

# CREATING A CAMPUS SAFETY NET FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

PRESENTED BY

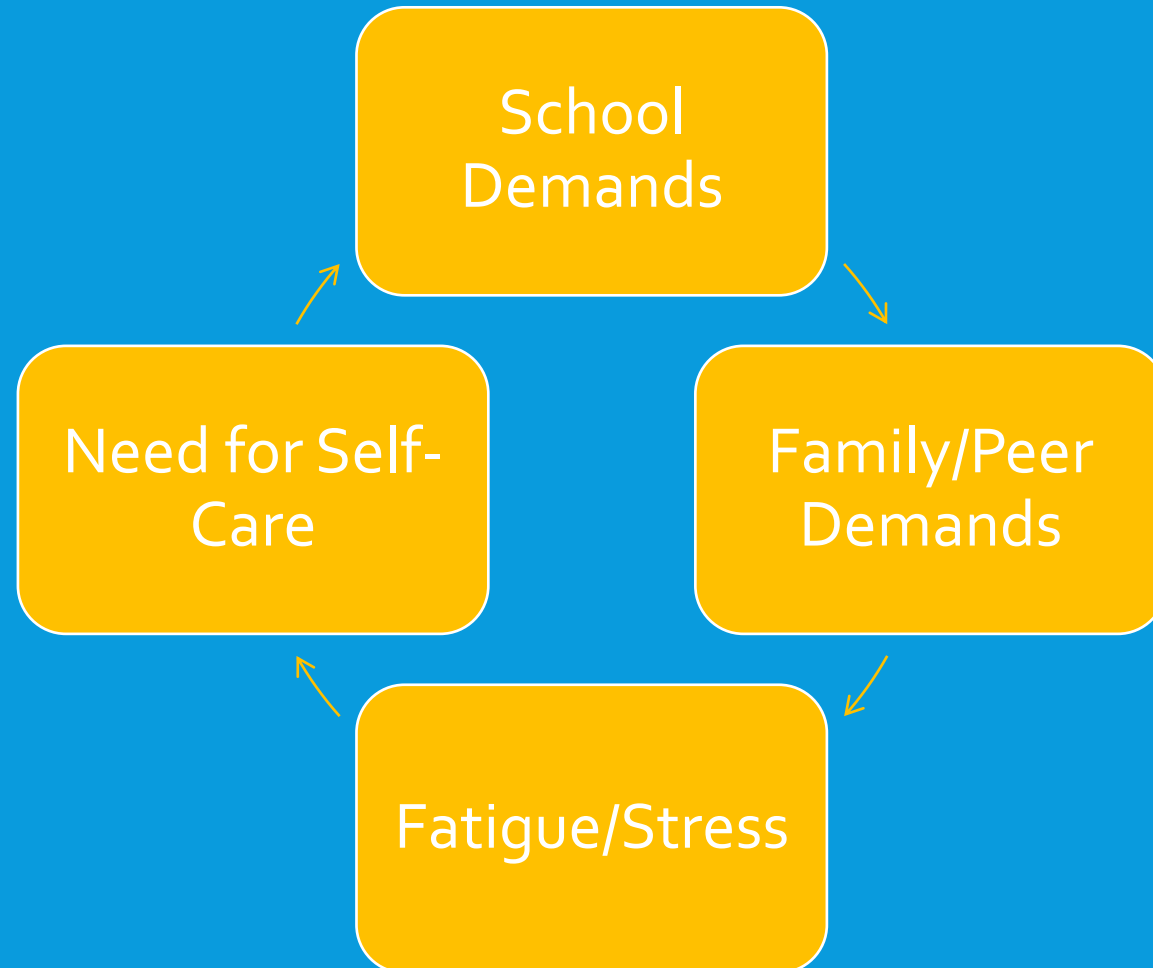
NSU OFFICE OF SUICIDE AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION

