

ACT 219

2023-2024

Suicide Prevention and Intervention

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Division of Mental Health, Wellness, and School Safety – Security Department

Associated Laws

- Act 219 – All staff are required to complete 2 hours of suicide prevention training yearly.
- Act 643 – Suicide, Safety, and Violence Education (SAVE) Students Act – All students in grades 6th-12th must have one hour of age-appropriate and grade-appropriate curricula on suicide prevention, student safety, violence, and social isolation. This will include how to recognize signs and signals of depression, suicide, and self-injury in themselves and in their peers, the importance of seeking help for themselves and their peers, and the process for seeking help. This mandate will be completed by the counselors at your site using the Signs of Suicide Program.
- Child Internet Protection Act – This is a mandate from E-RATE and requires one hour of child internet age and grade appropriate training in grades K – 12th.



Louisiana lost 13,000 Children in 2021 to Suicide & Opioid Overdoses

- Do not know if all were intentional
- Must educate students and parents more
- Must recognize the underlying overt and covert actions
- Must understand the why's
- Must change our outlook
- Must report



**What we
know:**

Suicide affects all communities

Asking about suicide doesn't cause
suicide

Suicide is a rare event

Suicide results from multiple
complex factors

State of Mental Health

- America's School mental Health Report Card
 - 85% of children who need mental health services don't get them
 - 15% get mental health services in schools



Hopeful Futures Campaign: America's School Mental Health Report Card

- Half of mental illnesses begin during the school age years
- Poor mental health leads to poor learning
- Positive mental health promotes academic and life success
- When treatment is delivered in the school setting, youth are far more likely to be identified early, initiate and complete care
- On average, people usually do not get into care for over a decade after their initial onset of symptoms



LOOK at the NUMBERS – HEART BREAKING

Suicide affects people all over the world and each death has far reaching effects. In 2021, 48,183 Americans died by suicide, which is about one death every 11 minutes.

Suicide is the 14th leading cause of death in Louisiana. It is the 3rd leading cause of death for ages 10-24 and for ages 25-34 in Louisiana. In Louisiana, 689 people killed themselves in 2021.

The proportion of high school students who seriously considered attempting suicide increased by 36% from 2009-2019

Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among young people ages 10-24

Michelle Fitz

Zoe Tappin

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among high school-aged youth, ages 14-18

- Nearly 1 in 3 parents (31%) shared that their children's emotional health is worse than before the pandemic
- Half of all mental health illness presents by age 14, yet few get the services they need
- In 2020, the proportion of mental health-related emergency room visits for children 5-11 increased by 24% and for children 12-17, there was a 31% increase



It is estimated that for each suicide death, 135 people are exposed. Among those exposed to a suicide death, it is estimated that more than 6 experience a major life disruption. Suicide Loss Survivors are at greater risk for suicide.

It is estimated that there are over 25 suicide attempts for every death by suicide. For 15-24 year-olds, the estimate is 100-200 attempts to each death by suicide; for the elderly, there are 4 attempts for each death by suicide. While 90% of the individuals who attempt suicide do not die by suicide, previous suicide attempts are one of the risk factors for suicide.

FACTS to PONDER

Overwhelming evidence suggests that inflammation from various sources, including allergic reactions, can cause or worsen depression. Our immune system spends the winter trying to ward off viral infections, but not trying to ward off allergies, which affect more than 50 million Americans each year. Seasonal allergies in the spring put a large number of Americans at a higher risk for depression. The chances of depression were 42% higher in people with rhinitis (both allergic and nonallergic) than those without.

Most people think suicides are most common during the holidays, but the Spring is the peak for suicides. Suicides are lowest in December.

Suicide rates are about 70% higher in homes with elevations 2000 meters in elevation compared to sea level and the study controlled for gun ownership and population density.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics in a study of 11 to 21-year-olds in a major metropolitan area of Texas, significantly higher rates of suicide-related behaviors appear to have corresponded with times when COVID-19 stressors and community responses occurred (e.g., stay-at-home orders and school closures).

Additional Myths About Suicide

- People who talk about suicide are just trying to get attention.
- People who talk about wanting to die by suicide do not try to kill themselves.
- Suicide always occurs without any warning signs.
- Suicide only strikes people of a certain gender, race, financial status, age, etc.
- People who attempt suicide and survive will not attempt suicide again.

Suicidal Ideation & Social Media

Vast information on the topic of suicide is available on the Internet and via social media.

There are several specific ways that social media can increase risk for pro-suicide behavior. Cyber-bullying and cyber harassment, for example, are serious and prevalent problems.

Unfortunately, the Internet has also provided a way for people to obtain detailed descriptions of how to commit suicide including the use of lethal means.

February 2022 : U.S. Surgeon General Posted a Warning to Parents

- Be aware of the following:
 - An increase in truancy, tardiness, or resistance to going to school
 - A sharp change in focus or difficulty concentrating, a lack of motivation, or failing grades, feeling anxious, feeling sad or low all the time, frequent mood swings
 - Withdrawing from friends; peer conflict
 - Indications of self-harm
 - Frequent nightmares and sleep disturbances; changing in eating habits
 - Physical symptoms (headaches, body aches, stomach aches)
 - Excessive use of social media!

