



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK
FAMILY LIFE

WELCOME TO “HOPE AND ACTION”!

WEBINAR FOR PARENTS OF TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS

Preventing Suicide among our Children
Wednesday, November 3, 2021



Sue DiSisto
Moderator



Fr. Chris Alar, MIC
Prayer & Reflection



Stan Collins
Webinar Presenter



Pamela Morris, Ph.D.
Webinar Presenter



HOUSEKEEPING NOTES

- If you have a question, technical problem, or comments, please type it into the “CHAT” window.
- NOTE: If you would like to chat privately in your chats, choose “Hosts & Panelists” and not “Everyone” so that all attendees don’t see your chat or your name.
- This live webinar is being recorded (however, chats are not included in the recording).
- Disclaimer: Inclusion of organizations in these webinar slides does not constitute an endorsement, but rather they are offered for informational purposes. Not all of the organizations are associated with the Archdiocese of New York, and we are not responsible for their policies, the views they express, the products and services they offer, nor the content of their materials or websites. For additional questions, contact Sue DiSisto at Susan.DiSisto@archny.org.

Suicide Prevention 101: Tools for Parents



Funded by counties through the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (Prop. 63).



Directing Change

Program and Film Contest

Before we begin...

- You are not a "bad" parent
- Being a parent is hard, being a parent to a teenager is really hard, and supporting a child who is struggling is even harder
- Parenting in the context of COVID is especially difficult, given ongoing uncertainties

Data on Youth Suicide

- **Nearly 1 in 5 students** report having seriously considered attempting suicide
 - Females: 24.1%
 - Males: 13.3%
- **Nearly 1 in 6 students** made a plan about how they would attempt suicide.
- **Nearly 1 in 10 students** have attempted suicide
 - Females: 11.0%
 - Males: 6.6%

Recommended Language

<i>Use</i>	<i>Don't Use</i>
<p data-bbox="233 568 755 768"><i>“died by Suicide”</i> or <i>“took their own life”</i></p>	<p data-bbox="1155 544 1673 596"><i>“committed suicide”</i></p> <p data-bbox="948 689 1779 793"><i>Note: Use of the word commit can imply crime/sin</i></p>
<p data-bbox="233 982 755 1035"><i>“attempted suicide”</i></p>	<p data-bbox="1029 882 1792 935"><i>“successful” or “unsuccessful”</i></p> <p data-bbox="948 1029 1850 1133"><i>Note: There is no success, or lack of success, when dealing with suicide</i></p>

What can be done to prevent suicide?

