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Let's Talk About Suicide

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Let's Talk About Suicide

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Let's Talk About Suicide

This education video is intended for Georgia School health personnel who:

- Care directly for children and adolescents presenting with thoughts of suicide
- Participate in the multidisciplinary team for children with mental health needs



Objectives

1. Define common terms related to suicide
2. Describe the risk factors and epidemiology of suicide
3. Explain the importance of identifying children at risk and how to talk to them



Definition of Common Terms

- **Suicide** is defined as death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with intent to die as a result of the behavior.
- A **suicide attempt** is a non-fatal, self-directed, potentially injurious behavior with intent to die as a result of the behavior. A suicide attempt might not result in injury.
- **Suicidal ideation** refers to thinking about, considering, or planning suicide.



Suicide Facts

FACT



Suicide Facts

- FACT** Suicide is the second leading cause of death in youth ages 15-19. Third leading cause of death ages 10-14.
- FACT** Every year approximately 157,000 youths between the ages of 10 and 24 receive medical care for self inflicted injuries at emergency departments across the United States.
- FACT** A 2015 nationwide study of youths in 9-12th grade found that 17.7% of students reported seriously considering suicide, 14.6% reported creating a plan and 8.6% reported trying to take their own lives in the 12 months preceding the survey.



Annual Georgia Student Health Survey 2016-2017 School Year

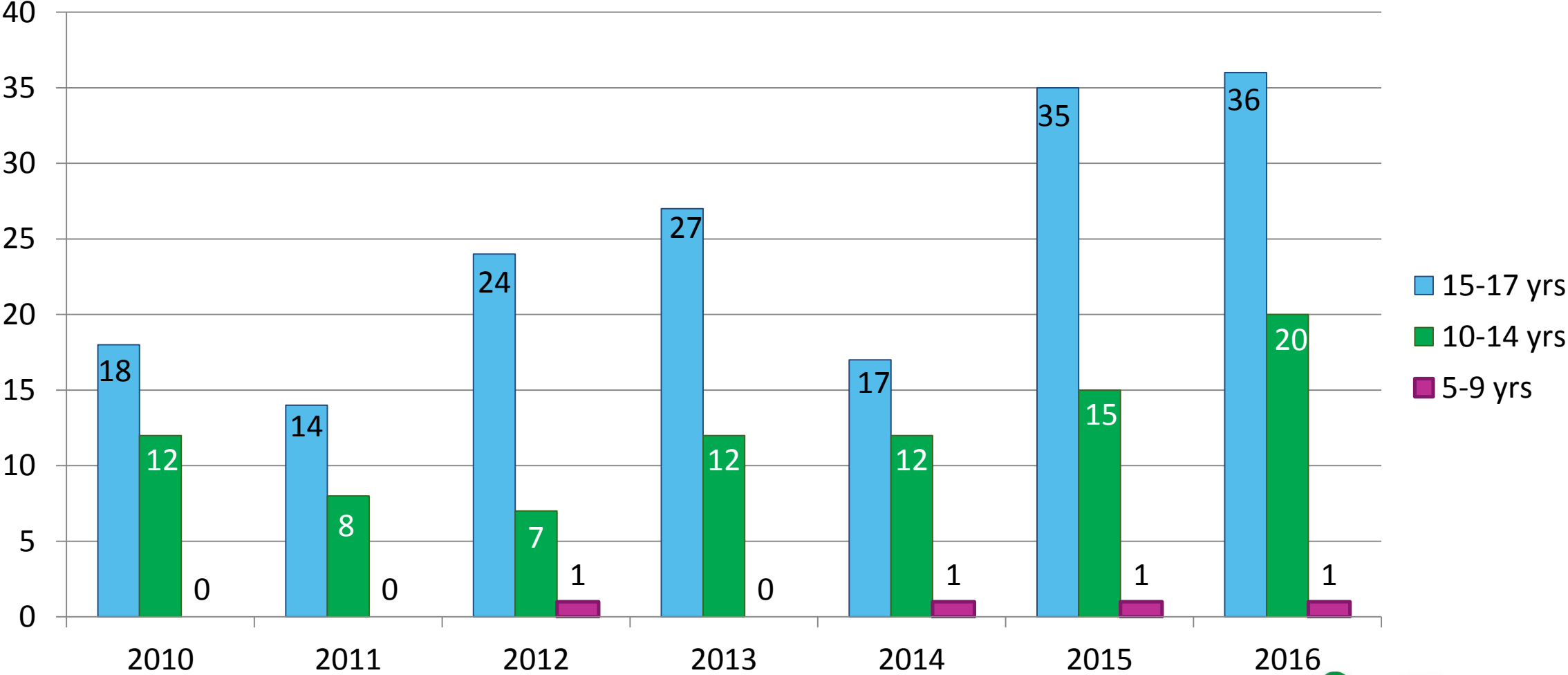
The state of Georgia sends out an annual self-report student health survey to all students in grade 6-12.

