____	_____	_____	61. Adolescents have the opportunity to learn the skills required for responsible roles such as parenting,

employment, participating in government and being a good citizen

Religious Opportunities

_____ % 62. Percent of young people who attend church services or participate in other church activities (i.e. choir, religious classes, and church youth groups)

Exten- -sive	Lim- -ited	Does Not Exist	?
-----------------	---------------	----------------------	---

_____ _____ _____ _____ 63. Organized religious activities are available for youth

Equal Opportunities Exist for Youth

_____ % 64. Percent of youth who report, "When I am an adult, I will have a good chance of getting an occupation that is good, steady, and dependable"

_____ _____ _____ _____ 65. All youth receive equal encouragement to pursue a good job or higher education

The Adolescent Work Place

_____ % 62. Percent of freshman and sophomores working 10 to 19 hours per week

_____ % 62. Percent of juniors and seniors working more than 20 hours weekly

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