Meta-Analysis of 90 Studies: The Epidemic of Loneliness

- Destructive impact of patient isolation
- 32% higher risk of early death
- No significant caring adults
- No meaningful friendships with peers
- Feeling lonely
- 14% more likely to die early
- Emptiness of social media
- Limits of online “Relationships”
- Loneliness is such an issue that 2 countries, Japan and the United Kingdom, created “Ministries of Loneliness”



Social Media: A Cultural Change in Our Society and in Our Schools

- In 2013 – 300,000 social media users
- 2023 – 4 Billion social media users
- 40 school districts are currently suing social media platforms...like opioids, they are alleging that social media addiction is harmful to students' mental health



10 Ways Social Media Can Hurt Children (Forbes)

- Social media:
 - Can make you feel inadequate
 - Can pressure you to maintain an image
 - Can reduce your contact with other human beings
 - Can keep you from doing other things
 - Can mess with your sleep
 - Can connect you with dangerous people and expose you to cyberbullying
 - Can invade privacy
 - Can spread incorrect and harmful thoughts
 - Can prompt harmful activities
 - Is designed to addict you.



Recent Movies & Songs Related to Suicide

Movies with Suicide Themes

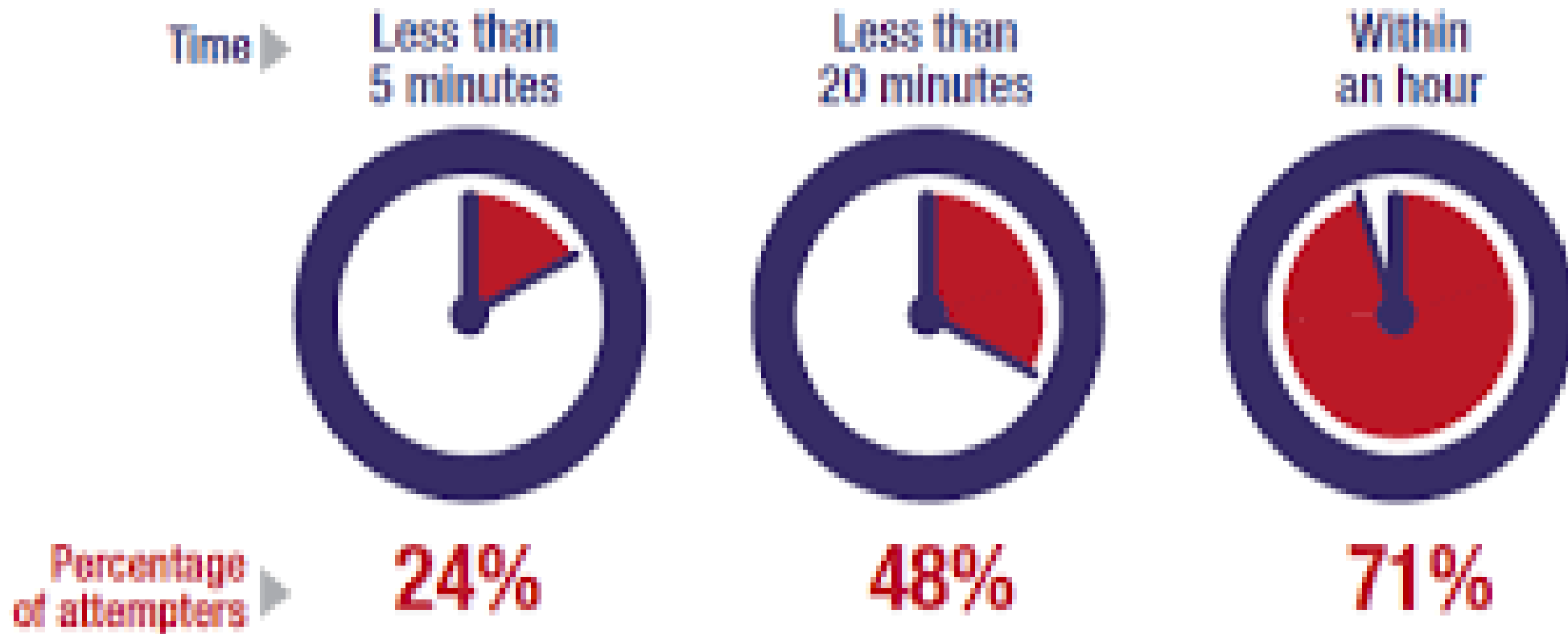
- Don't Worry Darling
- A Man Called Otto
- Everything Everywhere All At Once
- Death on the Nile
- The Matrix Resurrections

Songs About Suicide

- *Listen Before I Go and Gloomy Sunday*, both by Billie Eilish (2019)
- *I'enfer* by Stromae (2022)
- *Zombie (English Version)* by Day6 (2020)

