



Youth Suicide: Serving and Protecting Our Youth

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Youth Statistics

- 517 died by suicide ages 10-14 (2017) suicide rates have increased 128% for this age 1980's
- 6, 252 young people (age 15-24) died by suicide in 2017
- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death ages 10-34 (after accidents) 2015 AAS (accidents, suicide, homicide)
- Rates have tripled since the 1950's
- About 1 out of 6 students (grades 9-12) seriously consider suicide
- About 1 out of 7 students (grades 9-12) made a suicide plan
- About 1 out of 12 students (grades 9-12) attempted in a year

Center for Disease Control Journal, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly and
AAS

The Link Between Suicide and Mental Illness (a predisposing risk factor)

- Highest co-morbid risk – MDD and alcohol addiction
- Schizophrenia: 10% to 15% completed suicide; often younger in age and better educated
- Anxiety Disorders, Personality Disorders when accompanied with Depression increase risk
- Bipolar disorder-#1 cause of death, 1 to 2 % per year (25%-50% attempts)
- PTSD - links to depression, anxiety, alcohol abuse

Johns Hopkins U. K. J.

The Link Between Suicide and Mental Illness (a predisposing risk factor)

- Early studies showed that over 90% of all people who die by suicide are suffering from a major psychiatric illness or substance abuse disorder, or both.
- But in 2018, the CDC reported that 54% of those who died by suicide did not have a *known* mental health condition
- More teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia and influenza, and chronic lung disease, COMBINED.
- Effective, accessible, competent care could save thousands of lives.

Mental Health Issues w Children

- 4 million children/adolescents suffer from a serious mental disorder that interferes with functioning a home, at school and with peers
- Ages 9-17-21% have a diagnosable mental or addictive disorder that at causes at least minimal impairment
- Half of all lifetime cases of mental disorders begin by age 14
- Untreated mental disorder can lead to more severe, more difficult to treat illness and co-occurring mental illnesses

Teen Depression – How is it Different?

- More likely to be irritable or angry, vs. sad or withdrawn
- Lesser degree of social withdrawal
- More likely to report physical symptoms



Teen Depression – Emotional Warning Signs

- Increased feelings of sadness or crying spells
- Increased frustration
- Angry outbursts
- Low self-esteem
- Increased conflict with friends or family
- Extreme sensitivity to criticism, rejection, or failure
- Fixation on past failures or exaggerated self-blame



Teen Depression – Behavioral Warning Signs

- Decreased energy
- Use of alcohol or drugs
- Increased agitation or restlessness
- Frequent complaints or body aches or headaches, without an apparent physical or medical explanation
- Decrease in academic performance or frequent absences from school
- Neglected appearance or hygiene
- Self-harm



Contributing Factors

- Reaction to school problems/job loss
- Relationship problems -42%
- Rejection
- Humiliation
- Overwhelming guilt
- Intense fear of circumstances that seem both unacceptable and inescapable (anticipation of punishment, threat or reality of physical, emotional, and/or sexual abuse)
- Loss of a loved one
- Devastating or debilitating illness
- Trauma
- Recent or impending crisis-29%

Nature of the suicide

- Lethal emotional pain
- Psychic suffering (Psychache)
- Hopelessness
- Unbearable mental anguish
- Cognitive constriction
- Grossly impaired problem solving ability
- Feeling a burden to others
- Thwarted belongingness
- Acquired capacity for self-injury

Ambivalence

- Back and forth
- Part of the person wants to die, but part wants to live
- Exists until the moment of death
- Person wants to find a way to live without the pain

The 3 I's

- Person feels situation is Intolerable
- Person feels situation is Inescapable
- Person feels situation is Interminable

Risk Factors

- Personal or Family History of Depression, Substance Abuse and/or Suicide
- Abuse – being teased, bullied, experiencing physical or sexual abuse
- Problems with Relationships, School or Work
- Loss of a Loved One
- Stress of a New Situation – starting a new school, moving to a new community
- Lack of Social Support / Isolation
- Easy Access to Lethal Means

