

Existing Interventions and Support

MHCAS-R:

A revised version of Mental Health Crisis Assessment Scale has been created by Kalb et al (2022) for use with autistic populations. The MHCAS-R has good internal consistency ($\alpha = .85$) which can be used to show all items are relevant to mental health crisis for autistic individuals. Furthermore, the scale was well-reviewed by parents who completed the scale, and the professionals who interpreted it. There was 88% agreement between the scale and clinician judgement, which is strong concurrent validity and demonstrates the utility of the scale.

VEQ:

The Vulnerability Experiences Quotient (VEQ) was designed by Griffiths et al. (2019) and contains 60 items assessing an individual's vulnerability across 10 facets. The facets are 1. education, 2. employment, 3. finances, 4. interactions with social services, 5. interactions with the criminal justice system, 6. childhood victimisation, 7. adulthood victimisation, 8. domestic abuse, 9. mental health and 10. social support. The scale was validated for use with autistic individuals and has very good internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.89$)

Revised Suicidality Assessment Tool:

Cassidy et al (2020; 2021) have revised a suicidality assessment tool used with the general population. The feedback they received from autistic individuals on the non-revised tool includes response options were unclear; questions were too vague (e.g. one participant was unsure as to what constituted a suicidal thought in terms of intensity and duration). There were particular issues identified with questions that required participants to 'predict the future' e.g. 'How likely are you to die by suicide some day?'. This is linked to wider difficulties with future abstract thinking in autistic populations (Cassidy et al., 2018).

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The revised questionnaire scored highly for content validity (how clear each item is) and had acceptable internal consistency (>0.79). The revised questionnaire also has excellent temporal stability, meaning scores are consistent across time (>0.9) and measurement sensitivity, with 88% agreement with expert opinion.

References:

Cassidy, S., Bradley, L., Shaw, R., & Baron-Cohen, S. (2018). Risk Markers for Suicidality in Autistic Adults. *Molecular Autism*, 9(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13229-018-0226-4>

Cassidy, S. (2020). Suicidality and self-harm in autism spectrum conditions. In S. White, B. Maddox, & C. Mazefsky (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Autism and Co-Occurring Psychiatric Conditions* (pp. 349–368.). Oxford University Press.

Cassidy, S. A., Bradley, L., Cogger-Ward, H., & Rodgers, J. (2021). Development and validation of the suicidal behaviours questionnaire - autism spectrum conditions in a community sample of autistic, possibly autistic and non-autistic adults. *Molecular Autism*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13229-021-00449-3>

Griffiths, S., Allison, C., Kenny, R., Holt, R., Smith, P., & Baron-Cohen, S. (2019). The Vulnerability Experiences Quotient (VEQ): A Study of Vulnerability, Mental Health and Life Satisfaction in Autistic Adults. *Autism Research*, 12(10), 1516–1528. <https://doi.org/10.1002/aur.2162>

Kalb, L. G., DiBella, F., Jang, Y. S., Fueyo, M., Mahajan, R., & Vasa, R. A. (2022). Mental Health Crisis Screening in Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology*, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15374416.2022.2119984>

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