

Couch Surfing - Risk Screening Tool

Date:

Name:

	1 None	2 Minor	3 Medium	4 High	5 Very High
1. What is the level of risk around access to basic needs such as food, bedding, water, clothing, personal hygiene, sleep?					
2. What level of risk is there around the privacy within the home? (E.g., own space, sleeping arrangements, bathroom etc.).					
3. What level of risk is there around the expectations of the accommodation and any arrangement to be allowed to stay? (E.g., work, study, chores, caring roles, lifestyle/religious participation, financial, sexual, emotional, physical expectations).					
4. Is the couch surfing environment impacting on mental and physical health and emotional wellbeing? (E.g., do you feel like a burden, do you feel isolated, is there any insecurity and instability around having to leave suddenly?)					
5. Are there any concerns relating to accessing and connecting to support networks? (E.g., family support, social support, services, medical support).					
6. What level of risk is there around physical safety? (E.g., are you exposed to DFV in the home, aggressive and/or unpredictable behaviours?)					
7. Are there any risks to being exposed to drug and / or alcohol use? And are there any expectations or pressures to use drugs/alcohol?					
Combined total of all answers:					
Final Risk Level: (Including any discretionary override)					
LOW RISK (7 – 14)	MEDIUM RISK (15 – 21)		HIGH RISK (22-35)		
Response: Engage in Brief Intervention support. Identify referral needs Address immediate concerns Stabilise where possible	Response: Establish a Safety Plan and discuss identified risks. Engage in Case Management support. Identify referrals to relevant support networks Encourage regular contact Stabilise if possible Explore other housing options		Response: Consider mobile support (if safe to do so) or immediate removal from environment. Establish a Safety Plan and discuss identified risks Identify housing alternatives where possible Connect relevant support networks for identified issues Engage in Case Management support Regular contact every 2 – 3 days.		

Risk Assessment Narrative:

Discretionary Override factors for consideration:

1. The young person has a diagnosed intellectual impairment, or there is sufficient evidence to suggest the young person has intellectual challenges that increase risk of harm.
2. The young person is a parent with children currently couch surfing with them, which increases the risk of harm via the additional emotional stress, financial pressure and increased risk of transience.
3. Young person has expressed suicidal ideation or made an attempt on their life previously.

Explanation of risk questions:

1. What level of risk is there around the young person's basic needs? (E.g., access to food, appropriate bedding, personal hygiene, sleep).

Basic needs such as access to water (clean), regular access to (healthy) food, opportunities to have a shower, access to your own bed / mattress (where is the bed/mattress located) to sleep and rest.

2. What level of risk is there around the young person's privacy within the home? (E.g., own space, sleeping arrangements, bathroom etc.).

Do you have your own space? Do you have your own bed? Is there a lock on your room if you have your own room? When you use the bathroom can you do this in private? When you get changed, can you do this in private?

3. What level of risk is there around the expectations of the accommodation and any arrangement for the young person to stay? (E.g., must study, participate in religion, dress, subject to financial, sexual, emotional, physical expectations).

Are you required to complete or commit to unreasonable or unrealistic and problematic expectations? Are you being asked to or coerced into performing any favours in return staying at the house (e.g., excessive chores)? Are you being pressured to perform tasks, actions and engage in behaviour which is sexual in nature with any person in the house? Are you being exploited on a financial level (i.e., paying too much in exchange for your stay)?

4. What level of risk is there around the young person's mental health and the emotional impact of couch surfing? (E.g., feeling like a burden, feeling isolated, insecurity and instability and having to leave suddenly).

Do you experience mental health concerns, feelings of anxiety, mood changes, thoughts of suicide, thinking or has a history of self-injury? Do you feel shame, guilt, sense of hopelessness? Do the people in the house experience severe mental health concerns which impacts on your overall health and wellbeing? Do you feel like a burden to the people where you are staying? Do you feel isolated? How long can you stay where you are now? What makes the current situation unstable or insecure? Is there a time-limit? Can you be 'kicked out' any moment?

5. What level of risk is there regarding the young person's access to support networks? (E.g., family support, social support, services, medical support).

What kind of supports do you have? Family? Friends? Are you linked in with any support services? Do you know where to turn to for support? Is there anyone in your life who you may be able to support you? Are you able to attend medical appointments, pay for your medication? Does the living environment aggravate a medical condition - such as asthma in a smoking environment?)

6. What level of risk is there around the young person's physical safety? (E.g., DFV in the home? Aggression? Unpredictable behaviour?).

Is there exposure to violent and aggressive behaviours in the house? Are the people you living with subject to unpredictable behaviours (including unmanaged MH), causing insecurities around your stay, expectations? Are you experiencing physical and or emotional violence by any person in the house? Is the area you are staying in very isolated? Is there a history of crimes in the area? Unsafe neighbours? How about public transport? It is easy to travel to and from your place?

7. What is the level of risk associated with exposure to drug and / or alcohol use?

Do you use drugs/alcohol? Is your use impacting on where you are staying? Is using drugs/alcohol negatively impacting on your mental health? Does it impact on your financial, emotional and capacity / abilities? Does the person or persons you are staying with use alcohol and/or drugs every day? Are there visitors to the house using drugs and/or alcohol? Are you being pressured or told to use drugs/alcohol?