Exposure to Violence or Abuse

- High prevalence of suicide ideation in children ages 8-12 who have been exposed to domestic violence or been physically or sexually abused or neglected

Protective Factors

- Strong connections to family and friends
- Strong connections to school, community
- Skills such as problem-solving, conflict resolution, and anger management
- Access to health care
- Beliefs (religious, spiritual, cultural) that discourage suicide
- Limited access to lethal means

Warning Signs

Suicide Warning Signs

These signs may mean someone is at risk for suicide. Risk is greater if a behavior is new or has increased and if it seems related to a painful event, loss, or change.

- ❖ Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself.
- ❖ Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or buying a gun.
- ❖ Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live.
- ❖ Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain.
- ❖ Talking about being a burden to others.
- ❖ Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs.
- ❖ Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly.
- ❖ Sleeping too little or too much.
- ❖ Withdrawing or feeling isolated.
- ❖ Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge.
- ❖ Displaying extreme mood swings.

Suicide Is Preventable.

Call the Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

With Help Comes Hope

How to Respond

- Express your concern about what you are observing in their behavior
- Ask DIRECTLY about suicide
- LISTEN
- Offer Hope
- Discuss options for help and encourage next steps
- Provide support

How to Ask

- “Are you considering ending your life?”
- “Are you thinking about dying?”
- “Are you having thoughts of suicide?”
- “You know, when people are as upset as you seem to be, they sometimes wish they were dead. I’m wondering if you’re feeling that way, too?”
- “With all you’re going through, have you experienced thoughts of killing yourself?”

LISTEN

Take a deep breath
and just be present
with the person

Offer Hope

- Persist in statements that suicide is not a good solution and suggest that better alternatives can be found
- Accept the reality of the person's pain, but offer healthy alternatives
- Show respect
- Collaborate with person and assure them of your ongoing support

Compassion Communicated

“With everything you’ve been going through—in your past and right now—it’s not surprising you are desperate to find some way to escape the pain.”

“Research about depression explains if you are experiencing severe pain and hurt, you can get tunnel vision where you begin to think there is only one solution to the pain...ending your life. Someone not in that state can see lots of options for you and help.”

Encourage Next Steps

- Will you go with me to get help?"
- "Will you let me help you get help?"
- "If you were able to find a way to reduce your pain, would you be willing to agree to live longer?"

Provide Support

- Assist and facilitate referral process
- Explain next steps calmly
- Collaborate and offer choices during process
- Ask if person has any questions or concerns
- Stay with person or arrange for an adult to be with person
- Follow up and check in

Role Play

On scene at local high school parking lot after Friday night football game. Two teen males are becoming increasingly escalated in a verbal conflict. You step in, are able to de-escalate the situation and discover the two teens are actually close friends (Tim and Chris). Chris tells you that Tim just “snapped” for no reason and it’s not like him to get so angry. Tim is having difficulty settling down and still appears angry, agitated and tears are beginning to well up in his eyes.

How could you engage Tim in a safe and trusting manner?

What could you say to encourage him to talk to you?

Once he realizes you are listening and being supportive he shares the following:

- His father drinks alcohol to excess nightly and becomes verbally and emotionally abusive to his mother.
- His mother has threatened suicide on several occasions.
- He feels responsible to take care of his mother and is scared something bad will happen to her especially because his dad has a gun.
- Last night his girlfriend broke up with him.

What validating/supportive statements could you say next?

How would you ask Tim directly about suicide?

What would you do to help persuade him to get help?