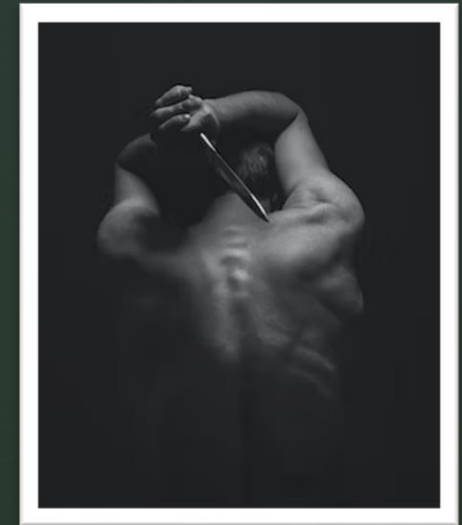
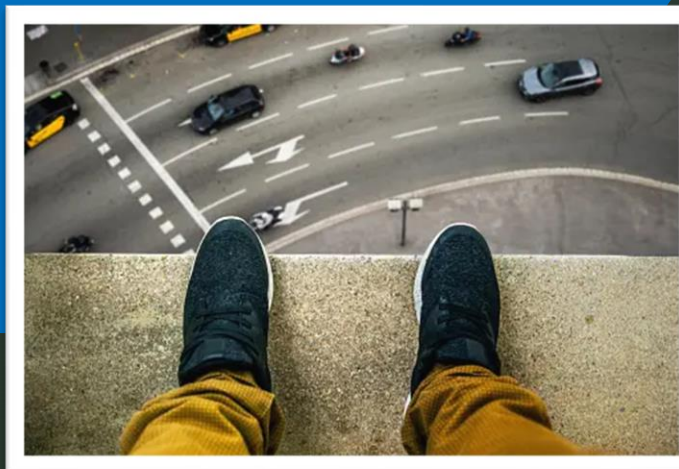
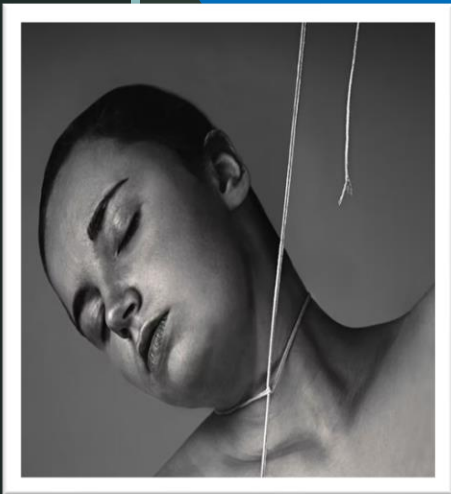
LENGTH of TIME IS IMPORTANT from DECISION and ATTEMPT

Time Elapsed Between Decision and Suicide Attempt



COMMON METHODS of SUICIDE


- Falls
- Cutting/Stabbing
- Drowning
- Inhaling Carbon Monoxide
- Electrocutation
- Vehicular Impact
- Freezing
- Exsanguination



What protects against suicide?

- Connections to friends, family, culture, and community
- Limited access to lethal methods (e.g., firearms, medications)
- Coping and problem-solving skills
- Access to physical and mental health care





Many children
experienced
loss, stress and
trauma due to
the pandemic
and for many
other life events
at home and in
the community

- Every child needs a trusted adult at school and in the community. Some children need us the most when they are behaving at their worst. They may be reacting to trauma of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

ACE Questions



Prior to your 18th birthday:

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? or Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? or Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever... Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? or Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
4. Did you often or very often feel that ... No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? or Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
5. Did you often or very often feel that ... You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you? or Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
7. Was your mother or stepmother:
Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? or Sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? or Ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___
10. Did a household member go to prison?
No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___

Now add up your "Yes" answers: ____ This is your ACE Score.

Philadelphia Expanded ACE Questions

Philadelphia Expanded ACE Questions look at Community-Level Adversity

Witness Violence

How often, if ever, did you see or hear someone being beaten up, stabbed, or shot in real life?

Felt Discrimination

While you were growing up...How often did you feel that you were treated badly or unfairly because of your race or ethnicity?

Adverse Neighborhood Experience

Did you feel safe in your neighborhood? Did you feel people in your neighborhood looked out for each other, stood up for each other, and could be trusted?

Bullied

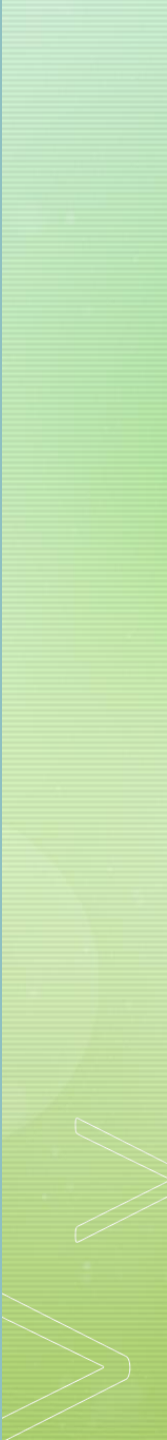
How often were you bullied by a peer or classmate?

Lived in Foster Care

Were you ever in foster care?



What happens after a crisis?

- The situation is never the same. It can get better or it can get worse.
 - But after a crisis, there is a change and an opportunity to make things better.
 - But the body always keeps the score!
- 



Name It To Tame It

Naming negative emotions can help people regulate those emotions and help them regain a sense of self-control.

As the labeling activity happens, the activity in the amygdala decreases...allowing the frontal lobe (seat of reasoning and thinking) to have greater control.

Normal Stress Reactions

- Physical Changes – difficulty sleeping, regressive behavior, anxiety, withdrawal from others, exhaustion
- Emotional Changes – worry about separation, fear of recurrence, becoming emotional more easily, emotional numbness, feeling anger, shame, or guilt
- Cognitive Changes – trouble listening and concentrating, trouble or inability to complete tasks, thinking about the crisis all the time
- Behavior Changes – avoidance, hypervigilance, or high-risk behaviors



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Protective Factors and Resilience

- Individual
 - Good coping strategies and problem-solving skills
 - Emotional self-regulation
 - Having a sense of purpose
 - Engagement and connection with school, peers, activities, etc.
 - Temperament
 - Talents (academic, athletic, artistic, etc.)



Protective Factors and Resilience

- Family
 - Structure, limits, rules, monitoring, and predictability
 - Supportive relationships with family members
 - Clear expectations for behavior and values

Protective Factors and Resilience

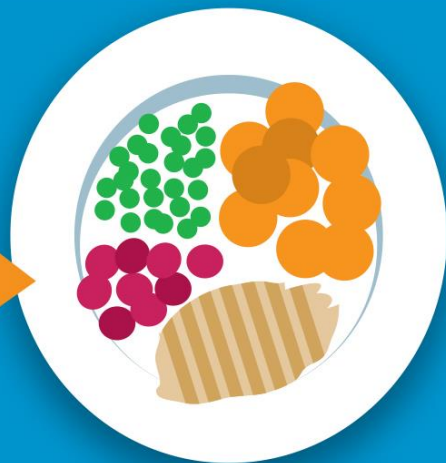
- School/Community
 - Mentors and support for development of skills and interests
 - Engagement in school and community
 - Positive norms
 - Clear expectations for behavior
 - Physical and psychological safety



5

TOP TIPS FOR RELIEVING STRESS

Eat nutritious food—fill your plate with lean meats, fresh fruits and veggies.