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# CHALLENGING TIMES

- There is a climate of political division in America and racial unrest
- More than 1 million Americans died of Covid
- Global warming is a major concern
- There are wars in the Middle East and Eastern Europe
- Mental health issues for college students have dramatically increased
- Mental health and self-care are very important

# CYCLE OF NORMAL STRESSORS



# SELF-CARE MODEL

- **C** for **calmness** and **control** what you can which is your reaction to the events in the world. We all do best with **consistency!**
- **A** for being **available** to your family and students and being **alert** to their emotions and worries.
- **L** is for truly taking the time to **listen to** others and for **limiting** disturbing news coverage.
- **M** is for your **modeling of coping** and optimism

# SELF-CARE

## Physical Self-Care

- Diet, exercise, and proper rest

## Mental Self -Care

- Attending to emotional needs by talking to others
- Examining the problem outside of your body
- Let go of self criticism
- Express thoughts and emotions through journaling, painting, drawing, gardening or other creative venues.

# SELF-CARE PLANS

Spiritual Self-Care

- Active participation in places of worship is very helpful to many people. Even those of us not active in places of worship need to live by a set of values that includes compassion, empathy, friendliness, helpfulness, humor and respectfulness

Embrace Nature

- Spend time outdoors

Model Good Values

- Be a positive person for you family, your classmates, and other

Engage in "I Can"  
Statements

- "I can...relax by myself." "...make myself happy by..."  
"...exercise by..." "...be a good friend by..." "...help others by..."  
"...eat healthy by..." "...get proper rest by..."

# NSU SUICIDE AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION OFFICE (SVP)

- Have made hundreds of presentations on campus and in the community on suicide prevention
- Coordinates with student affairs and campus safety
- Working with the JED Foundation on student mental health
- Publishes several newsletters each year
- Every new employee views an online module on suicide prevention
- Today, I want to highlight our presentation for undergraduate students in the first-year experience class FYE

# PERSONAL REFLECTION

*As we discuss suicide, we are sorry to say that some people in this class may have been impacted by suicide. You are not alone. Please see the Resources at the end of this presentation if you would like to talk to someone.*

# SUICIDE AWARENESS IS CRITICAL

1

How big a problem is suicide for young people?  
-Suicide is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for ages 10 to 34.

2

How many college students experienced moderate to high levels of stress in the last 30 days?  
78% in 2023 American College Association Survey.

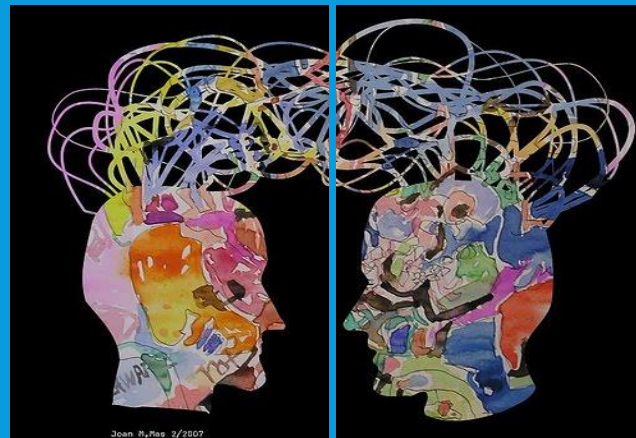
3

What percentage of college students screened positive for suicide?  
28% in 2023 American College Association Survey.