Strangers hold onto man for two hours after he threatens to jump off bridge (Golders Green, North London) 5/3/17

People holding onto man trying to commit suicide



I got dumped and laid off from my job on the exact same day. On my way home I was contemplating suicide and then I saw these people. I never believed in "signs from god" but I do now



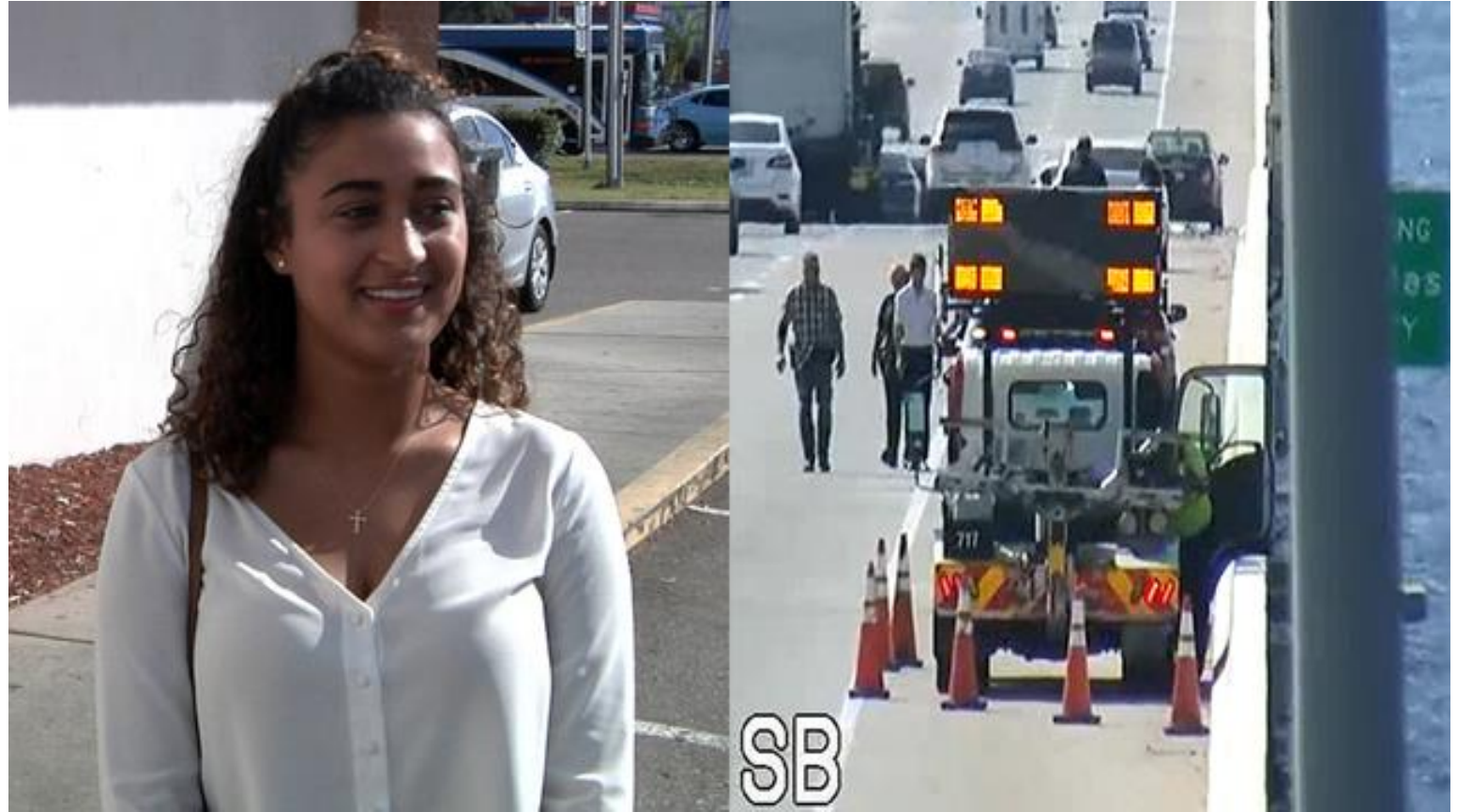
Six suicides have been prevented by a teenage girl who attached uplifting messages to a bridge. Paige Hunter, 18, tied more than 40 notes to Sunderland's Wearmouth Bridge.