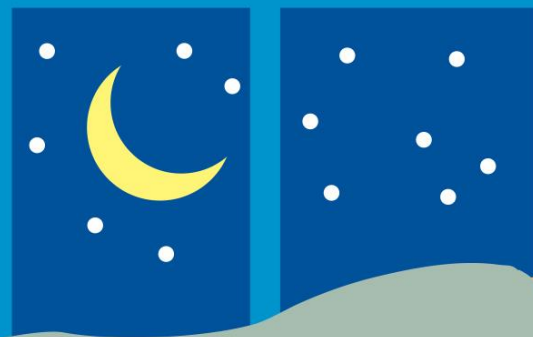


Exercise: Find something you enjoy and do it each day!



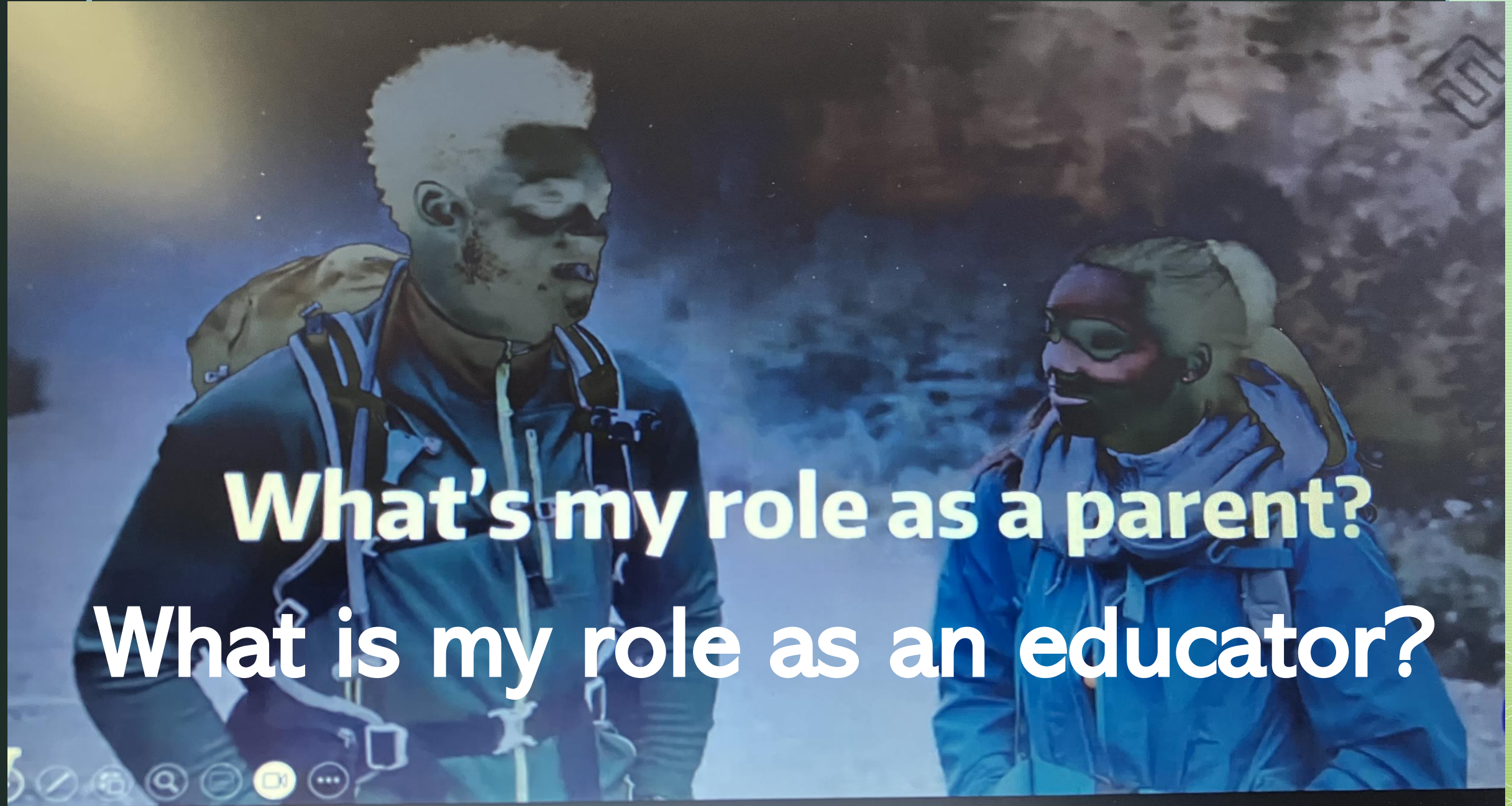
Drink lots of water!

Get at least 7 hours of sleep each night.



Make a task list and mark each thing off as you go.





What's my role as a parent?

What is my role as an educator?



LEARN – Process of Helping

- 1) LOOK FOR SIGNS
- 2) EMPATHIZE and LISTEN
- 3) ASK ABOUT SUICIDE
- 4) REDUCE THE DANGER
- 5) NEXT STEPS – TAKE ACTION



Why Does Anyone Consider Suicide?