# SUICIDE MYTHS & FACTS

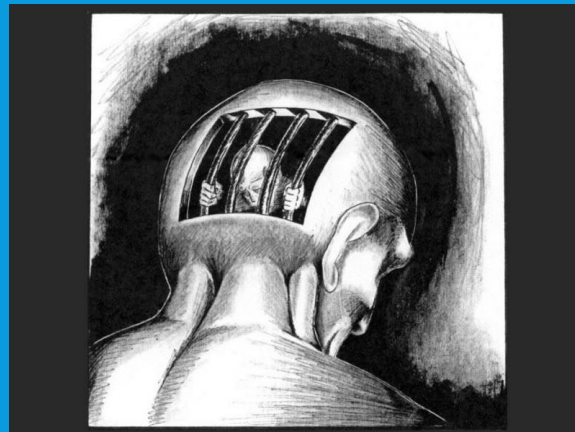
*MYTH: YOU CAN'T HELP SOMEONE WHO IS SUICIDAL*  
SUICIDE FACT

Suicidal individuals are  
**DESPERATE**  
for  
**CONNECTION**



*MYTH: SUICIDE IS A SELFISH ACT*  
SUICIDE FACT

Suicidal individuals are  
**DESPERATE**  
to escape their  
**SUFFERING**



*MYTH: SUICIDE CAN'T BE PREVENTED*  
SUICIDE FACT

Suicidal individuals are  
(almost always)  
**AMBIVALENT**  
about dying

*MYTH: ASKING ABOUT SUICIDE IS DANGEROUS*  
SUICIDE FACT

Talking about suicide  
makes everyone

**SAFER**

# REVIEW

## SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS: "IS PATH WARM?"



# *REVIEW* URGENT WARNING SIGNS



Self-destructive hallucinations



Extreme changes in mood or behavior



Writing, talking, or hinting about death or suicide



Purchasing a gun or weapon



Stockpiling drugs



Putting affairs in order (E.g., Giving away prized possessions)



Sudden happiness and calm, as if things have improved when they have not

# WHAT TO *DO* TO PREVENT SUICIDE

DO - Take all threats of suicide *seriously* and call for help.

- Stay with the person. Do not leave them alone. Get help.

DO - Listen *empathically* to what the person is saying.

- Demonstrate that you grasp what they are facing and how they are feeling.

DO - Ask *directly* about suicidal thoughts & plans.

- “Are you thinking about ending your life?” “Have you thought about killing yourself?”

# WHAT *NOT* TO DO IF SOMEONE IS SUICIDAL

DO NOT

- Criticize or judge, try to change, or make light of what the person is thinking or feeling.

DO NOT

- Minimize the potential for harm.

DO NOT

- Agree to secrecy or try to handle it yourself.

DO NOT

- Wait to seek help.

DO NOT

- Believe denials if there are warning signs.

DO NOT

- Leave a potentially suicidal person alone.

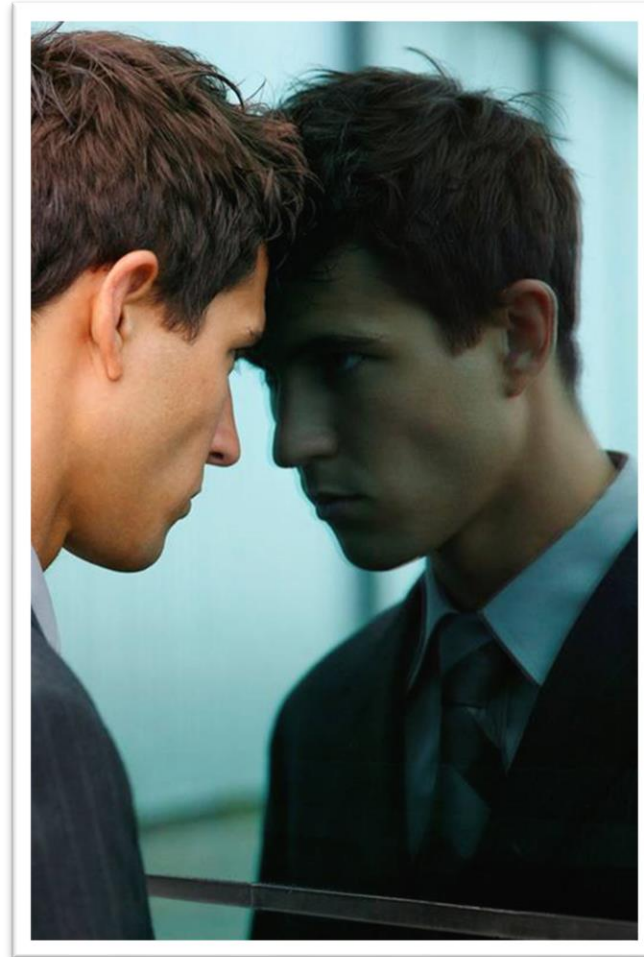
# ROLE PLAY

## WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IF SOMEONE TELLS YOU THIS . . . ?

Read the  
scenario,

Take turns  
responding to  
your partner.

