

TOPIC

Suicide Prevention

AUDIENCE

Temple University Students

TIME NEEDED

60 minutes

HEALTHY PEOPLE 2030 OBJECTIVES

- Reduce the suicide rate — MHMD-01
- Reduce suicide attempts by adolescents - MHMD 02
- Increase the proportion of adults with depression who get treatment - MHMD 05

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the completion of the program,

1. At the completion of this lesson, at least 75% of participants will be able to list at least two possible warning signs of suicide among their peers on a post test.
2. At the completion of this lesson, at least 75% of participants will be able to indicate on a post test that they believe no one should feel ashamed to get help for having suicidal thoughts.
3. At the completion of this lesson, at least 80% of the participants will be able to identify a trusted resource that they can turn to for help on a post test.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- WIFI
- Computer (students should bring/use phones)
- PowerPoint presentation
- White board
- White board markers
- Index cards
- YouTube Access
- Appendix A (Post Assessment: Suicide Prevention answer key)
- Appendix B (Case Study Worksheets)
- Appendix C (5 pieces of paper with an emoji and word on each one)

- Appendix D (Case study answer sheets for instructors only)

PREPARATION

Prior to the session, hang one emotion emoji in five different areas of the classroom. Load the PowerPoint presentation on the computer. Have the YouTube video loaded and ready to play. Also have menti open and ready for class discussion during class presentation.

PROCEDURE

Introduction (7 minutes)

PowerPoint Slides 1-3

1. Begin with introducing yourself to the audience and state today you will be teaching about suicide prevention. Also say that you will be discussing the purpose of your presentation on suicide prevention. Let students know that if they feel uncomfortable or need a moment to themselves they may step out of the room.
 - a. Discuss ground rules:
 - Listen with an open mind
 - One person speaks at a time
 - Be considerate of each other's feelings
 - Avoid insulting other students
 - Try not to stereotype
 - Honor confidentiality
2. Go over the objectives for the lesson
 - a. Say “ *By the end of this presentation, you will be able to list two warning signs of suicide, you will be able to list at least one trusted resource you can turn to for support and you will recognize that no one should be ashamed to ask for help* ”
3. Launch a menti poll

- a. Say “*now it’s time for a poll to see what you know about why suicide prevention is important.*” Give students the link to the poll. Start the Menti poll and ask the students to choose true or false to the statement that pops on their cell phone or computer.
 - *Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among college students* *True*
 - *1 in 3 college students have a mental health condition* *True*
 - *Once a person is intent on suicide, there is no way of stopping them* *False*
4. After each question, briefly state the correct answer. For the last statement, discuss why there is still time to intervene and what should be done to stop the suicide attempt. Keep the discussion light. Exit out of the poll and transition into Activity 1.

Activity 1: Definition and Mental Health Overview (10 minutes)

PowerPoint Slides 4-5

1. Discuss the definition of suicide prevention (slide 4)
 - Definition: Activities implemented and actions taken before a suicide occurs that are designed to reduce the risk of suicide.
2. Brainstorm ways to take care of mental health by asking students to raise their hands to answer the question “*How do you take care of your mental health?*”
 - a. Allow a few students to answer
 - b. Write their answer on the whiteboard
3. Move to slide 6 with the 5 types of self-care. Explain the different types and give examples.
 - a. Physical (exercise, getting enough sleep)
 - b. Emotional (feel okay with saying no, take time to do activities you enjoy)
 - c. Social (ask for help when you need it, spend time with family and friends)

- d. Environmental (take time off of social media, maintain a clean environment)
 - e. Spiritual (take walks in nature, reflect in a journal, meditation)
4. Ask the students “*What are some similarities you see between your responses and the self-care examples that were just given to you?*”
5. This will wrap up the definition and mental health overview.

Activity 2: Risk Factors & Warning Signs (10 minutes)

PowerPoint slide 7-9

1. Say to the students: “*Now let’s discuss the risk factors.*”
 - a. Risk factors are things that increase the likelihood that a person will begin to have suicidal thoughts.
2. Move to slide 7 and 8 with a list of different risk factors and give examples (slide 7)
 - a. Previous suicide attempt (tried to commit suicide in the past)
 - b. Mental illness (depression, anxiety and bipolar disorder, ptsd (from past abuse)
 - c. Feeling homesick (being in a new environment)
 - d. Social isolation (lack of person connections, staying in apartment or dorm room most of the time, feeling alienated and lonely)
 - e. Feeling hopeless and helpless (feeling unworthy)
 - f. Stress as a result of prejudice and discrimination (experiencing racism, discrimination for your sexual orientation)
 - g. Being afraid to ask for help (being ashamed/guilty of having suicidal thoughts)
 - h. Sexual assault and violence
 - i. Frequent drug and alcohol use
 - j. Knowing someone who died from suicide

