LESSON 3 PARTS

SUICIDE PREVENTION FOR YOUTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age/Grade</th>
<th>Middle School and High School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Time</td>
<td>3 class periods ~45 to 50 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials Needed</td>
<td>LED screen, student computers, white erase board and markers, paper and pencils</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>Actions to Help Prevent Suicide of youth ages 11 through 24 years</td>
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I: Topic One – Talking about Suicide Risk Factors

Goal: Open the conversation about youth deaths from suicide

Teacher initiates with the statistics that suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among youth between ages of 11 to 24 years. Alarming Fact; posing the questions “Does anyone agree that this is alarming?” “Who is uncomfortable talking about the subject of Suicide?” Today we are learning about risk factors that give us some insights to the cause of suicide. The hope is to use critical thinking and logic when discussing suicide. Ask for a volunteer scribe to list classmate’s ideas and responses.

Activity - Teacher and student led discussion and recording on white erase board the risk factors that are often seen in youth as risk factors followed by a guest speaker.

Objectives: To help students think about what might happen to lead them to suicidal thoughts and behaviors

Examples of Risks Factors include 1) mental health, depression, substance use, feelings of hopelessness, isolation, history of abuse, 2) family history of death, or divorce, violence, stress and self-injury 3) coping with sexual orientation in hostile environments, suicide of peer or family member, copy cat suicide, 4) easy access to weapons, bullying, cyberbullying, stigma of asking of help and lack of family and other adult support.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

How does a person’s thoughts fit into the risk factors?

What feelings lead to depression, is depression always a factor in suicide?
II. Topic Two - “Warning Signs”

**Goal: To be aware of recent painful events such as loss or changes in the family, with friends or at school**

Teacher introduction to warnings signs includes the ideas that suicidal thoughts or behaviors are more common than actual suicides.

A youth exhibiting the warning signs of suicidal thoughts and behaviors is not trying to get attention for attention sake, do not ignore the warning signs as difficult as it may be to admit that you see them.

**Activity – Student Participation in Groups (use attached list of 20 warning signs)**

**Objectives: To expose students to the identified warning signs of suicidal thoughts and/or actions**

**ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS:** Using the lists distributed to students, have groups of four students sit and work together reading the list and checking off any signs that they have heard or seen among their friends or peers. (Students will not be identifying anyone by name or relationship.) After ~20 minutes, have the large group come back together and tally the signs to see which ones are identified the most.

**DISCUSSION QUESTION**

- How would you approach a friend or peer when you definitely see them struggling?
- What will be the next step to get them to ask for help?
- Why might you risk talking with a friend on the chance that they won’t listen

**Last part of Lesson**

*****Guest Speaker is introduced to class. Today’s speaker is a parent who is surviving a child’s suicide. She has come to share her story and to encourage you to learn from her experience. *****
I: Topic Three – Suicide Prevention

Goal: To list the people and places that are involved in the role of helping to prevent youth suicide

Teacher leads by naming the people that can help the youth such as: their peers, their parents, teachers, and school counselors and other school staff. Do not keep a youth’s suicidal thoughts a secret, tell someone from the groups mentioned above. Schools have created a safe environment for students and are willing to help youth with suicidal tendencies. Parents, teachers and school professionals all work together and professional outside help must be sought to further support a child contemplating suicide when necessary. The ultimate goal is prevention of suicide. All students have the ability to begin personal change and self-care whether or not they have suicidal thoughts. Prevention Groups are in place promoting protective factors to improve a youth’s ability to move away from self-destructive behaviors.

Activity Individual Student Oral Expression and Comprehension

Objectives: To give youth a list of behavior goals as protective factors to help them with preventing suicidal thoughts and behaviors

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS: Each student will draw a card from container and be asked to read it aloud and to explain what it means to them. There will be 15 written examples for students to consider.

Examples: having a positive mood, developing emotional intelligence, adaptable temperament, being able to center internally, strong problem solving skills, conflict resolution in a peaceful manner, developed self-esteem, participation in physical activity, being part of a social or talent group, have a spiritual belief, cultural belief in revering life, sense of hope, care of one’s body, access to basic needs, including food, clothing, medical care, dental care and shoes

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- How can a student begin to establish healthy habits and behaviors?
- What type of help do you know about in the community?
- Why is it important to begin setting new goals now and why do you suppose the age of 24 years was mentioned in the group that has a high rate of suicides?