- 672,307 responses from those students:
 - 9% (60,507) had seriously considered suicide
 - 4% (26,892) had attempted suicide



Suicide Death Trends

2010-2016, GA (GA OASIS)



Georgia Department of Education

- Jason Flatt Act - Georgia
- Requires local school systems to provide annual suicide prevention education training to all certificated school system personnel and to adopt a policy on student suicide prevention
- www.gadoe.org, search “House Bill 198”



Risk Factors

- Previous suicide attempt
- Close family member who has committed suicide
- Past psychiatric hospitalization
- Recent losses
- Social isolation and or hopelessness
- Co-occurring mental and alcohol or substance abuse disorders
- Impulsive and/or aggressive tendencies
- Exposure to violence in the home or social environment
- Handguns in the home, especially if loaded
- Parental psychopathology
- Chronic physical illness



Tips to Identify a Child at Risk

- Change in eating habits
- Withdrawal from friends, family, and regular activities
- Violent actions, rebellious behavior, or running away
- Drug and alcohol use
- Unusual neglect of personal appearance
- Marked personality change
- Persistent boredom, difficulty concentrating, or decline in quality of schoolwork
- Frequent complaints of physical symptoms often associated to emotions
- Loss of interest in fun activities
- Not tolerating praise or reward



Tips to Identify a Child at Risk



Tips to Identify a Child at Risk



Tips to Identify a Child at Risk



Common Warning Signs

- Talking about suicide
- Seeking out lethal means
- Preoccupation with death
- No hope for the future
- Self-loathing, self-hatred
- Getting affairs in order
- Saying goodbye
- Withdrawing from others
- Self destructive behavior
- Sudden sense of calm



Common Misconceptions



Common Misconceptions

“Anyone who tries to kill themselves must be crazy.”

“People who talk about suicide won’t really do it.”

Misconceptions

“Talking about suicide may give someone the idea.”

“If a person is determined to kill themselves, nothing is going to stop it.”

“People who commit suicide are people who are unwilling to seek help.”



Ask the Questions



Ask the Questions



Has there ever been a time when you wished you were dead?



Have you ever thought about a specific way to end your life?



Have you ever tried to end your life?



What has prevented you from following through with these thoughts?



To what means does the student have access?



When Talking to a Suicidal Person

✓ Do's

&

⊘ Don'ts



When Talking to a Suicidal Person

✓ Do:

- Be yourself. Let them know they are not alone.
- Listen.
- Be empathetic, non-judgmental, patient, and calm.
- Offer hope. Reassure the person that help is available.



When Talking to a Suicidal Person

✓ Do:

- Be yourself. Let them know they are not alone.
- Listen.
- Be empathetic, non-judgmental, patient, and calm.
- Offer hope. Reassure the person that help is available.

⊘ Don't:

- Argue with a suicidal person.
- Act shocked, lecture on the value of life.
- Promise confidentiality.
- Offer ways to fix the problem, or give advice.
- Blame yourself.



Reflection

Take a moment to reflect on this idea and how it relates to the students with whom you interact.



Summary

1. Defined common terms related to suicide
2. Described the risk factors and epidemiology of suicide
3. Explained the importance of identifying children at risk and how to talk to them



Resources

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK
- National Hopeline Network:1-800-SUICIDE
- Georgia Crisis and Access Line: 1-800-715-4225
- National Institute of Mental Health Suicide Prevention Resources,
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention/index.cfm>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Strategy on Suicide Prevention,
<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/suicideprevention>
- S.O.S High School Suicide Prevention Program,
<http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org/highschool/>



Resources

- <http://gspin.org/>
- <http://www.suicide.org/hotlines/georgia-suicide-hotlines.html>
- <https://afsp.org/chapter/afsp-georgia/>
- <http://www.span-ga.org/>
- <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/suicide-prevention/index.shtml>
- <http://nami.org/suicideawarenessmonth>



Child/Adolescent Mental Health Issues: What School Health Personnel Need to Know

- Child/Adolescent Suicide
- Child/Adolescent Anxiety
- Eating Disorders



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A component of the Child/Adolescent Mental Health Issues: What School Health Personnel Need to Know video series.



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