



# STAFF TRAINING

## We all Have Good Mental Health Program Implementation

### Agenda

Part 1: Signs and Symptoms of Depression & Suicide

Part 2: Being a Trusted Adult



## Founded in 2004

Founded over seventeen years ago after the loss of a 14-year-old who died from her depression; it was the second suicide in the community in the same school year

## Mission-driven

Dedicated to educating and raising awareness about adolescent depression, encouraging good mental health and breaking down the stigma surrounding mental health issues

## Free programs, always

All programs are no cost and focus on bringing our hopeful and empowering message to middle and high schools

## Evidence-informed

Published in *Advances in Social Work* in January 2019 based on an independent evaluation conducted by Michael S. Kelly, PhD, LCSW, of the Loyola University Chicago School of Social Work



# OUR STORY



Erika's Lighthouse®

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# PART 1

## Signs and Symptoms of Depression & Suicide

### Agenda

- Signs & Symptoms of Depression
- Signs & Symptoms of Suicide
- Shared Risk Factors & Warning Signs
- Stats
- Treatment

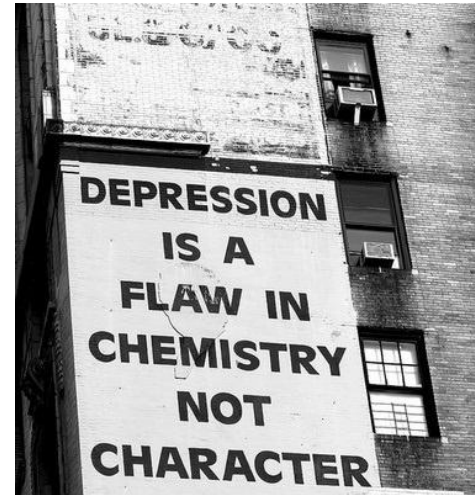


# What is Depression?

"Depression is a common and real illness that interferes with a child's ability to be productive and enjoy friends, family, activities, school or really anything. Recognizing and treating depression is the most effective way to prevent suicide."

*-The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention*

- Depression is a real illness.
- Depression is common.
- Depression is serious.
- Depression can be treated.