1
Lack of Coping Skills

2
Feeling Like They Are a Burden

3
Feeling Alone

4
Unbearable Pain

Suicide WARNING SIGNS

**NEGATIVE
VIEW
of SELF**



**MAKING
SUICIDE
threats**

A sense of
**HOPELESSNESS
OR
NO HOPE
for the
FUTURE**



**ISOLATION
or
FEELING
ALONE**



**AGGRESSIVENESS
and
IRRITABILITY**

**SUBSTANCE
abuse**

**GIVING
things AWAY**

**Possessing
LETHAL
MEANS**



Making funeral
ARRANGEMENTS

**FEELING LIKE A
BURDEN
to others**

**ENGAGING
"risky"
BEHAVIORS**

**SELF-
HARM**

like
CUTTING
behaviours



**FREQUENTLY
TALKING
about
DEATH**



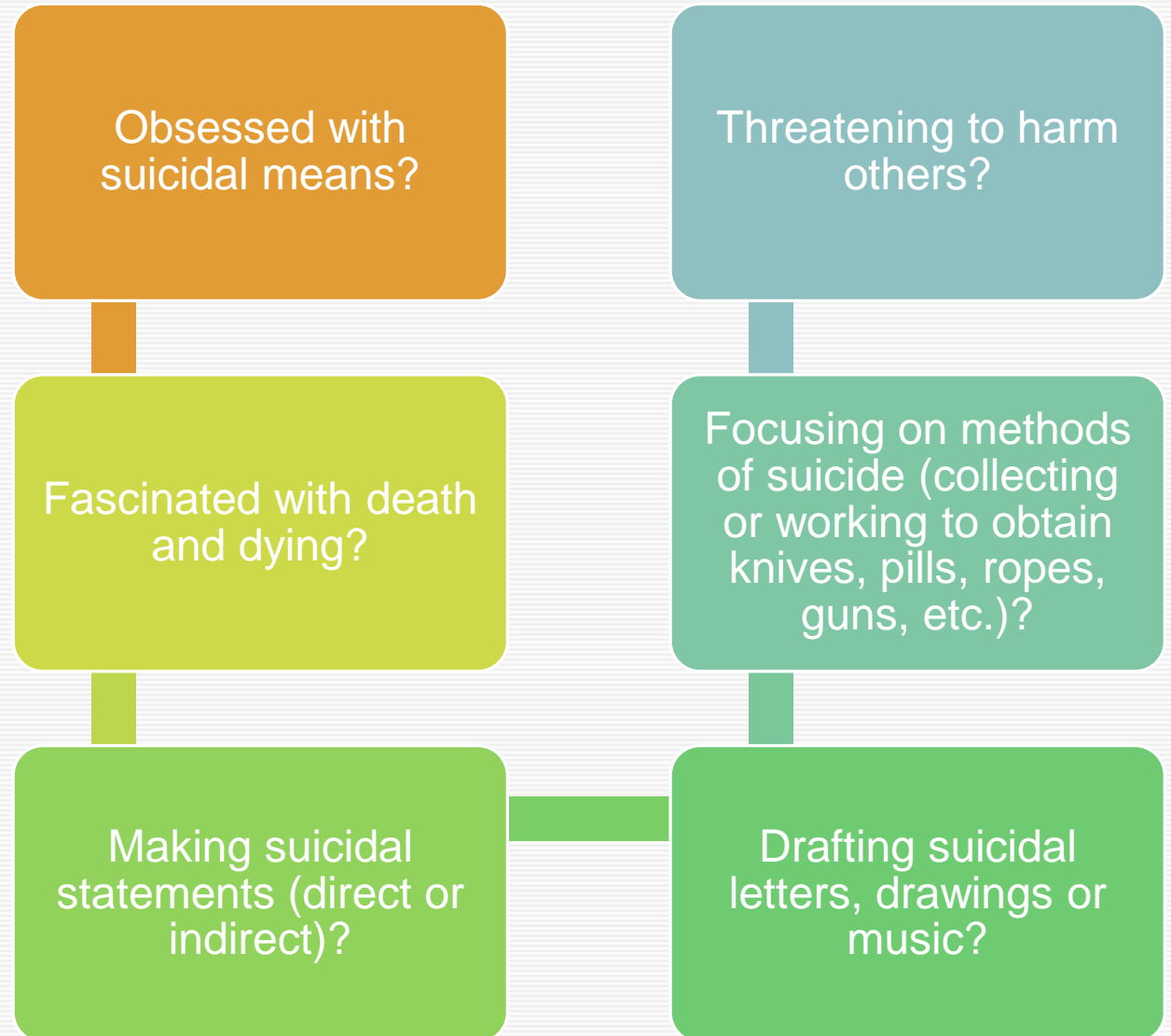
**DRASTIC
changes in
MOOD
and
BEHAVIOUR**



What is a Suicide Crisis?

- ▶ If the person is talking about imminent or specific plans for suicide, this is a crisis requiring immediate attention. Do not leave the person alone.
- ▶ Do not put yourself in harms way. But if it's safe to do so...remove any firearms, medications, or sharp objects that could be used for suicide from the area.
- ▶ Take the person to a walk-in clinic at a psychiatric hospital or a hospital emergency room.
- ▶ If these options are not available, call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 988
- ▶ Or ask Siri!

Is the student...





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BByqa7bhto>

A CHILD TELLS YOU THEY ARE STRUGGLING – WHAT DO YOU DO?

WHAT
NOT
TO
DO...

