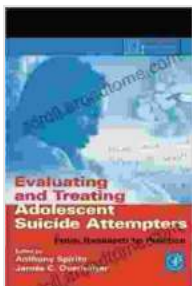


# Evaluating and Treating Adolescent Suicide Attempters: A Comprehensive Guide for Clinicians

Teenage suicide is a tragic and preventable public health issue. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), suicide is the second leading cause of death among individuals between the ages of 15 and 24. Adolescents who attempt suicide are at an increased risk for completing suicide in the future, as well as developing other mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, and substance abuse.



## Evaluating and Treating Adolescent Suicide Attempters: From Research to Practice (ISSN)

by Caroline Archer

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Mental health professionals play a critical role in preventing suicide and providing treatment for adolescents who have attempted suicide. This comprehensive guide will provide clinicians with an in-depth overview of the latest approaches to evaluating and treating adolescent suicide attempters.

## Assessment of Adolescent Suicide Attempters

The first step in treating adolescent suicide attempters is to conduct a comprehensive assessment. This assessment should include a detailed history of the attempt, as well as an evaluation of the adolescent's mental health, social support, and family environment.

### **History of the Attempt**

The history of the attempt should include information about the method used, the intent of the attempt, and any precipitating factors. It is important to ask the adolescent about any previous suicide attempts, as well as any thoughts or plans for future attempts.

### **Mental Health Assessment**

The mental health assessment should include a screening for depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders. It is also important to assess for risk factors for suicide, such as a history of trauma, family history of suicide, and social isolation.

### **Social Support Assessment**

The social support assessment should include information about the adolescent's relationships with family, friends, and peers. It is important to assess for any lack of social support or any negative relationships that may be contributing to the adolescent's suicidal thoughts or behaviors.

### **Family Environment Assessment**

The family environment assessment should include information about the adolescent's relationships with parents and siblings. It is important to assess for any family conflict or dysfunction that may be contributing to the adolescent's suicidal thoughts or behaviors.

## **Treatment of Adolescent Suicide Attempters**

The treatment of adolescent suicide attempters should be tailored to the individual needs of the adolescent. Treatment options may include psychotherapy, medication, and hospitalization.

### **Psychotherapy**

Psychotherapy is the most common treatment for adolescent suicide attempters. Psychotherapy can help adolescents to understand their suicidal thoughts and behaviors, develop coping mechanisms, and improve their problem-solving skills. There are a number of different types of psychotherapy that have been shown to be effective for adolescent suicide attempters, including:

- Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)
- Dialectical behavior therapy (DBT)
- Family-based therapy
- Interpersonal therapy (IPT)

### **Medication**

Medication may be used to treat depression, anxiety, or other mental health disorders that may be contributing to the adolescent's suicidal thoughts or behaviors. Medication can be effective in reducing symptoms and improving functioning, but it is important to note that medication is not a cure for suicide.

### **Hospitalization**

Hospitalization may be necessary for adolescents who are at imminent risk for suicide. Hospitalization can provide a safe environment for the adolescent and allow for close monitoring and treatment.

## **Preventing Future Suicide Attempts**

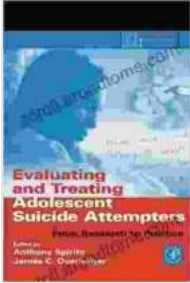
Preventing future suicide attempts is a critical part of the treatment of adolescent suicide attempters. There are a number of things that clinicians can do to help prevent future attempts, including:

- Developing a safety plan with the adolescent
- Providing ongoing support and follow-up care
- Educating the adolescent's family and friends about suicide prevention
- Advocating for policies and programs that promote suicide prevention

Suicide is a complex issue, but it is one that can be prevented. Clinicians play a critical role in preventing suicide and providing treatment for adolescents who have attempted suicide. By using the latest evidence-based assessment and treatment approaches, clinicians can help adolescents to recover from their suicidal thoughts and behaviors and go on to live healthy and productive lives.

For more information about adolescent suicide prevention, please visit the following resources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Suicide Prevention
- National Institute of Mental Health: Suicide Prevention
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline



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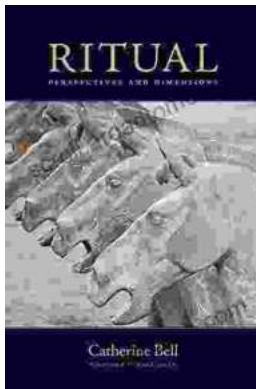
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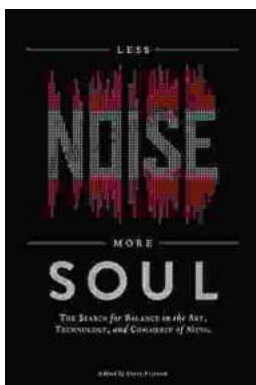
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