### Risk and protective factors to look out for youth deemed at risk for suicide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXT</th>
<th>Predisposing factors</th>
<th>Contributing factors</th>
<th>Precipitating factors</th>
<th>Protective factors</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Individual** | • previous suicide attempt  
• depression, substance abuse, anxiety, bipolar disorder or other mental health problems  
• persistent and enduring suicidal thoughts  
• history of childhood neglect, sexual or physical abuse  
| • rigid cognitive style  
• poor coping skills  
• limited distress tolerance skills  
• substance misuse  
• impulsivity  
• aggression  
• hypersensitivity/ anxiety  | • loss  
• personal failure  
• victim of cruelty, humiliation, violence  
• individual trauma  
• health crisis  | • good individual coping, self-soothing and problem solving skills  
• willingness to seek help  
• good physical and mental health  
• good experience or feelings of success  
• strong cultural identity and spiritual beliefs*  
• living in balance and harmony*  |
| **Family** | • family history of suicidal behaviour/ suicide  
• family history of mental disorder  
• early childhood loss/ separation or deprivation  | • family discord  
• punitive parenting  
• impaired parent/caregiver-child relationships  
• invalidating interpersonal environment  
• multi-generational trauma and losses*  | • loss of significant family member  
• death of a family member, especially by suicide  
• recent conflict  | • family cohesion and warmth  
• positive parent/caregiver-child connection  
• positive role models  
• active parental supervision  
• high & realistic expectations  
• support and involvement of extended family & elders connection to Ancestors*  |
| **Peers and school** | • social isolation & alienation  
• history of negative school experience  
• lack of meaningful connection to school  | • negative attitudes toward help seeking  
• limited/conflicted peer relationships  
• suicidal behaviours among peers  
• reluctance/uncertainty about how to help among school staff  | • interpersonal loss or conflict  
• peer victimization  
• rejection  
• peer death by suicide  
• academic failure  
• expulsion  
• disciplinary crisis  
• school-based harassment  | • social competence  
• healthy peer modeling  
• peer friendship, acceptance & support  
• success at school  
• interpersonal connectedness/ belonging  
• supportive school climate  
• school engagement  
• anti-harassment policies and practices  |
| **Community** | • multiple suicides  
• community marginalization*  
• socioeconomic deprivation*  | • sensational media portrayal of suicide  
• access to firearms or other lethal methods  
• uncertainty about how to help among key gatekeepers  
• inaccessible community resources  | • high-profile/celebrity death, especially by suicide  
• conflict with the law/incarceration  | • opportunities for youth participation  
• availability of resources  
• community ownership*  
• control over local services*  
• culturally-safe healing practices*  
• opportunities to connect to land and nature*  |

(* Considered especially relevant for First Nations, Metis and Inuit youth).