Know the warning signs

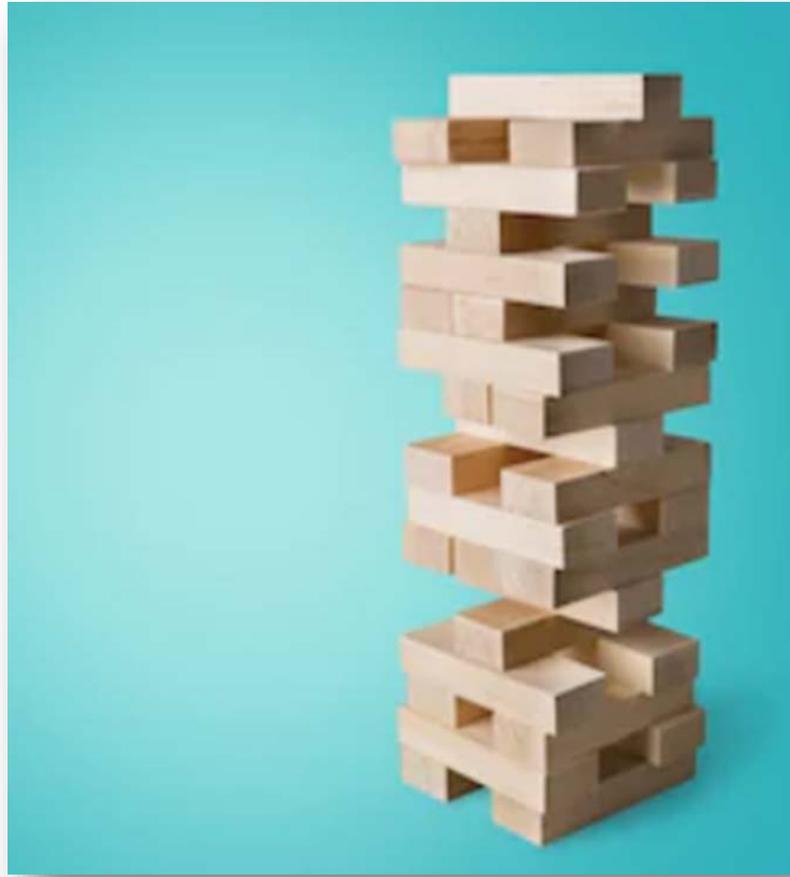
Ask directly about suicide

Make a safety plan and reduce access to lethal means

Connection to MH professional trained in suicide prevention treatments (DBT, CAMS, etc.)

Create systems to respond to suicide risk in least restrictive (least traumatizing) way

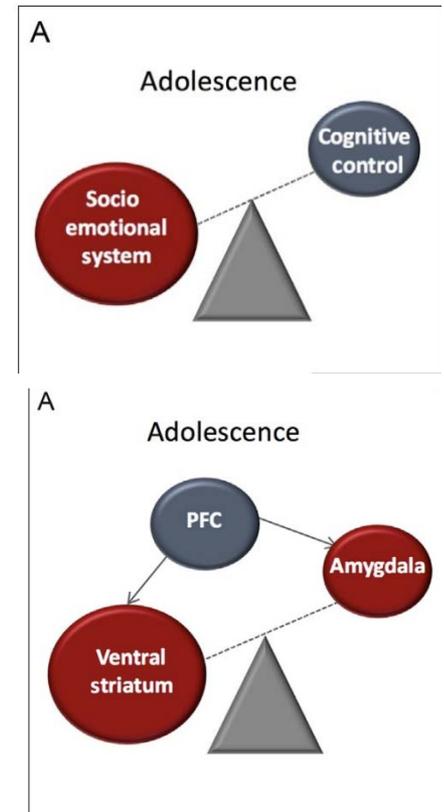
What “causes” suicide



Stress and Supporting Resilience in Teens

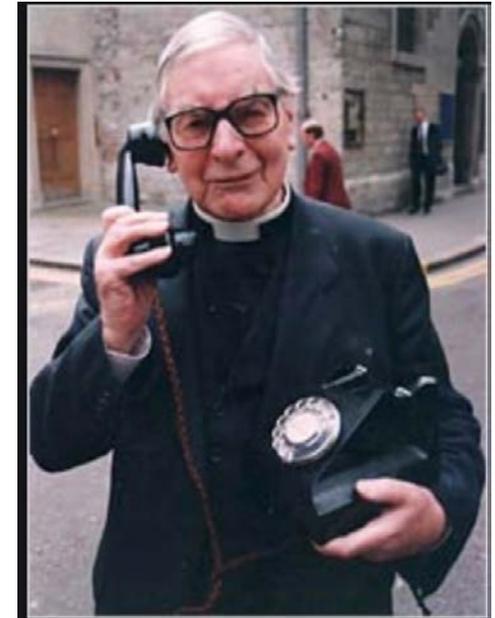
Some experience with stress is actually a *good thing* to build “resilience”...

