Suicide risk assessment is a topic that often causes a great deal of anxiety in both novice and expert clinicians for many reasons. First and foremost, clinicians feel anxiety due to the magnitude of the assessment. Truly no other mental health assessment has as significant a consequence as a suicide risk assessment. Further, research suggests that many clinicians do not have adequate training in suicide assessment and management (Schmitz, et al. 2012), which may further help explain the feelings of unease in relation to suicide. Although one cannot change the magnitude of the assessment, excellent resources such as King, Foster, and Rogalski’s book Teen Suicide Risk: A Practitioners Guide to Screening, Assessment, and Management can help increase confidence through educating clinicians on this important issue.

In 2010 suicide was the third most prevalent cause of death in those age 15-24, and suicidal ideation is highly prevalent among teens and adolescents (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013). However, suicide assessment and prevention resources often primarily target adults. Thus, Teen Suicide Risk: A Practitioners Guide to Screening, Assessment, and Management is an especially needed resource for a population at particularly high risk of suicidal thoughts and behavior.

The authors deftly cover a broad range of topics including suicide risk and protective factors, screening suicide risk, suicide risk assessment, and suicide risk management in a way that is strongly influenced by the literature without getting bogged down in the details of the literature. This leaves the reader with a strong understanding of the significant research findings, and the empirical bases of suicide assessment, while having the book remain accessible to most all clinicians and psychology students. The text also covers other related important topics including how to work with parents and schools and potential legal issues related to suicide.

The authors also include a wealth of resources in the appendix including a suicide risk assessment checklist, suicide tracking form, and suicide safety plan. These excellent resources greatly aid the reader in understanding how to implement the interventions and assessments described in the text, and greatly help any clinician that wants to ensure that their suicide assessment and intervention plan is age appropriate and empirically supported.

The book appeals to those who work in a wide range of clinical settings, including outpatient mental health clinics, inpatient psychiatric departments, hospital emergency departments, and schools. Its grounding in psychological and psychiatric research makes it ideal for any therapist, both senior and junior alike, who want to ensure that they are providing empirically-supported up-to-date care. Thus, the book would be very useful to any clinician or student clinician who may encounter suicidal teens and adolescents as it includes sage advice from experts in the field and is based upon a strong review of the current literature on teen suicide that would benefit even the most experienced clinicians.