11/1/18 Nicole Oyola -
stopped to help a man who was
moments from jumping off the
Howard-Franklin Bridge
(Florida)

"I started talking to him. I told
him, 'You're worth it. You're
enough. I don't know what
you're going through, but I love
you and God loves you and
everything is going to be okay.'"

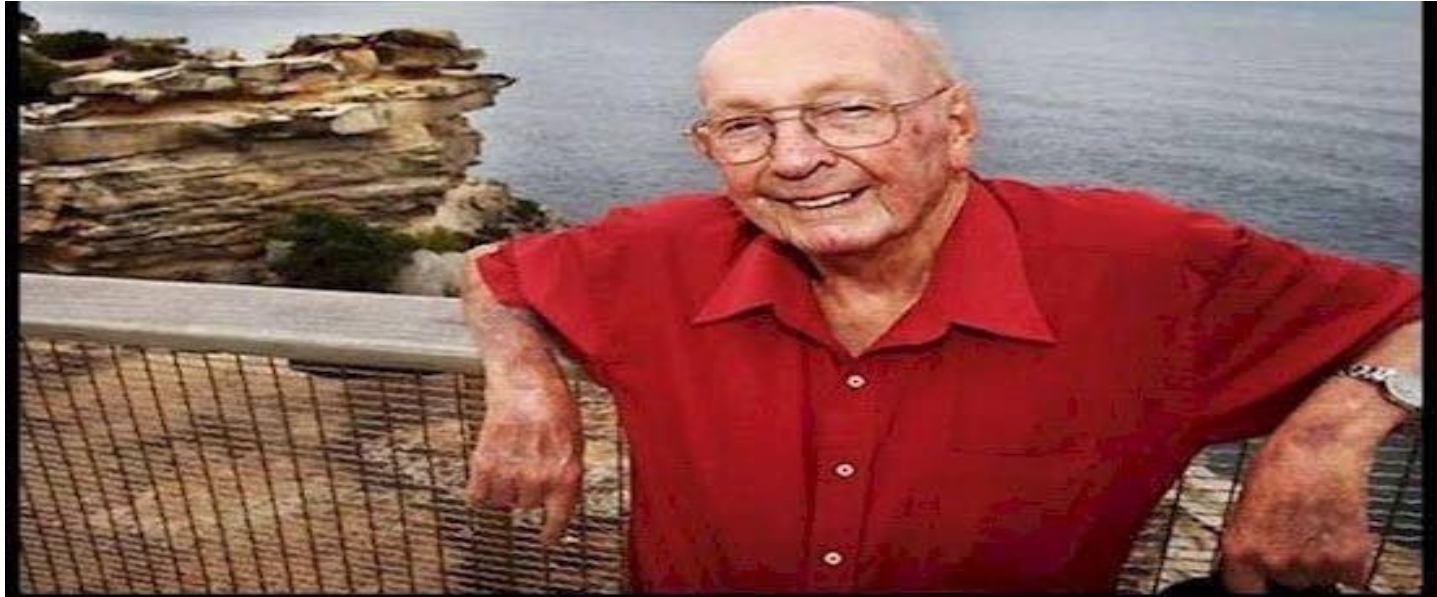
"He looked at me, and after he
looked at me he started crying
and I said, 'I just want to give
you a hug.' So he came to the
other side and I gave him a
hug.".



"First thing I could think to say to her was, 'Ma'am you look like you're having a bad day. You know, can I give you a hug?'
Damone "D" Hudson of Dayton, Ohio.
10/30/13



Donald Taylor "Don" Ritchie who resided next to The Gap, a cliff in Sydney, has officially rescued 160 people over a 45-year period. His family reports that he saved closer to 500 people.



An Australian man living by a cliff has prevented around 160 suicides in his 50 years of living there, by striking up a conversation with people contemplating suicide and inviting them to his house for tea.

You can
save a life.

We all have a role to play.
Together, we can save lives.



Thank You

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