



About Teen  
Suicide

# Breaking the Silence

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# Objectives

- Teen Suicide Statistics
- Importance of Prevention & Your Responsibility
- The Myths & The Facts
- Warning Signs & Risk Factors
- Protective Factors
- Where to Get Help



# Breaking the Silence



# Did You Know...?

## **EVERY YEAR**

- *there are approximately 10 youth suicides for every 100,000 youth*

## **EVERY DAY**

- *there are approximately 11 youth suicides*

## **EVERY 2 HOURS & 11 MINUTES**

- *a person under the age of 25 takes his/her life by suicide*

# Statistics on Teen Suicide

- In the U.S., 1 adolescent attempts suicide every minute
- Nearly 5000 teenagers commit suicide yearly—this doesn't include deaths labeled as "accidents"
- Suicide rate has doubled in the last 20 years for adolescents age 10-14
- The suicide rate for Caucasian males aged 15-24 has tripled since 1950, while for Caucasian females it has more than doubled. The rate for African-Americans is lower than Caucasians but has been on the rise since the 1980s

# More Startling Facts

- Most suicides occur in the home between 3 p.m. and midnight
- More suicides occur in the months of March, April and May and on Saturdays and Mondays
- Female teenagers attempt suicide six times more frequently than males.
- For every female who commits suicide, there are three males who commit suicide
- Most males use more violent means: guns, hanging, etc. Most females use less severe methods: overdoses, cutting, etc.
- Gay youth suicide attempts are four times that of heterosexual youth

# Why has the youth suicide rate increased?

- Easier access to means: guns
- Pressures of today's life are greater, uncertainty about the future
- Tough competition for good grades, college admission
- More violence in the newspapers and on TV
- Families spend less time together, Divorce, the formation of a new family with step-parents and step-siblings, or moving to a new community can be very unsettling and can intensify self-doubts
- Youth experience high stress, self-identity confusion, self-doubt, pressure to succeed, uncertainty about their future, and other fears

# Why We Need Prevention

- Third leading cause of death for teens
- Second leading cause of death of college students
- For every completion, there are between 30-50 attempts
- CDC Youth Risk Survey: 8.5% grades 9-12 reported attempt in past year
- 25% high school students report suicide ideation
- Attempt rate increasing for 10-14 year olds
- Same risk and protective factors for suicide as other problem behaviors such as drugs, violence, risky sexual activities



# The Importance of Training

*School systems are not responsible for meeting every need of their students, but when the need directly affects learning, the school must meet the challenge.*

*Carnegie Task Force on Education*

# Your Responsibility

- ***Learning***  
*signs of risk in students*
- ***Identifying***  
*at-risk students*
- ***Referring***  
*to appropriate resources*