1. Offer solutions to fix the problem – after all, you don't want to see them hurting.

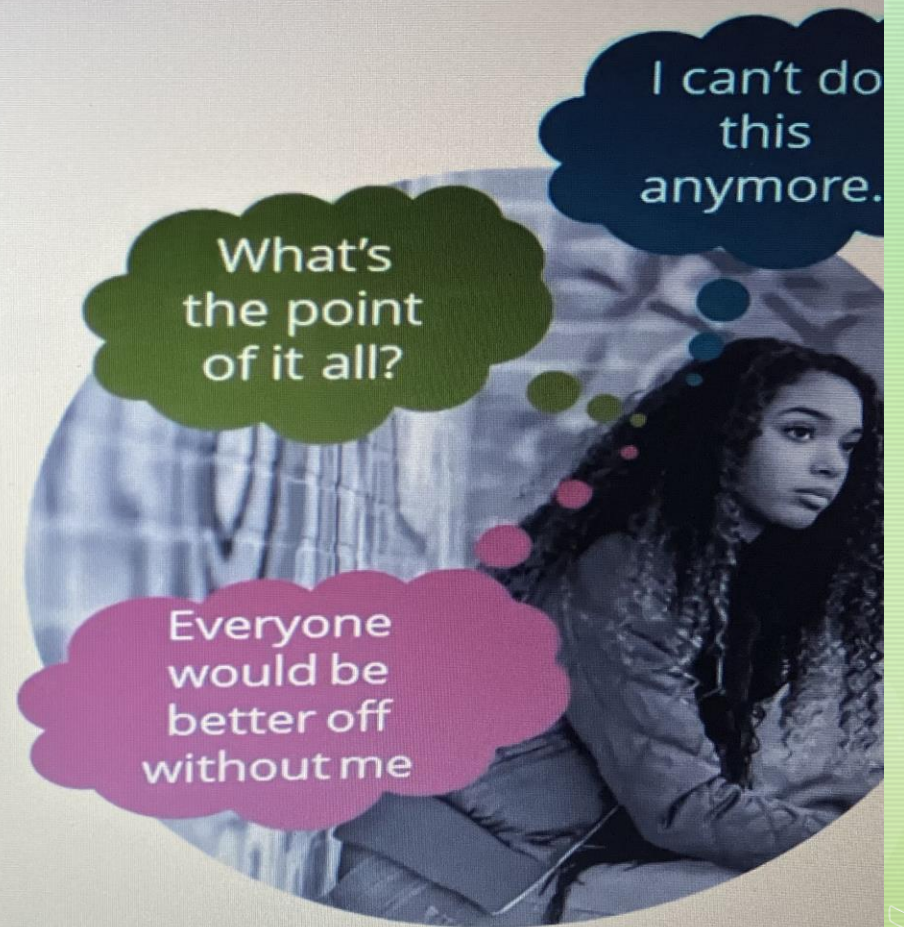
2. Share a story about a time that something similar happened to you.

3. Sit with them and say, "wow, that sounds like you're going through a lot right now."

LOOK FOR SIGNS

Warning Signs in Youth

- Stress over a significant loss
- Changes in behavior, like not wanting to do things that they once enjoyed
- Inability to deal with ordinary challenges
- Escalating risk-taking or reckless behavior
- Talking about wanting to hurt themselves or wanting to die



Look for warning signs



Emotions, Feelings

- Depression, anxiety
- Anger, irritability, agitation
- Unusual mood swings
- Feeling hopeless/helpless
- Loneliness
- Shame, humiliation
- Emotional/physical pain
- Sudden unexplainable joy after a period of depression

Actions, Behaviors

- Withdrawing
- Isolating
- Substance use
- Giving away prized possessions
- Acquiring lethal means
- Risky/Reckless behavior
- Joking/frequent statements about death
- Self-injury
- Threats against self or others

Experiences

- Significant life changes or loss
- Bullying, harassment
- Discrimination linked to sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or race/ethnicity
- Personal and/or historical trauma
- Previous suicide attempts or family history of suicide
- Access to lethal means

Look for signs

Empathize & listen

Ask about suicide

Reduce the danger

Next steps

Empathize & Listen





Suicidal thinking

Suicide isn't always about
wanting to die.

It's about wanting
to end overwhelming pain.

Language matters

Instead of saying
"committed suicide",
Let's say "died by suicide"
or "took their own life"

Dr. Brene' Brown (Houston, TX) on
EMPATHY-SYMPATHY



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw>

HOW TO BE EMPATHETIC

LISTEN

5 types of empathetic responses you can try

- Calling out their courage. “Thank you for trusting me with this. ...
- Clarifying. “From what I'm hearing, you are feeling X. ...
- Character boosting. ...
- Conveying that you care. ...
- Checking in.



ASK ABOUT SUICIDE

WHAT DO I DO? ASK!!!!

- Using the word “suicide” is scary to some people
- How does it make you feel?
- Turn to your neighbor and say the word several times



WHEN DO I ASK?

- ❖ Multiple signs
- ❖ Big changes in a person's life or behavior
- ❖ When you “feel/sense” that something is wrong

JUST ASK!!!



How do I ask about suicide?



Sometimes when people are...

they're thinking about suicide.

Are you thinking about
suicide?

Insert any warning signs
you see here!