- **Foster Positive Connections**
 - Importance of peer / social connections
 - Encourage “positive” risk taking
- **Promote Healthy Emotional Skills**
 - Help your youth *regulate* emotions such as stress, anger and sadness
- **Focus on the basics: Sleep, eating well and exercise**
 - Physical wellness, especially *sleep*, is vital to youth mental health



A Key Part of Suicide Prevention: Helplines

- **Helplines**
 - Phone numbers numbers that people can call to receive immediate emotional support
- **For Suicide Prevention**
 - Began with Chad Varah in 1952 in UK
 - Expanded to be an important piece of national suicide prevention strategies
- **Befrienders Worldwide**
 - Based on **active listening, acceptance, understanding and empathizing, with no giving of advice or counseling techniques.**



**Befrienders
Worldwide**
volunteer action to prevent suicide

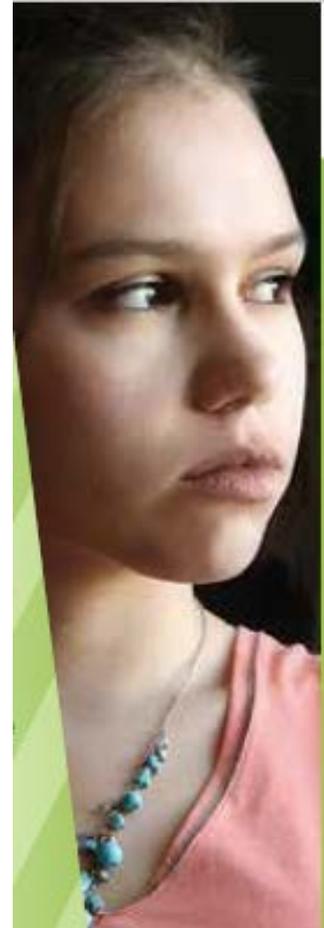
Creating Safe Space

It's not about having all the answers, or even having any answers, it's about *creating space to actively listen*.

- **Share YOUR Emotions / Be *emotionally* present**
 - Being stoic only teaches your child to repress their emotions
- **Know your resources**
 - Whether it's your school, a crisis resource, or another resource in your community
- **Find your supports**
 - Supporting a loved one through tough times can take a toll on you too, be sure you are reaching out for support

Pain Isn't Always Obvious: When to Worry

- Mood changes can be part of the youth experience
- It is important to stay vigilant for warning signs that your child is more than moody
 - Extended over time
 - But **TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS!**
- Due to current events, our children are impacted by additional mental health stressors (including uncertainty)



