

Suicide Prevention & Intervention

Speakers

- Meghan Moser (Program Manager @ McLean County Center for Human Services & Supervises 7x24 Crisis Mobile Unit)
- Nona Waller (outreach program for youth in schools)

Intro

- Almost everyone has been affected either directly or indirectly by suicide or depression
- Everyone has a 50% chance of being diagnosed with a mental health issue at some point in lifetime
- Mean time a person suffers before seeking treatment is 10 years because people hope or think it will just get better on it's own
- Family history of suicide attempts or completions can contribute toward risk of suicide
- Adolescents are very "in the moment". Drugs/Alcohol intensifies the lack of recognition of how final a spontaneous decision can be.
- Mental Health treatments are not the same for everyone and what works at one point may stop working. For example, most people can take roughly the same medicine for strep throat.
- Bear in mind that a child's choice cannot always be blamed on the parents.
- UHS Health teachers discuss this topic with students for helping self & peers through role-play
- UHS creating "United Family" where students sign up to be part of a family that meets once a month?

Types of Stressors

- Academics – homework, tests, and grades
- College – where to go and getting admitted to the college of choice
- Over scheduled w/activities & schoolwork – maybe minimal time for socializing
- Underdeveloped Time Management skills
- Physical - Nutrition, sleep, hormones
- Who am I, where do I fit?; What do I want to do with my life?
- Relationship breakups
- Peer pressure
- Social media

Signs a teen is overloading/ feeling stressed

- Headaches, stomach aches
- Temper/anger, acting out
- Tears
- Withdrawal
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities
- Changes in appearance
- Anxious/nervous more than usual
- Lack of emotion
- Loss of ability to concentrate
- Self-criticism/ blame
- Changes in sleeping/eating habits
- Giving away possessions
- Taking more risks

Perspective

- Some of the points below are just part of adolescents that come & go – watch for continued occurrence
- What were the triggers that occurred during the day? Are they excuses or do they truly value those triggers? How can people around them help provide perspective to show it's not “the end of the world”
- Look for impacts to daily living
- Suicide was 10th highest cause of death in 2013

Depression/Anxiety Symptoms

- Depression
 - Down
 - Sad
 - Crying w/o knowing reason
 - Feeling helpless/hopeless/worthless
 - Difficulty concentrating
 - Loss of interest
 - Changes in eating habits
 - Excessive sleeping
 - Lack of energy to do chores (not choosing/lazy)
 - Snappy at people
 - Avoidance of discussing future events
 - Not completing work or showing results less
 - Finding reasons to avoid school
- Anxiety
 - Still worry after receiving passing grade on tests
 - Physical – Pounding heart, shallow breathing, sweating, etc.
 - Psychological – irritability, blank mind, racing thoughts, confusion, nervousness
 - Avoiding situations
 - Compulsive
 - Distress in social situations

Protective Factors

- Find an adult the teen finds trustworthy for listening to venting, as well as keep an eye on the size of the concern
- Create connections with other people
- Having responsibility to others (pet, siblings, etc.)
- Identifying sense of purpose
- Recognizing what is going well and areas of life that are happy
- Identifying how to deal with stress / positive coping skills (multiples choices on hand to fit the current stressor)
- Parents monitoring
- Parents listening non-judgmentally
- Having hope for the future and things to look forward to – must believe good things will happen
- Fear of death or the process

Suicide Stages

- Suicidal thoughts/ideation
- Uncertain whether want to live vs not live

- Desire to not live / finding fewer and fewer reasons to live
- Plan (how many pills will kill or not, what weapons in home are accessible, etc.)
- Ability to follow through with the plan

How to respond to depression & anxiety (Suicide Prevention)

- Specifically ask questions about suicide:
 - Are you thinking about killing yourself?
 - Have you thought about how?
- Ask how are you doing and make the time to listen to the response – be prepared for the answer to be “I’ve had the worst day of my life”; be an active listener and really hear what the teen is saying instead of thinking how you will respond – this takes practice
- Don’t assume it’s just going to get better, and recognize the teen may think there’s no way things could get better
- Who do you want to talk with? Another adult (ex. coach, friend’s parent, etc.) maybe good options – someone the teen feels comfortable and open with

Self-Care

- Common Run/Walk, eat, video game, read, brush dog
- Ensure physically ok – eat right, exercise, sleep enough
- Social networking – call a friend
- Psychologically – mani/pedi, bubble bath
- Refer to Handouts
 - 99 Coping Skills
 - 50 Ways to Take A Break
- Car is best place to talk
 - Not looking at each other
 - Can’t get away
 - Repetitiveness of car ride is soothing
 - Finite amount of time (if headed somewhere the discussion can’t continue)
- REMEMBER to listen non-judgmentally and show listening
 - Eye contact
 - Not fidgeting
 - Body language – uncross arms, but don’t wave them
 - The right amount of physical space
- Help the teen determine how to address it without interjecting a your solution upfront
- “I’ve been through something similar and it really hurts” instead of “I know exactly how you feel”
- Open-ended questions instead of “did you...”
- Work on the Q&A every day so the dialogue is happening
- Ensure you are listening and not just waiting for your turn to talk

Resources

- PATH - Providing Access To Help (211) has volunteers to handle initial questions then contacts for deeper intervention
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255) anytime.
- Center for Human Services, 108 W. Market St., Bloomington (during regular weekday business hours)
- School Guidance Counselors
- Primary Care Physician can provide lists of resources

- “Mental Health First Aid” seminar – sign up @ Bromenn Website Education Courses
 - 1/19/16 @ Bromenn for 8 hrs + book
- BNParents.org – website. Also, like their FaceBook page for teen-related alcohol and drug information

Liz Hamilton

B-N Parents Organization

- All U-High parents received a flyer from Andrea Markert w/letter regarding conversations around alcohol & marijuana
- Facebook & Website – build relationships to create those highly protective factors
- Substance use can increase risk of suicide even if not abused
- Teen brain impacted differently due to it still being “under construction”
- Alcohol studies have a large pool from which to draw conclusions
- Due to marijuana being illegal, it hasn’t been studied very easily

Future Parent Support Network Topics

- Drug/Alcohol
- Social Media
- Eating Disorder & Self Image