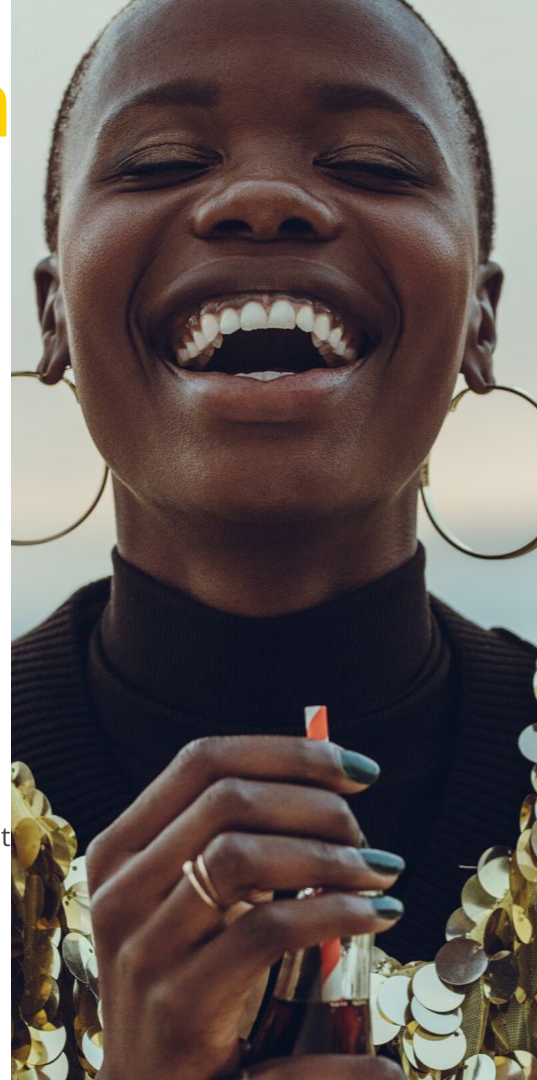


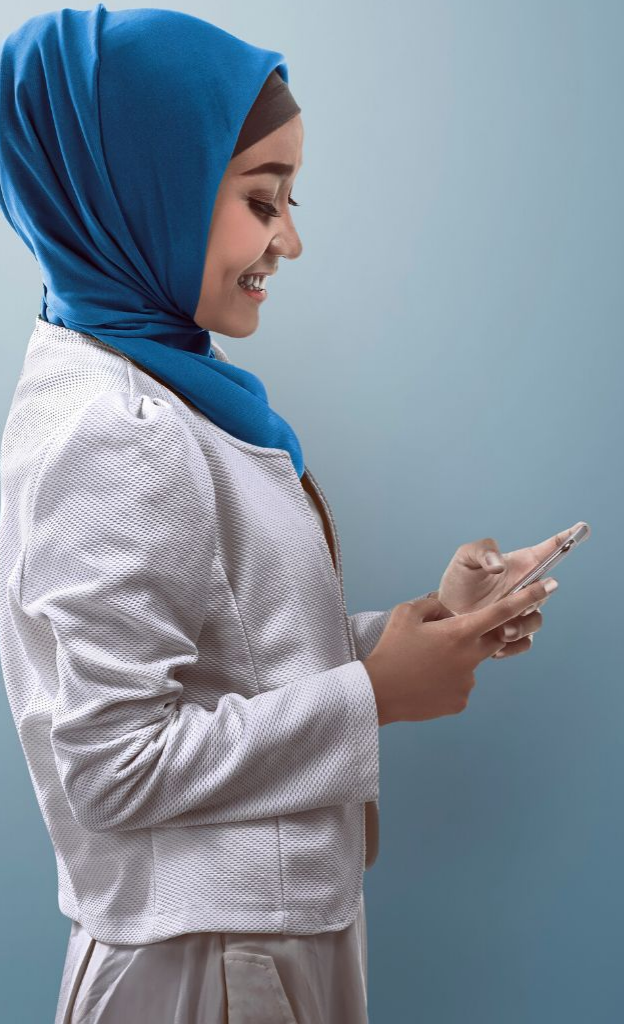
# Warning Signs of Depression

Depression symptoms can vary from mild to severe and can include:

- **Feeling sad or having a depressed mood**
- **Loss of interest or pleasure in activities once enjoyed**
- Changes in appetite — weight loss or gain unrelated to dieting
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Loss of energy or increased fatigue
- Increase in purposeless physical activity (e.g., hand-wringing or pacing) or slowed movements and speech (actions observable by others)
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Difficulty thinking, concentrating or making decisions
- Thoughts of death or suicide

\*The individual must be experiencing five or more symptoms during the same 2-week period and at least one of the symptoms should be either (1) depressed mood or (2) loss of interest or pleasure.





# Depression in Adolescents

- Irritability
- Self defeating attitude
- Bizarre sleep patterns
- Substance use
- Risk taking
- Aggression
- Acting out
- Problems in school

## Other Facts

- Girls have depression at slightly higher rates
- Boys are more likely to take their own life



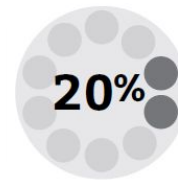
# Risk Factors of Depression

- Personal or family history of depression
- Major life changes such as moving, divorce, death of a loved one, trauma, or stress
- Certain physical illnesses, like chronic diseases, diabetes, or thyroid issues; and medications



# Depression by the Numbers

- Depression is the most common mental health disorder among teens.
- Between 2009 and 2017, rates of depression among kids increased:
  - Ages 12-13: 47%
  - Ages 14-17: 60%+
  - Ages 18 to 21: 46%
- Depression is commonly accompanied by other disorders like anxiety or behavior challenges.
- Almost all the youth that experience depression in adolescence will experience it again as an adult.
- 50% of mental health disorders begin before the age of 14 and 75% occur before 24.



Up to 20% of young people will experience **a major depressive episode** before age 20. (National Institute of Mental Health)



**31%** of high school students reported symptoms of depression, a significantly higher number than the number who have been diagnosed.

**12.5%** of teens experience diagnosed depression every year.



# Warning Signs of Suicide

***Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for individuals ages 10-24.***

## **Talking about:**

- Wanting to die
- Great guilt or shame
- Being a burden to others

## **Feeling:**

- Empty, hopeless, trapped, or having no reason to live
- Extremely sad, more anxious, agitated, or full of rage
- Unbearable emotional or physical pain

## **Change in behavior, such as:**

- Making a plan or researching ways to die
- Withdrawing from friends, saying goodbye, or giving away prized possessions
- Taking dangerous risks such as driving extremely fast
- Displaying extreme mood swings
- Eating or sleeping more or less
- Using drugs or alcohol more often

*If these warning signs apply to you or someone you know, get help as soon as possible, particularly if the behavior is new or has increased recently.*