Critical Warning Signs

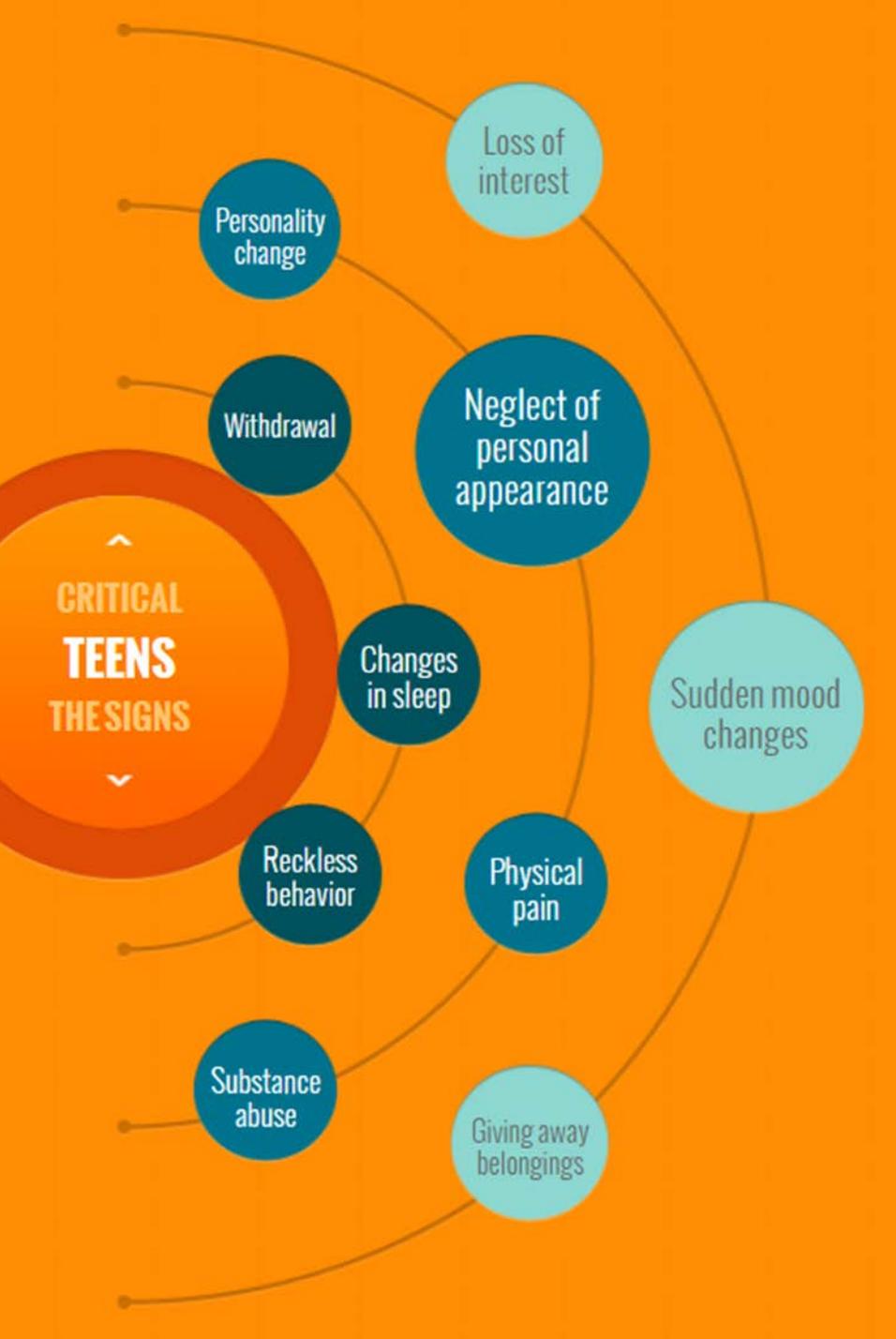
If any of these critical warning signs are present, call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 (TALK) right away:

- Talking or writing about death or suicide
- Seeking methods for a suicide attempt, including searching online
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live

Warning Signs

Additional Warning Signs:

