

Suicide Prevention and Intervention



Prevention & Intervention: The Need

- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for 10-14 year olds
- Suicide is the 3rd leading case of death for 15-24 year olds
- 15.8% of students surveyed in a national study, reported seriously considering suicide within the past 12 months
- 2016 Henry County Student Health Survey indicated that:
 - ~10% of our high school students seriously considered suicide in the past year.
 - ~8% of our middle school students seriously considered suicide in the past year



Objective

- To learn risk factors and warning signs for suicide
- To learn protective factors to prevent suicide
- To understand what to do and how to access help if you identify a student that may need intervention
- Learn some local and national resources dedicated to preventing suicide

Risk Factors vs. Warning Signs vs. Protective Factors

Risk Factors

- Risk factors are characteristics that make it more likely that individuals will consider, attempt, or die by suicide

Warning Signs

- Warning signs indicate an immediate risk of suicide

Protective Factors

- Protective factors are characteristics that make it less likely that individuals will consider, attempt, or die by suicide

Table 1. Examples of Risk and Protective Factors and Warning Signs for Heart Attack and Suicide

	Heart Attack	Suicide
Examples of Risk Factors (Individual level) Indicate that someone is at higher risk for heart attack or suicide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tobacco use • Obesity • High LDL cholesterol • Physical inactivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior suicide attempt • Mood disorders • Substance abuse • Access to lethal means
Examples of Protective Factors (Individual level) Indicate that someone is at lower risk for heart attack or suicide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise • Sound diet • High HDL cholesterol • Stress management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectedness • Availability of physical and mental health care • Coping ability
Examples of Warning Signs Indicate that someone is having a heart attack or is seriously considering suicide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chest pain • Shortness of breath • Cold sweat • Nausea • Lightheadedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threatening to hurt or kill oneself • Seeking a means to kill oneself • Hopelessness • Increasing alcohol or drug use • Dramatic mood changes

Examples of Risk, Warning, and Protective Factors for Heart Attack and Suicide

Risk Factors for Suicide

- Previous suicide attempts
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Mental illness, including mood disorders, such as depression, anxiety disorders, and certain personality disorders
- Impulsive/Aggressive Tendencies
- Hopelessness
- History of Trauma or Abuse
- Family history of suicide
- LGBTQ+ Identification



• Adapted from Suicide Prevention Resource Center <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/learn/riskfactors.aspx>



If you notice **risk factors** for suicide...


- Get help by contacting your school counselor, school social worker, or administrator.
- Continue to build a meaningful relationship with the student
- Increase protective factors that may save a child's life

Warning Signs for Suicidal Thoughts

4 out of 5 teens who attempt suicide give clear warning signs.

Warning Signs of suicidal ideation include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Talking about suicide
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Making or writing statements about feeling hopeless, helpless, or worthless
 - This may be contained in a writing prompt, assignment, or other form of written expression
- A deepening depression
- Preoccupation with death
- Taking unnecessary risks or exhibiting self-destructive behavior
- Out of character behavior
- A loss of interest in the things one cares about
- Visiting or calling people one cares about
- Making arrangements; setting one's affairs in order
- Giving prized possessions away



If you notice warning signs of suicidal thoughts...

Get help **immediately** by contacting your school counselor, school social worker, or administrator.

How Do Students Ask for Help?

- In dialogue with other students:
 - Often, students will disclose their thoughts/plans with peers first
 - Take all concerns from peers seriously
- Within written exercises, such as a writing prompt, literature assignment or other.
- In dialogue with teachers or other staff
- Non-verbal expressions during, before, or after the school day:
 - Self-injury – in itself is not always indicative of suicidal ideation, but there is a correlation between these two behaviors.
 - Sudden change in behavior - withdrawn, angry, sad, giving things away
 - Sense of or expression of hopelessness
- Suicide attempt – student may disclose that they took a handful of pills before coming to school, or at school. Student may be actively attempting to cut or harm self at school with intention to die **(Extreme Risk - Notify Administrator immediately for help/authorized to CALL 911 if needed)**



Making a Referral for Suicide Assessment

- Designated student services personnel should be notified immediately to begin assessment process
- Students should be treated with compassion from start to end of referral/assessment process
- Students should be actively supervised at all times once identified:
 - do not send students alone to counseling office
 - do not allow them to sit alone in the media center while you are busy in a nearby office
- Share all information regarding the referral with the counselor, school social worker, or administrator. Do not assume the student will share with another adult.