# Teen Suicide Myths & Facts



# Suicide Myths & Facts

1. If questioned, youth will admit suicidal thoughts or behaviors to parents.

**True**

**False**

# Suicide Myths & Facts

2. It is inaccurate and sexist to suggest that there is a difference in suicidal behavior between boys and girls.

**True**

**False**

# Suicide Myths & Facts

3. People who talk about suicide don't complete suicide - they are just seeking attention.

**True**

**False**

# Suicide Myths & Facts

4. Talking about suicide can plant the idea in the minds of at-risk youth.

**True**

**False**

# Suicide Myths & Facts

5. The only one who can really help a suicidal student is a counselor or mental health professional.

**True**

**False**



# Suicide Myths & Facts

6. Once a youth is suicidal, he / she is suicidal forever.

**True**

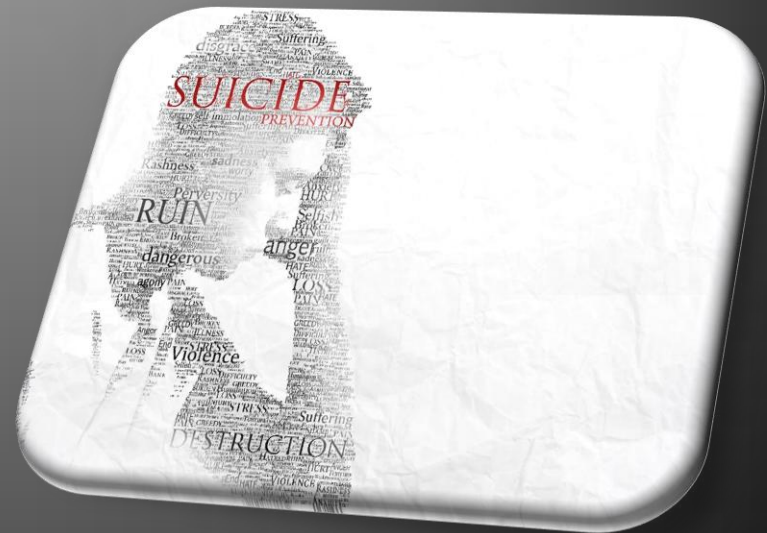
**False**

# Teen Suicide Myths

- Those who openly talk about suicide will never commit it.
- The main factor in suicide is mental illness.
- There's nothing you can do when someone wants to commit suicide.
- Once a person is suicidal, he/she is always suicidal.
- People who attempt once will attempt again.
- If someone survives a suicide attempt, he/she must have been doing it to get attention
- Asking a suicidal person about his/her plan will increase suicide potential.
- Suicide is to be expected in cases of severe hardship.
- Suicide is a spontaneous/unplanned activity.

# Common Feelings

- I am not worthy of love.
- I will only fall in love once.
- Everyone must like me.
- I must be perfect in everything I do.
- If I talk to others they'll make fun of me.
- I will feel this way forever.
- My life is hopeless
- It's never going to get better.



# Factors of @ Risk Teens



- Presence of a mental illness: depression, anxiety
- Availability of guns in the home
- Previous suicide attempt
- Personal failure: failing class, not making sports team, not getting the desired job
- Recent death or anniversary of death of friend/family member
- Family history of suicide
- Other teen stressors: break-up, beginning new school/college, unplanned pregnancy, legal trouble, being bullied
- Increase in use of alcohol and drugs
- Suicide clusters

# 4 out of 5 teen suicide attempts occurred after clear warning signs

- Change in eating or sleeping habits
- Drug and alcohol use
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Violent actions, rebellious behavior, or running away
- Feelings of guilt or hopelessness
- Loss of interest in favorite activities
- Hard time paying attention in school
- Frequent Complaints of boredom
- Poor school attendance
- Increased trouble in school
- Neglects personal appearance
- Frequent physical complaints: migraines, stomach aches
- Crying Spells
- Sudden happiness after long depression
- Not responding to praise like before
- Self-mutilation
- Giving away possessions
- Hopeless statements or vague comments: "I wish I was never born" or "I won't be around much longer."
- Direct statements about wanting to kill oneself
- Themes of death or depression evident in conversation, writing, artwork, or reading selections

# Protective Factors

- Optimism & positive orientation towards the future
- Ability to cope with setbacks
- Strong problem-solving skills
- Willingness to seek and accept help
- Good self-esteem and self-worth
- Strong spiritual and religious values
- Close personal social bonds
- Emotional stability



# REAL LIFE





# HOPES's Story

## What Are The Risk Factors?

- **Bully Victim**
- **Feeling as though it unstoppable**
- **Cutting**
- **Sought help in School**
- **Direct statements in Journal**





# JACOB's Story

## What Are The Risk Factors?

- **Bully Victim**
- **Friends Pulling Away**
- **School Avoidance**
- **Lonely**
- **Physical Conditions**
- **Poor Self-esteem**
- **Lack of Hope**

# Things You Can Do



- Teach students it is okay to ask for help
- Allow teens to talk about traumatic events like suicide
- Help students identify trusted adults
- Encourage participation in school & community activities
- Listen and be present – two powerful tools

# I'M GLAD I FAILED

...AT SUICIDE,  
BECAUSE MY LIFE  
IS SO AMAZING NOW.

 *The Trevor Project*

THE**TREVOR**HELPLINE.ORG

THE**TREVOR**HELPLINE.ORG

**YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**



# Resources

- [www.sptsnj.org](http://www.sptsnj.org)  
***Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide***  
*Sponsor of this program focuses on resources for the competent school community*
- [www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org)  
***Suicide Prevention Resource Center***  
***National Resource***
- [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)  
***American Foundation for Suicide Prevention***  
***Printed materials & resources***
- [www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org)  
***American Association of Suicidology***  
***Data, resources, links***
- <http://theguide.fmhi.usf.edu/>  
***University of Southern Florida***  
***Downloadable guide for a school suicide prevention program***
- [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)  
***Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration***  
***[http://www.samhsa.gov/SAMHSAnewsLetter/Volume\\_18\\_Number\\_5/ResourcesAtAGlance.aspx](http://www.samhsa.gov/SAMHSAnewsLetter/Volume_18_Number_5/ResourcesAtAGlance.aspx)***