Examples of Warning Signs:

Isolating from friends

Feeling alone / isolated

Upset after a breakup

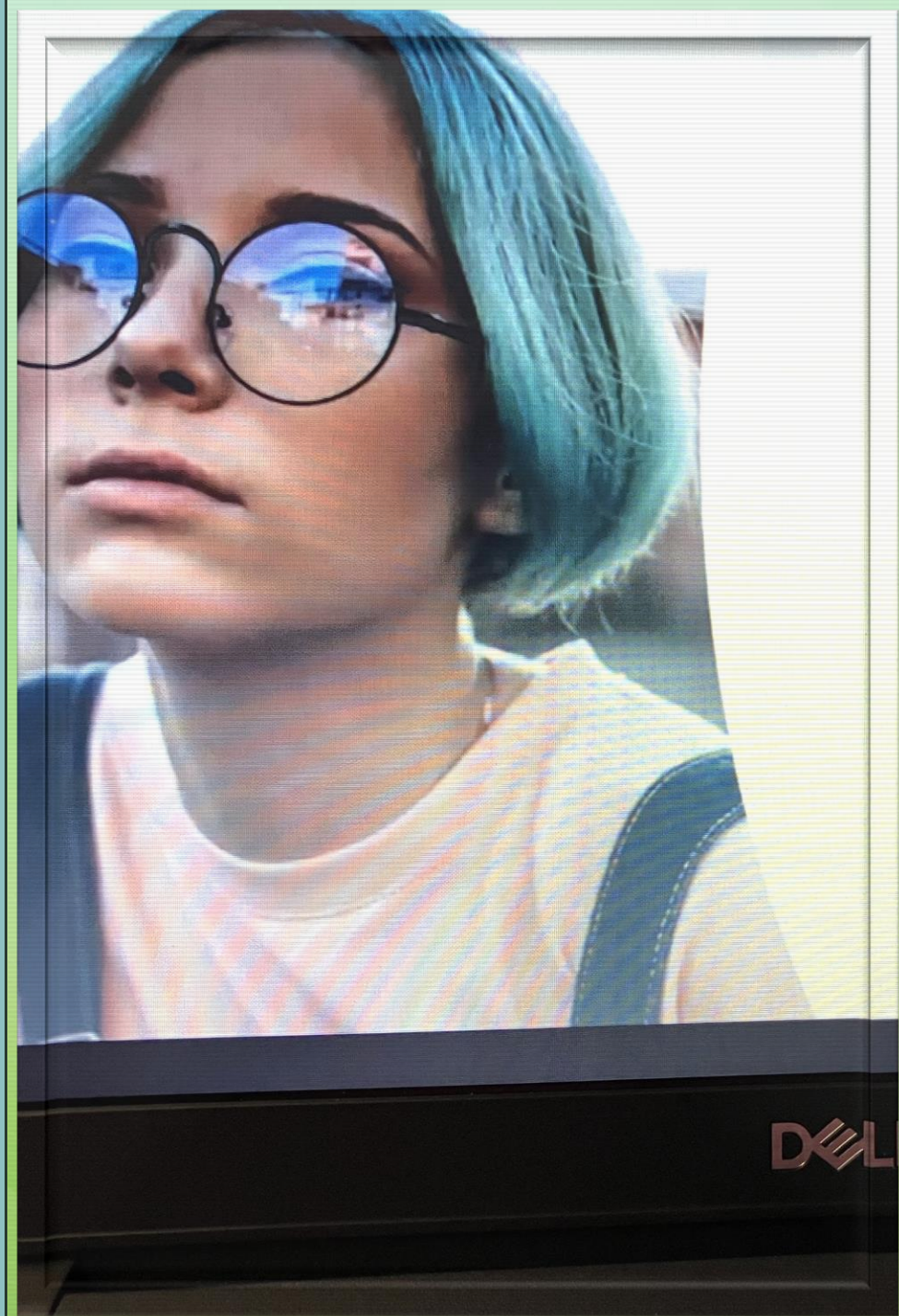
Hopeless about their future

Feeling like giving up



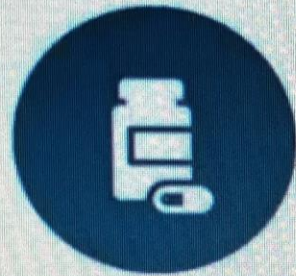
IF YOU ASK AND THEY SAY “NO”

- Stay neutral and non-judgmental
- Let them know you care
- If you are still concerned, gather more information and ask again.
- If they still say no, ask: “If you were thinking about suicide, who would you talk to?”
- Move on to Reduce the Dangers & Next Steps



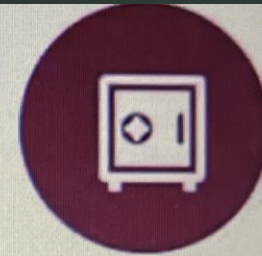
REDUCE the DANGER

***WHAT IS IN YOUR HOME?
WHAT IS AVAILABLE AT SCHOOL?***



56% of teens say it's easy to get prescription drugs from their parents' medicine cabinet

95% of parents don't believe their child would take a prescription drug for misuse



90% of suicide attempts with a gun are fatal

82% of youth suicides by firearm involve a family gun

Suicide is 3 times more likely in a home with a gun

What happened to Zachary?

- Following COVID lockdown restrictions, Zach bought a Percocet via social media!
- But the pill was counterfeit (fake pill)
- Zach died shortly after in his room. He never had a chance.
- This was not a party death, not an overdose, and not an addiction casualty! Toxicology results...Fentanyl intoxication!