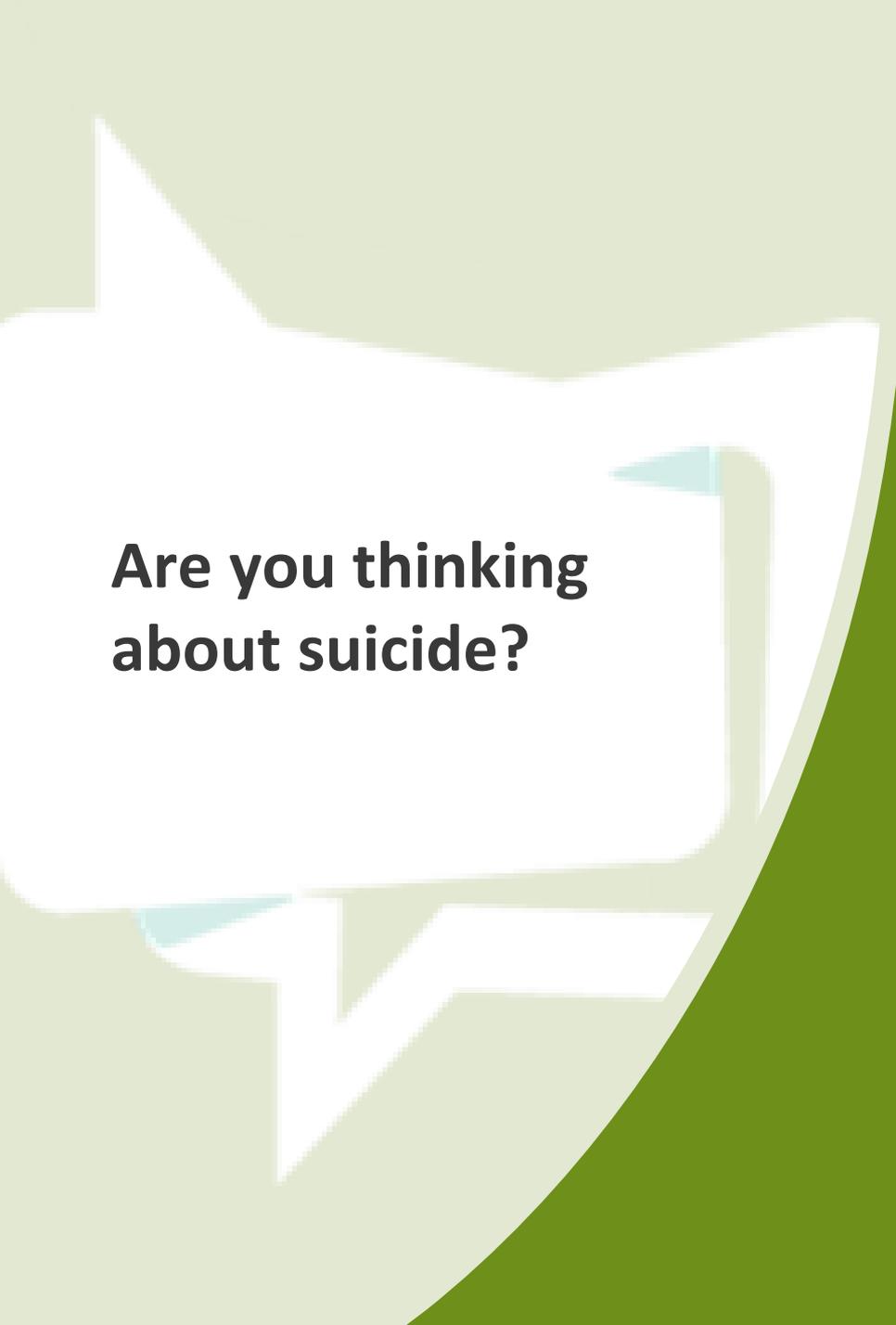
- Anger, aggression, irritability
- Perfectionism, inability to adjust to failures
- High levels of empathy
- Any others? (please chat)



What Can You Do?

- If you sense something is wrong, **don't delay in getting help!**
- **Find the Words** to have this difficult conversation.
- Express your concern, mention specific things you have noticed.
- Ask directly if they are thinking of suicide.

Are you
thinking about
suicide?



**Are you thinking
about suicide?**

**Talking about suicide
does not increase
suicidal behavior.**

**By talking openly and
directly, you are
sending the message
that you care and want
to help.**

Tips for Effective Communication

- Take a deep breath
- Create a safe environment
- Give yourself plenty of time (don't rush)
- Be prepared with resources and also for their response (yes or no)
- Listen more than you talk, don't try to fix
- Make sure to have your own supports in place

Remember you don't have to have all of the answers!

The “best” time to talk to your youth about suicide is actually when you are not concerned that suicide risk is present.

What if They Say “No”?

- Continue to talk to your child about mental health.
- Support their coping and resiliency
 - Encourage them to reach out to resources such as the Crisis Text Line or another trusted adult.
- Remind them that you are there for them.
- Listen without lecturing or judgment.
- Be vigilant about the behaviors you are noticing and continue to check in with your child on a regular basis.

Crisis Text Line
Text “GOT5” to 741741

What if They Say “Yes”?