# Resources

- [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)  
**Center for Disease Control**  
<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/>
- [www.yspp.org](http://www.yspp.org)  
**Youth Suicide Prevention Program**  
<http://www.yspp.org/>

## **NATIONAL SUICIDE HOTLINES**

United States of America

Toll-Free / 24 hours a day / 7 days a week

[1-800-SUICIDE](tel:1800SUICIDE)

[1-800-273-TALK](tel:1800273TALK)

## **NORTH CAROLINA SUICIDE HOTLINES:**

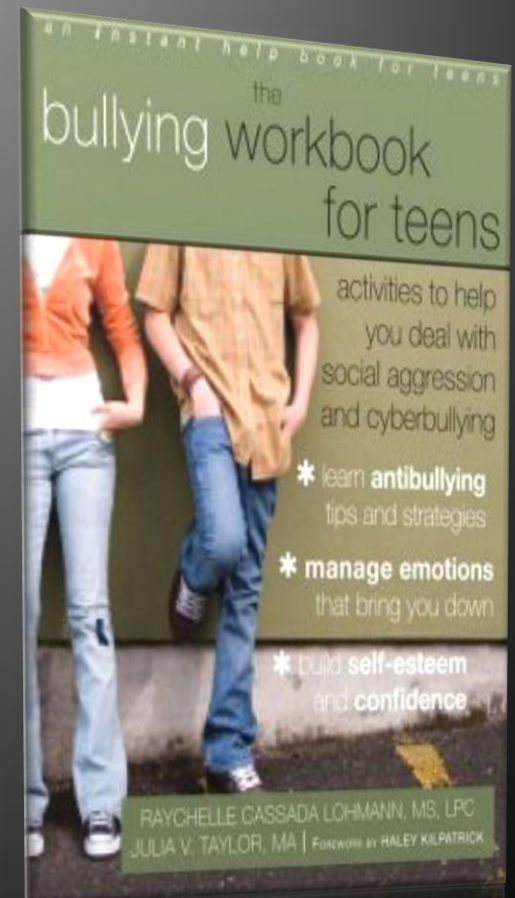
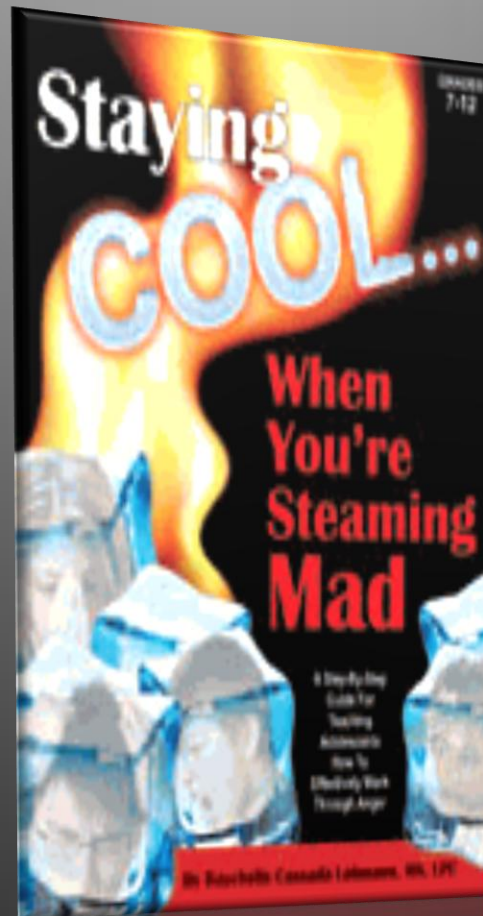
<http://www.suicidehotlines.com/northcarolina.html>

## **SOUTH CAROLINA SUICIDE HOTLINES:**

<http://www.suicidehotlines.com/southcarolina.html>



# BOOKS





# *WHERE TO FIND ME*



<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/bloggers/raychelle-cassada-lohmann-ms-lpc>



<http://twitter.com/RLohmann>



<http://www.sharecare.com/user/raychelle-lohmann/bio>



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<http://www.newharbinger.com/AuthorExpertRaychelleCassadaLohmannMSLPC/tabid/348/Default.aspx>



# Presentation & Handouts



**[www.raychelleclohmann.com](http://www.raychelleclohmann.com)**

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