

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE: Suicide Overview

QUESTION 1 - TRUE or FALSE:

Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death for youth ages 10-24?

FALSE - Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for youth ages 10-24

Additional Facts: Ask the audience... do you know the number one leading cause of death for this age group? It is "undetermined." Therefore, the rate of suicide incidences is potentially higher than documentable.

QUESTION 2 - TRUE or FALSE:

People who attempt suicide may or may not have a mental illness.

TRUE - A mental illness does increase one's risk; however, many people have attempted and completed suicide who did not have a mental illness or diagnosis.

Additional Facts: The frontal cortex of the brain does not fully develop until one is about 25 years old. This part of the brain controls emotions, rational thinking and impulse behaviors.

QUESTION 3 - TRUE or FALSE:

Only counselors and principals can intervene and help a student who is suicidal.

FALSE - Anyone can intervene and help support someone who is suicidal. You need to listen and pay attention to the risk factors and warning signs.

Additional Facts: Students usually talk to one another first then a trusted adult. Anyone can become aware of a student who is suicidal and take action – ANYONE.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE: Suicide Prevention

DISCUSSION 1:

TRUE or FALSE: Only one risk factor is ever known for each suicide attempter.

FALSE – There are typically multiple factors that are associated with an individual's suicide attempt.

What are three of the potential youth risk factors?

Additional Facts: Review the risk factors one pager. Discuss the ways many of them can be linked; such as:

** "Family Dysfunction" & "Substance Use/Addiction": A 11th grade male – parents are divorcing and he is blindsided by this. He has broken into his father's liquor cabinet each night for the past two and a half weeks. And he is now smoking marijuana.

** "Loss or Suicide of a Loved One" & "Lack of Purpose or Self-worth" & "Social Challenges": A 7th grade female – sister (8th grade) died as an innocent victim in a drunk driving accident. She and her sister were involved in many of the same friend groups and extra-curricular activities; of which now she no longer wants to participate.

DISCUSSION 2:

TRUE or FALSE: September is known as Suicide Prevention Month, and this is the only time in which suicide prevention activities should take place.

TRUE & FALSE – September is Suicide Prevention Month. However, Suicide Prevention should be an ongoing event in September and year round.

What ways can your school promote suicide awareness year round?

Additional Facts:

** There are free posters and print materials available from Alabama Department of Public Health which feature the Suicide Hotline. These can be posted around schools.

** Utilize student programs to share reducing risk factors... Anti-bullying, drugs and alcohol.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE: Suicide Intervention

DISCUSSION:

Scenario 1: A student has shared with you that one of their peers said in the restroom, “No one would notice if I were gone. I am just a burden to everyone.”

What do you do? What is your immediate first step?

Scenario 2: Walking through your classroom you see a student’s drawing on his desk. The drawing is of a gun and the words, “I’m Done.”

What do you do? What is your immediate first step?

What is your school’s referral process?