Ask directly, "Are  
you thinking of  
killing yourself?"



"Ever since the  
breakup, I  
haven't been  
able to study. I  
just found out  
that I'm losing  
my job. I'm not  
sure life is worth  
living anymore."

# HOW YOU COULD RESPOND



*You probably said something like this*

Show empathy

"It's hard to concentrate when you're in pain. And now you're getting hit with another loss. You must feel overwhelmed."

Ask directly about suicide

"Are you thinking of killing yourself?"

Call for help

"It sounds like you could use some support. I know someone who can help. Let's call now."

# NSU CRISIS RESOURCES

If immediate danger,  
call 911 or  
NOVALERT (24 hrs.)  
954-262-8999

Call the NSU Center  
for Student Counseling  
& Well-being  
954-424-6911  
24/7 crisis line

Tell trusted adults

- Professor/staff
- NSU Student CARE Team  
954-262-7280 (non-crisis)
- Counselor-in-Residence
- Parents

# OFF-CAMPUS 24/7 CRISIS RESOURCES

## Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Call **988** or **1-800-273-TALK**

*Ask and Siri/Google will connect you*

## Crisis Text Line

Text "HOME" to **741741**

## Broward Helpline

Call **211**

Go to the nearest hospital  
emergency room

# A LEGAL CASE

*Should a university counseling center contact the parents of a suicidal student?*

# UNIVERSITY LAWSUIT

- An 18-year-old freshman far from home at a prestigious eastern university sought treatment for depression on 12/9 at the counseling center (in phone intake admitted history of previous suicidal thoughts)
- Walked into counseling center on 1/13 (admitted researching how to die by suicide and he scored at 99% on depression on the CCAPS)
- In an individual counseling session on 1/15, he stated his girl friend broke up with him yesterday and repeated he was researching how to kill himself

# LAWSUIT CONTINUED

- A follow-up appointment was made with a psychiatrist for 1/22
- He died by suicide on 1/21
- No evidence existed that a safety plan was developed
- His psychologist stated in her deposition that they had no idea that safety plans needed to be written and safety was discussed verbally
- Psychologist also stated she had no idea that a break-up could precipitate a suicide and that the counseling center policy was to never notify parents
- What do you think the outcome was of this case?

# QUOTES FROM THE FIELD INTERVIEWS IN THE SVP NEWSLETTERS

- The most common mistakes clinicians make in suicide assessment are to mischaracterize the risk level or make an accurate assessment of the risk level but do not take appropriate action to secure client safety or the clinician overestimates the effect of protective factors (Dr. Thomas Joiner, The Robert Lawton Professor of Psychology at Florida State University).
- There is a shocking lack of curriculum-based training on suicide risk assessment and management across all health care disciplines. Most clinicians when they learn- it is in the field (Dr. David Jobes Psychology Professor Catholic University of America).

# DISCUSSION

## Question & Answer



# FOR MORE INFORMATION: NSU OFFICE OF SUICIDE & VIOLENCE PREVENTION

[WWW.NOVA.EDU/SUICIDEPREVENTION](http://WWW.NOVA.EDU/SUICIDEPREVENTION)  
-NEWSLETTERS, INTERVIEWS, VIDEOS

[SVP@NOVA.EDU](mailto:SVP@NOVA.EDU)  
-PRESENTATIONS ON & OFF CAMPUS

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