# Risk Factors of Suicide

- Depression, other mental disorders, or substance abuse disorder
- Certain medical conditions
- Chronic pain
- A prior suicide attempt
- Family history of suicide, a mental disorder or substance abuse
- Family violence, including physical or sexual abuse
- Having guns or other firearms in the home
- Having recently been released from prison or jail
- Being exposed to others' suicidal behavior, such as that of family members, peers, or celebrities

Many people have some of these risk factors but do not attempt suicide. It is important to note that suicide is not a normal response to stress. **Suicidal thoughts or actions are a sign of extreme distress and should not be ignored.**



# Signs & Symptoms

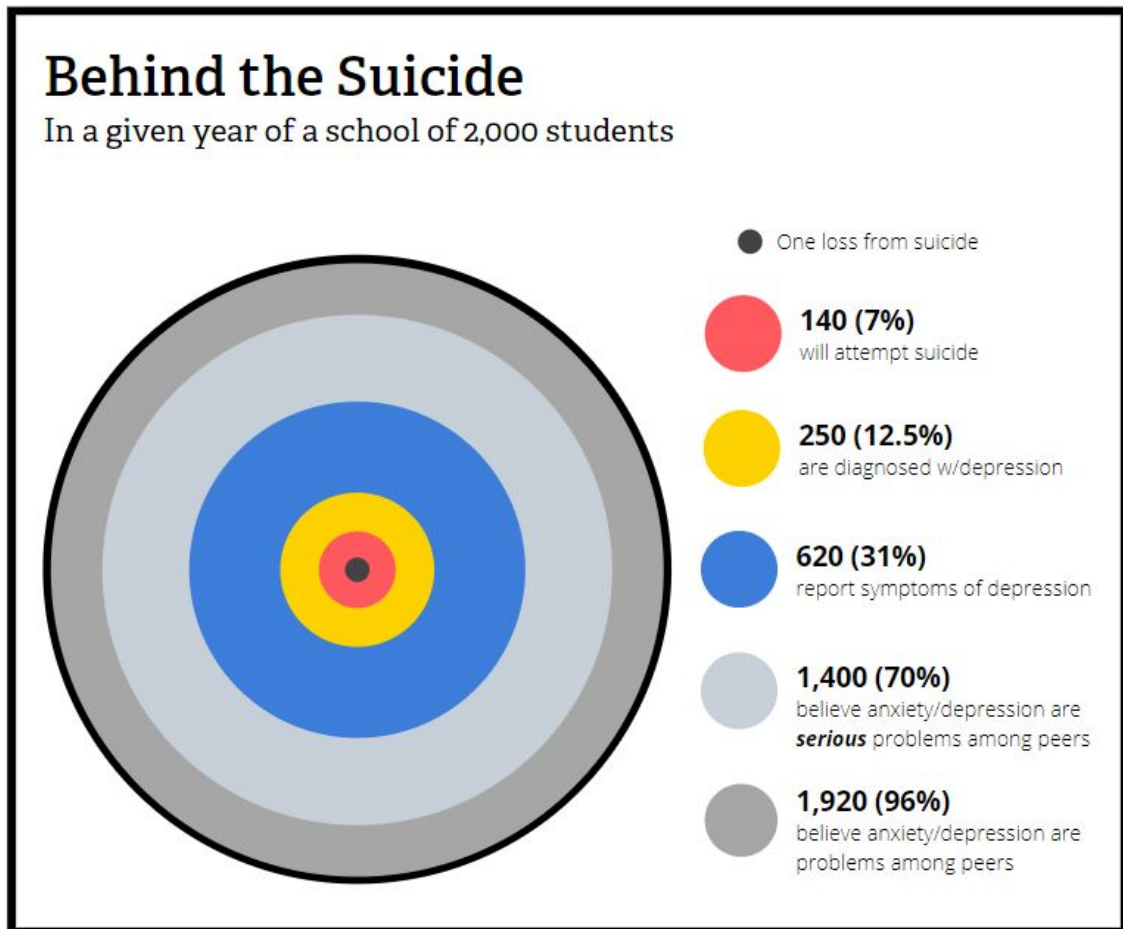
Many warning signs & symptoms are shared between depression and suicide