If your youth answers “yes,” and says they been having thoughts of suicide:

- **Take it seriously**
- Remain calm
- Thank them for their honesty and openness and courage
- Encourage them to talk about the reasons they feel this way and listen
- The most important action you can take is to listen...really listen



Plan for Safety



Stanley-Brown Safety Plan

Medical

Designed for iPad

GET

If your child is thinking about suicide, **make safety a priority:**

- Remove/secure weapons from the home and securely store medications and other means
- Create a safety plan with your youth (or make sure your child's mental health professional completes a safety plan and *ask them to share it with you*)
- Have your child download a wellness app, and review it with them from time to time.

STANLEY - BROWN SAFETY PLAN

STEP 1: WARNING SIGNS:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

STEP 2: INTERNAL COPING STRATEGIES - THINGS I CAN DO TO TAKE MY MIND OFF MY PROBLEMS WITHOUT CONTACTING ANOTHER PERSON:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

STEP 3: PEOPLE AND SOCIAL SETTINGS THAT PROVIDE DISTRACTION:

1. Name: _____ Contact: _____
2. Name: _____ Contact: _____
3. Place: _____ 4. Place: _____

STEP 4: PEOPLE WHOM I CAN ASK FOR HELP DURING A CRISIS:

1. Name: _____ Contact: _____
2. Name: _____ Contact: _____
3. Name: _____ Contact: _____

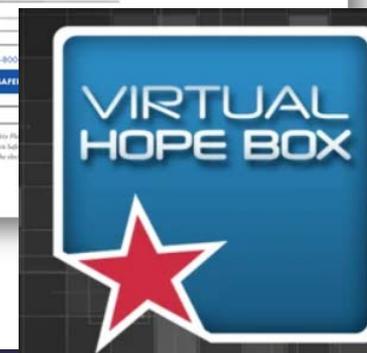
STEP 5: PROFESSIONALS OR AGENCIES I CAN CONTACT DURING A CRISIS:

1. Clinician/Agency Name: _____ Phone: _____
Emergency Contact: _____
2. Clinician/Agency Name: _____ Phone: _____
Emergency Contact: _____
3. Local Emergency Department: _____
Emergency Department Address: _____
Emergency Department Phone: _____
4. Suicide Prevention Lifeline Phone: 1-800- _____

STEP 6: MAKING THE ENVIRONMENT SAFE

1. _____
2. _____

The Stanley-Brown Safety Plan
Individual use of the Stanley-Brown Safety Plan
does not constitute an offer of therapy.



Consider the Next Steps

- A youth who is having thoughts about suicide, especially if they have a plan, needs to be evaluated by a mental health professional with training in suicide prevention.
- Next steps include contacting the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (**1.800.273.TALK [8255]**) or **Crisis Text Line (741741)**, a local crisis center, a mental health professional, or your family doctor - as soon as possible.
- Your child's school can also provide a variety of supports and help keep your child safe, so you are encouraged to engage the school.

In danger or need immediate medical attention? Call 911 or go to the nearest hospital.

Healing Takes Time

If your youth is undergoing mental health treatment remind them that *recovery takes time* and they may not feel better right away.

Urge them to take it a little easier and not expect to return to all their usual responsibilities right away.

Create a network of trusted friends and family as supports for your youth (and for yourself as well)



National Crisis Resources



CRISIS TEXT LINE |

Text GOT5 to 741741
Free, 24/7, Confidential

Para ayuda en español: 888.628.9454

*NOTE: In July 2022, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-TALK [8255]) will be able to be accessed by simply dialing **988**. Stay tuned for forthcoming national announcements!*

ADAPP Resources

(Archdiocese of New York Drug Abuse Prevention Program)

ADAPP serves schools and parishes within the Archdiocese of New York with prevention/intervention programs designed to prevent the abuse of alcohol and other drugs.