10 Most Common Toxic Chemicals in Products to Avoid

- Phthalates
- Paraben
- Lead
- BPA/BPS
- 1,4 Dioxane
- SLS
- PVC
- Triclosan
- Oxybenzone
- Diazolidinyl or Imidazolidinyl Urea



MAKE SCHOOL and HOME SAFER



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Make your home safer



LOCK UP TODAY

Firearms
Prescription medications
Over-the-counter medications

LOCK UP IN A CRISIS

Alcohol, drugs
Belts, ropes, plastic bags
Knives, sharps, car keys
Chemicals, pesticides

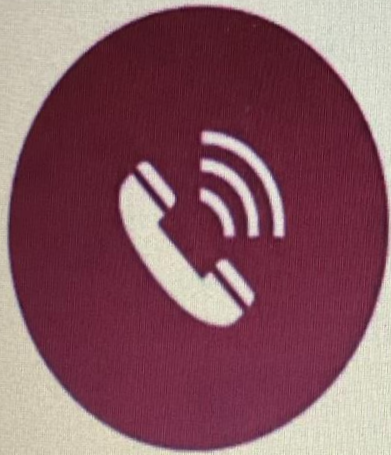


NEXT STEPS

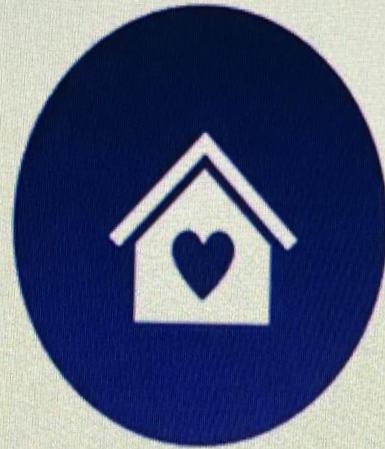
- ***DISCISION TIME***
 - Contact significant other
 - Make sure person has resource information
 - Make sure person is not alone
 - Make sure (if at school) all protocols are followed
 - If at home, contact mental health professional



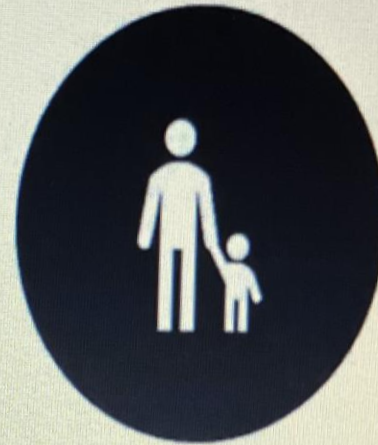
▶ ***ACTION STEPS TO TAKE TODAY***



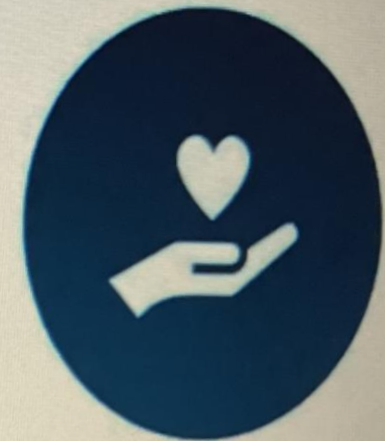
Add 24-hour crisis resources into your phone



Lock up/secure medications and/or firearms in your home



Check in with your child daily; listen with empathy



Seek out support - Connect with counseling staff, crisis lines etc.

Who You Gonna' Call?

- Call 988
- Text 741741
- Say "I'm feeling suicidal" into a smart phone



FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS for YOU to ASK

Have you thought about how you might end your life?

Do you have access to those methods?

Have you thought about when you might do this?

Remember: Putting time & distance between a suicidal person & the methods they may use can SAVE THEIR LIFE!

PRACTICE LEARN WITH YOUR NEIGHBOR

- Directions: In groups of 2-3, decide who will be the person having problems and who will be asking the questions. Do your best acting!!!

- Go through the LEARN steps
 - 1) LOOK FOR SIGNS
 - 2) EMPATHIZE and LISTEN
 - 3) ASK ABOUT SUICIDE
 - 4) REDUCE THE DANGER
 - 5) NEXT STEPS - ACTION

Share Hope Together

FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

KNOW THE SIGNS. FIND THE WORDS. REACH OUT.

suicideispreventable.org

SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK: SEPTEMBER 10TH - 16TH, 2023

WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY: SEPTEMBER 10TH, 2023



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- A comprehensive document can be found on the Caddo Parish Schools website for staff (Suicide Prevention Manual – Developed by Dr. White for the Louisiana State Department of Education and modeled after the SAMHSA Toolkit).
- This document includes additional information on bullying, teen trends, suicide, non-suicidal self injury, and more.

POSTER CAN BE DUPLICATED

Suicide Warning Signs for Youth

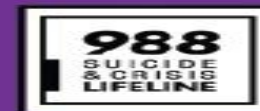


It's time to take action if you notice these signs in family or friends:

- 1. Talking about or making plans for suicide.**
- 2. Expressing hopelessness about the future.**
- 3. Displaying severe/overwhelming emotional pain or distress.**
- 4. Showing worrisome changes in behavior, particularly in combination with the warning signs above, including significant:**
 - Withdrawal from or changing social connections/situations.
 - Changes in sleep (increased or decreased).
 - Anger or hostility that seems out of character or out of context.
 - Recent increased agitation or irritability.

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available.

Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org, or reach out to a mental health professional.



Questions?



- Contact Information:
 - Dr. Barzanna White, District School Psychologist, Prevention Coordinator, and BJA Director
 - 318-603-6484
 - bwhite@caddoschools.org



RESOURCES

- Caddo Parish Schools, policy on drugs ,alcohol, tobacco
- **Dr. Brene' Brown (Houston, TX) on EMPATHY-SYMPATHY**
- https://redcap.link/gen_LEARN, Forefront – suicide prevention
- Law Enforcement Against Drugs and Violence – Louisiana Resources or Classrooms
- **LEAD - Child Suicide and Drug Addiction Support Charity**
- Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals' Office of Behavioral Health
- [Louisiana Department of Health, statistics](#)
- NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH
- NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION CENTER
- safeTALK
- SAFER HOMES, Suicide Awareness
- SAMSHA