Making sense of student suicide: 
*Prevention and response*

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Making sense of student suicide
Agenda

- Scope
- Risk Factors
- Protective Factors
- Warning Signs
- Responding
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U.S. 10th leading cause of death
  • 2nd for youth*

College student suicide
  ~ 7 per 100,000
  ~ half the rate for age-matched, non-students
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**National College Health Assessment**
**UNC Charlotte³**

- 7% seriously considered suicide
- 1.5% attempted
- 85% felt overwhelmed by all they had to do
- 37% felt so depressed it was difficult to function
- 62% felt overwhelming anxiety

Scope Cont’d
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Risk Factors

**Behavioral & Biopsychosocial**
- Mental health disorders
- Substance abuse
- Trauma
- Family history
- Chronic illness

**Environmental**
- Loss
- Lethal means
- Exposure to violence
- Victimization

**Sociocultural**
- Isolation
- Marginalization
- Limited help-seeking
- Barriers to treatment access
- Exposure to suicidal behavior
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Protective Factors

Personal
- Resilience
- Coping/life skills
- Self-esteem
- Purpose
- Hope

Environmental
- Connectedness
- Accessible health care
- Exposure to violence
- Victimization

Sociocultural
- Belief system discouraging suicide
- Community
- Responsibility & caretaking
Warning Signs

- I Ideation
- S substance abuse
- P purposelessness
- A anxiety
- T trapped
- H hopelessness
- W withdrawal
- A anger
- R recklessness
- M mood changes

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**Responding: Prevention**

- **Primary**
  - Prevent disease/injury before it occurs
    - Education
    - Environmental safety

- **Secondary**
  - Reduce impact of existing disease/injury
    - Self-care
    - Early intervention

- **Tertiary**
  - Decrease impact of ongoing illness
    - Ongoing treatment
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Responding: Primary Prevention

Campus Wide
• Decrease the impact of risk factors
• Build up protective factors
• Public health approach
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Responding: Secondary & Tertiary Prevention

Your Role

- Spot warning signs
- Share your concern directly
- Encourage them to talk
- Don’t keep secrets
- Provide resources:
  - National Suicide Prevention LIFELINE
  - Referral to CAPS
    - 80% of those who complete not seen by a counselor

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4: Reference or note on page 4.
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Responding: Secondary & Tertiary Prevention

Your Role

- Share concerns with a supervisor
- Consult CAPS
  - Mary Alexandar Rd & Cameron Blvd.
    - (704) 687-0311
    - caps.uncc.edu
- Tips when concerned about a student
- On-call counselor business days, 8-5
- After-hours emergencies
  - Campus Police: (704) 687-2200
  - CAPS ProtoCall
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Responding: Gatekeeper Training

• Faculty/Staff in ideal positions to notice signs and be “gatekeepers”
• Get prepared to notice and refer
• Gatekeeper trainings save time in the long run
  • Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR)
    • QPR trailer
  • Kognito At-Risk for Faculty & Staff
    • Kognito Trailer
Accessing the Simulations

More information at CAPS Website: At-Risk Simulation
Access Kognito at: https://kognitocampus.com
Create Your Account
  • Enrollment key for faculty/staff: uncc89
  • Enrollment key for students: unccharlotte
Questions: contact Dr. Jessalyn Klein
  • (704) 687-0311
  • JKLEIN14@uncc.edu
Also, “Tips & Resources” to help promote
Questions & Comments