While providing other programs/services such as bullying & violence prevention, and school mental health & wellness education, they also offer information and resources about suicide prevention.

To access their Parent and Student handouts, or for more information about their suicide prevention resources, visit their website at: adapp.org/news/suicide-prevention-information-and-resources/



Additional Resources

New York City	https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/ Free, confidential mental health support Call 1-888-NYC-WELL or Text " WELL " to 65173
Archdiocese of New York	adapp.org/ adapp.org/news/suicide-prevention-information-and-resources/
Archdiocese of New York	archny.org/parents/ archny.org/respect-life/find-support/suicide-depression/
Catholic Charities – Archdiocese of New York	https://catholiccharitiesny.org/find-help Call 1-888-744-7900
Catholic Charities of Brooklyn/Queens	https://www.ccbq.org/ Call 1-718-722-6001
National Catholic Partnership on Disability	ncpd.org/ ncpd.org/disabilities-ministries-specific-disabilities-mental-illness/suicide

Directing Change Program & Film Contest

Youth and young adults submit short films and art projects about suicide prevention, and mental health promotion & explore these topics through the lens of diverse cultures.



❖ Youth guided!

- ✓ Open to students in grades 6-12, and youth ages 12 to 25
- ✓ Change conversations in schools and communities about mental health and suicide prevention
- ✓ Evaluated curriculums and resources guide youth film makers and submissions

Directing Change Newsletter

Teaching Resilient Students and Raising Healthy Teens: Mental health, substance abuse and suicide prevention resources for educators and parents

- Newsletter provides a list of curated resources and activities to support social-emotional development, healthy coping as well as crisis support for educators, students and parents



Volume 5 August 2021

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FOR STUDENTS

MONTHLY PROMPT AND LESSON

In classroom • Distance learning • Grades 5-12 (ages 12-25)
URL: www.DirectingChangeCA.org

MONTHLY STUDENT CONTEST: Hope and Justice

Students in grades 5-12 and young adults can submit art and film projects to win cash prizes while exploring curriculum on critical health issues (coping during the pandemic, mental health, self-esteem, personal identity, and many more). For more information, view this [2 minute video](#) or [visit the website](#). All art and film projects are due the last day of every month.



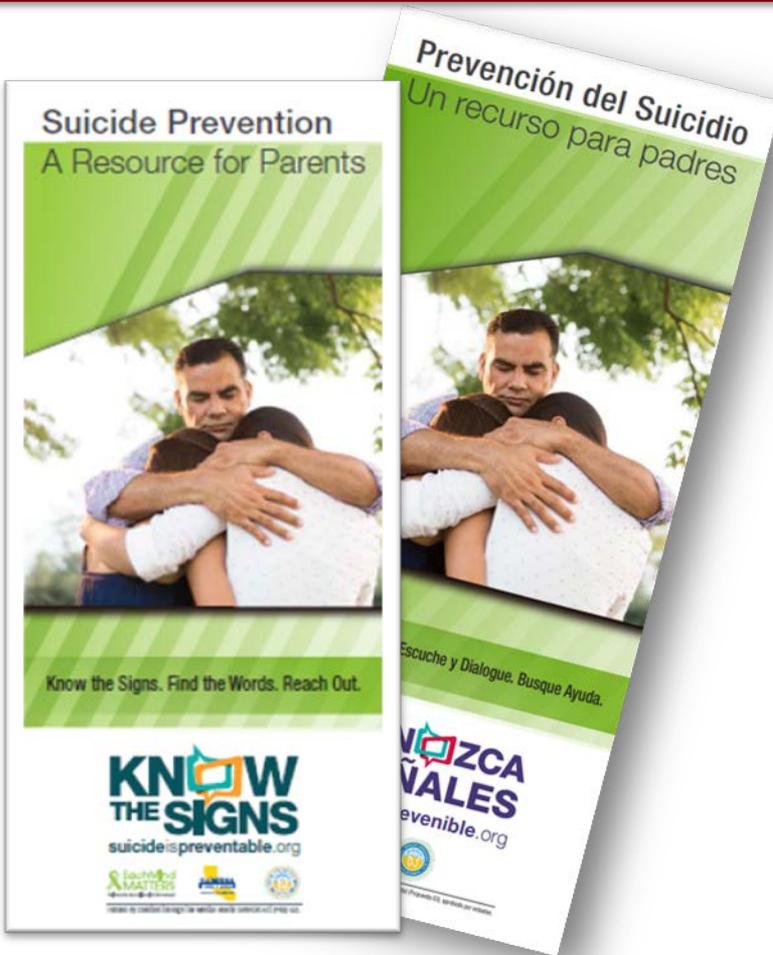
- The monthly prompt for September is: **You Are Not Alone**, which encourages students to create projects promoting crisis resources to their peers in a creative way.