Protective Factors

- Effective mental health care
- Connectedness to individuals, family, community, and social institutions
- Problem-solving skills
- Conflict resolution skills
- Social skills
- Impulse control
- Coping skills
- Hope for the future
- Reasons for living
- Supportive peers
- Contacts with caregivers – research has shown that even postcards from providers to patients have demonstrated reductions in suicide

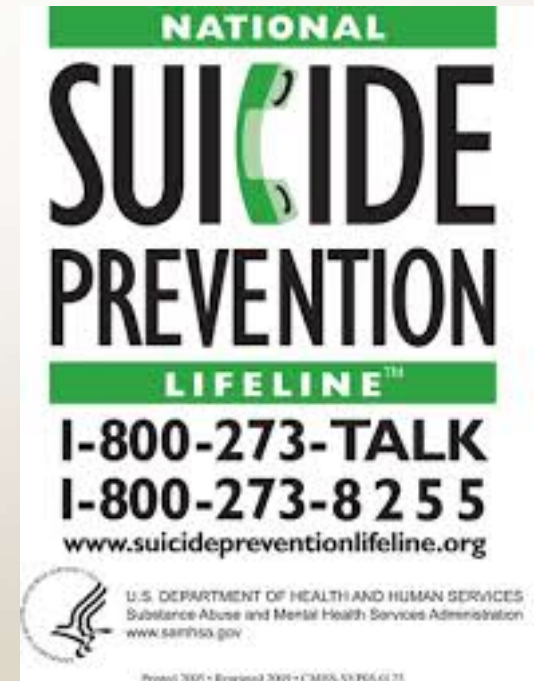
Creating Safe Spaces

- BE AVAILABLE FOR KIDS
- Encourage supportive communication and actions in the classroom
- Eliminate bullying behaviors and promote positive behaviors
- Have resources readily available ([Suicide Prevention Line cards](#); SAMHSA SAFE T Cards) for students without them having to ask
- Place [SAFE SPACE](#) stickers in your office area, somewhere visible for students
- No Place for Hate activities – creating an inclusive, supportive classroom environment
- Know which students struggle with depression, other mental illness
- Always be aware and actively identify students that need help
- All kids need to know that they matter to someone



Where to Get Help?

Local Mobile Crisis Assessment National Suicide Prevention Lifeline



Where Can Students and Adults Get Help?

Local Crisis Assessment Resources:

Assessment Facility	Phone	Website	Ages Served	Insurance	Cost**	Areas of Treatment
Georgia Crisis and Access Line	1-800-715-4225	www.mygcal.com	All	N/A	Free	Mobile Crisis Assessments - refers out for services
Crescent Pines 1000 Eagles Landing Parkway Stockbridge, GA 30281	770-474-8888	www.crescentpineshospital.com	4 and up	All managed Medicaid, Peach State, Tri Care, most other private insurance	Free, but call first	Crisis/Psychiatric Stabilization and treatment; Drug and alcohol dependency
Riverwoods Hospital 11 Upper Riverdale Rd. Riverdale, GA	877-394-5271	http://www.riverwoodsbehavioral.com/	9 and up	Most private insurance; call for others	Free	Crisis/Psychiatric Stabilization and treatment; Drug and alcohol treatment
Anchor Hospital 5454 Yorktown Dr. Atlanta, GA 30349	770-991-6044	www.anchorhospital.com	13 and up	Peachstate, Wellcare, Amerigroup, most private, call for most current info	Free	Crisis/Psychiatric stabilization and treatment.
Lakeview Behavioral Health 1 Technology Parkway Norcross, GA 30092	877-659-4522	http://www.lakeviewbehavioralhealth.com/	9 and up	Most private insurance; call for others	Free	Crisis/Psychiatric stabilization and treatment. Treats clients with mild intellectual disabilities on case by case basis.
Piedmont Henry Hospital ER 1133 Eagles Landing Pkwy Stockbridge, GA 30281	678-604-1000	http://www.piedmont.org/locations/piedmont-henry/phh-home	All		Based on ER fees	Crisis assessment
Peachford Hospital 251 Peachford Rd. Atlanta, GA 30338	770-454-2302	peachford.com	4 and up		Free	Crisis/Psychiatric Stabilization and treatment

*****Crescent Pines is no longer a resource*****