

Addressing Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors in Substance Abuse Treatment

This TIP is divided into three parts that are bound and produced separately.

Addressing Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors in Substance Abuse Treatment, Part 1, is for substance abuse counselors. It provides the “what” and “why” and “how” of working with clients in substance abuse treatment with suicidal thoughts and behaviors. It covers background information about suicide and substance use disorders, including risk factors and warning signs for suicide and a four-step process for addressing suicidal thoughts and behaviors in substance abuse treatment, summarized by the acronym GATE (Gather information, Access supervision, Take responsible action, and Extend the action). It also includes a set of competencies counselors should incorporate to work effectively with clients who are suicidal. Chapter 2 of *Part 1* represents the heart of the “how-to” for counselors. It consists of representative vignettes of counseling sessions with clients who have suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Master clinician notes help you understand the client and his or her issues related to suicide, and present approaches you can take in your counseling work with clients with suicidal thoughts and behaviors. “How-to” notes describe specific counseling techniques.

Addressing Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors: An Implementation Guide for Administrators, Part 2, clarifies why program administrators should be concerned about this clinical issue. It will help you understand how administrators can provide support for programs and counselors as they use GATE to address clients’ suicidal thoughts and behaviors. It is hoped that this knowledge will enable treatment programs to treat substance abuse while concurrently addressing the specific needs of those who have warning signs for suicide.

Addressing Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors: A Review of the Literature, Part 3, is for clinical supervisors, interested counselors, and administrators. It consists of three sections: an analysis of the available literature on suicidal thoughts and behaviors in clients with substance use disorders, an annotated bibliography of the literature most central to the topic, and a bibliography of other available literature. *Part 3* is available only online at <http://www.kap.samhsa.gov>.

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