|  | Depression | Suicide |
|--|------------|---------|
| Feelings of sadness, tearfulness, emptiness or hopelessness                      | ✓          | ✓       |
| Angry outbursts, irritability or frustration, even over small matters            | ✓          | ✓       |
| Loss of interest or pleasure in most or all normal activities, hobbies or sports | ✓          | ✓       |
| Sleep disturbances, including insomnia or sleeping too much                      | ✓          | ✓       |
| Tiredness and lack of energy, so even small tasks take extra effort              | ✓          |         |
| Reduced appetite and weight loss or increased cravings for food and weight gain  | ✓          | ✓       |
| Anxiety, agitation or restlessness   | ✓          |         |
| Slowed thinking, speaking or body movements                                      | ✓          |         |
| Feelings of worthlessness or guilt, fixating on past failures or self-blame      | ✓          |         |
| Trouble thinking, concentrating, making decisions and remembering things         | ✓          | ✓       |
| Unexplained physical problems, such as back pain or headaches                    | ✓          | ✓       |
| Poor performance or poor attendance at school                                    | ✓          | ✓       |
| Using recreational drugs or alcohol  | ✓          | ✓       |
| Self-harm and unnecessary risk taking  | ✓          | ✓       |
| Avoidance of social interaction  | ✓          | ✓       |
| Frequent or recurrent thoughts of death, suicide, or suicide attempts            | ✓          | ✓       |
| Giving away belongings or getting affairs in order for no reason                 |            | ✓       |
| Saying goodbye to people as if they will not be seen again                       |            | ✓       |
| Talking about suicide or death, even in a joking way                             |            | ✓       |



# Why Depression Education?

Identify more  
Struggling Youth





# Treatment

**Treatment is effective, yet hard to get.**

In 2016, only 41% of the 3.1 million adolescents who experienced a major depressive episode in the past year received treatment.

Approximately  $\frac{2}{3}$  of teens receiving mental health treatment are receiving services at school.

60-70% of teens with a mental health condition do not receive the treatment they need due to stigma and other barriers, such as access to care or insurance.

**Community Leaders and educators can play an important role in directing struggling kids to necessary support services.**



# Starting A Conversation



## Intervention Language and Being the Trusted Adult

Take into account that this conversation could elicit a personal disclosure and should be scheduled during a protected time and location. Also understand that it is vital to the teacher/student relationship that the student is informed if there are plans to share the disclosure with someone else, who that person is and why it is important to do so (i.e. a parent or school support staff).

Keep in mind that it is normal to feel a little anxiety and discomfort when approaching a student you are concerned about. Just remember the goal is not to take on the student's problem or to have all of the right answers. Instead, focus on approaching the student with honest inquiry, concern and compassion—and connecting the student to the right kind of help.

**I notice.** State the changes you have noticed – use the mental health checklist, this will help with defensiveness.

**I care.** This is all about countering the negative thoughts.

**How can I help?** This is the action step. Give kids choices, but be firm that action will be taken. Affirm that help is available, effective and that they deserve to feel better.

### Tips on Being the Trusted Adult

- **Ask Questions and Listen** – Kids want your attention, not your advice.
- **Be Prepared for the Truth** - Remain calm, it's okay to be uncomfortable.
- **Validate the Student's Feelings** – Kids say all the time the most hurtful thing is when their feelings are minimized or not taken seriously.
- **Listen to Your Gut** – It's the best tool you already have. If you are speaking with the student, it is because you care and they know it.
- **Remember your Training** - Follow school protocols to keep everyone safe.
- **Take Action** - If a student needs to speak with someone, walk them down to a counselor or social worker. Check with your school building about who the best person is to help students.

Always wrap up with an action plan that both you and the student develop together. Make sure the student knows there is help available at school (if there is) and in the community and give the student information on how to contact these resources.

**REMINDER:** As adults working with children we should always keep in mind our responsibility as mandated reporters. If a child discloses plans to hurt themselves, someone else or if someone is hurting them—a report to the appropriate authorities in your area is required by law.

“We need to talk...”

**I notice.**

*“Is everything okay? I’ve noticed you have been....”*

**I care.**

*“I’m concerned because I know this isn’t normal for you.”*

**How can I help?**

*“What can I do to help? Let’s come up with a plan together.”*

## QUICK TIPS

- Ask questions and listen
- Be prepared for the truth
- Validate the student’s feelings
- Listen to your gut
- Take action and follow up



# Engaging Support: BEACON OF HOPE SIGNS

Have you seen the  
lighthouses around school?



A teacher or staff member with a lighthouse on their door  
is a Beacon of Hope for good mental health.

If you're concerned about yourself or a friend, talk to one of these trusted adults.



For even more information,  
check out our website!  
[www.erikaslighthouse.org](http://www.erikaslighthouse.org)

Explain to the staff what it means to be a “Beacon of Hope” as some are nervous & unsure

Normalize that they are not mental health professionals and not expected to complete a suicide assessment.

“Beacons of Hope” staff members  
are fostering resilience

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