MINI LESSON PLANS OF THE MONTH: Suicide Prevention

This month's featured lesson plans are "Suicide Prevention" and "Superheroes and Our Purpose". Students will learn about the warning signs for suicide and what to do if they recognize the warning signs in a friend. Download the [Suicide Prevention Lesson Plan](#) to use with grades 8-12 and the [Superheroes and our Purpose Lesson Plan](#) with grades 5-8.

Subscribe at: directingchange.org/educator-newsletter-sub/

Directing Change - Resources for Parents



What I Wish My Parents Knew toolkit includes:

- Step-by-step instructions for hosting event
- Promotional flier template (customizable)
- Event tracking sheets for presenters and exhibitors



For more information: directingchange.org/schools/ under "Parent Engagement"

Know the Signs Materials and Resources



[SuicidelsPreventable.org](https://www.suicidelspreventable.org)



[ElSuicidioEsPrevenible.org](https://www.elsuicidioespreventable.org)



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THANK YOU!

QUESTION & ANSWER TIME IN A MOMENT

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOUR FUTURE REFERENCE

- Stan Collins: Stan@SuicidesPreventable.org
- Directing Change website: www.DirectingChangeCA.org
- Dr. Pamela Morris: Pamela.Morris@NYU.edu
- Fr. Chris Alar: frjoseph@marian.org
- Sue DiSisto: Susan.DiSisto@archny.org



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QUESTION & ANSWER TIME



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PRESENTER BIOS



Fr. Chris Alar, MIC

Father Chris Alar, MIC, is a priest with the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception. Father Chris wrote and produced the popular "Divine Mercy 101" and "Explaining the Faith" DVD series and is the author of the bestselling book, *After Suicide: There's Hope for Them and for You*. He is an internationally known speaker and a regular host and guest on EWTN. He also hosts the online "Divine Mercy Matters" series at DivineMercyMatters.org. He currently serves as "Fr. Joseph, MIC" the director of the Association of Marian Helpers, and is the head of Marian Press, located in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, home of the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy.



Stan Collins

Stan Collins has worked in the field of suicide prevention for nearly 20 years. Stan is a member of the American Association of Suicidology's Communication team, and in this role he supports local agencies in their communications and media relations related to suicide. In addition, he is specialized in suicide prevention strategies for youth and in law enforcement and primary care settings. Since 2016 he has been supporting California school districts with AB 2246 policy planning and as well as postvention planning and crisis support after a suicide loss or attempt. Stan is the co-founder of the Directing Change Program and Film Contest.



Pamela Morris, Ph.D.

Dr. Pamela Morris is a Professor of Applied Psychology at the NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development. With two-decades' experience in early education research, Morris brings her research training and perspective as a suicide loss survivor (having lost her 17-year-old daughter to suicide in 2019) to a developmentally-informed, population-based approach to youth suicide prevention. Her ideas have been highlighted in a 2021 New York Times Op-Ed. She received a B.A. from Columbia University and a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from Cornell University.