3. Discuss how everyone experiences different hardships in life and that we are all at risk of having suicidal thoughts. Explain that no one should be ashamed for feeling suicidal or for needing help.
4. Move to slide 9, play the YouTube video for class: “*University Leads Statewide Task Force to Create Suicide*” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lpttb4p5XQ0>. This video will go over the different warning signs students noticed among their peers. Stop the video at 1:19.
5. After watching the video, *ask students what are some warning signs you noticed? Why are these signs important? Now knowing what warning signs are, what would you do if someone you knew was displaying warning signs?* (slide 9)
6. Allow a few students to answer the following questions and have a mini discussion. This should wrap up “risk factors and warning signs.”

Activity 3: Ways to Prevent Suicide (20 minutes)

PowerPoint Slides 9-11

1. Bring the student’s attention to the papers that are hung around the classroom with a different emoji on each paper and a word describing the emotion/feeling that the emoji represents, (happy, sad 😞, stressed, tired, worried). Reference Appendix C.
2. Ask students to reflect on how they are currently feeling and ask them to stand next to the emoji that best represents that feeling. Once all of the students have chosen an emoji to stand with, ask the following: “*what did you have to do during this activity?, why is it important to check in with ourselves and others about how we are doing?, how could you check up on your friends and peers from now on?*”
3. Have students return to their seats.

4. Say to the students “*For this next activity, you will be divided into groups and you’ll be given a case study to discuss.*” Break the students into four equal groups, by grouping students according to where they are sitting. Give each group of students a different worksheet with a different case study on each worksheet that presents a scenario. Reference Appendix B: Case Study Worksheets.
 - <http://www.pbs.org/inthemix/educators/lessons/depression2/>
 - a. Latosha’s Story
 - b. Haley’s Story
 - c. Ryan’s Story
 - d. Peter’s Story
5. Move to slide 10. Tell the students that they will have 5-8 minutes to read the scenarios and discuss these two questions: “*What are the warning signs that you notice?*” “*What could you do to prevent the person in the case study from committing suicide?*”
6. Give the students 5-8 minutes to read the scenario and discuss the questions.
7. Bring the student’s attention back to the presentation. For each group, ask them to share what they discussed as a group.
8. Come back to the YouTube video on slide 9: “*University Leads Statewide Task Force to Create Suicide Prevention* created by <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lptb4p5XQ0>. Play from 1:20 to the end. The rest of the video will elaborate on when to help and ways to choose help.
9. Move to slide 11 and discuss resources that are available on Temple University’s campus.
 - a. Tuttle man Counseling Services
 - b. Wellness Resource Center

10. This should wrap up “Ways to Prevent Suicide”

Activity 4: Post Assessment (8 minutes)

PowerPoint Slide 12

1. Tell students that they will be completing a post-test to answer a few questions about what they learned from the presentation.
2. Hand out the post-test to each student. Reference Appendix A: Suicide Prevention.
3. Give each student 5 minutes to fill out the post-test.
4. Collect the post-test.
5. Go over the answers with the students and provide the correct answers.

Conclusion (5 minutes)

PowerPoint Slides 13-14

1. Restate the importance of mental health and suicide prevention.
2. Move to slide 13 to give the students different resources that are available:
 - a. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline- 1800-273-8255
 - b. Crisis Intervention Hotline- 215-686-4420
 - c. Suicide Prevention Resources Center <https://www.sprc.org/>
 - d. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
 - e. Tuttleman Counseling Services
 - f. Wellness Resource Center
3. Ask students if they have any questions (slide 14)
4. Conclude the presentation.

Lesson Extension/Plan B (optional)

- **Mental health stigma activity/discussion**

1. Grab the index cards. Say to the students *“for this next activity, you will be given an index card with a suicide myth on it and you will have to find the student who has the same suicide myth on their index card. This student will be your partner for this activity.”*
2. Do a quick headcount of the number of students in the room. All of the index cards may not be needed if there are less than thirty students.

Myths on the index cards include:

- It’s dangerous to ask someone if they are suicidal
- Someone who has their life together (has a job, family and friends) is not at risk of suicide
- People who die by suicide are selfish
- There is typically a singular cause (bullying, a break up, rejection) that leads to someone ending their life
- All people who experience suicidal thoughts have been admitted to a psychiatric hospital
- All people who have thoughts of suicide will act on them eventually
- People take their own life “out of the blue”
- Someone who made an attempt and recovered will not be suicidal again
- Everyone who experiences suicidal thoughts has depression
- People who threaten suicide are just seeking attention
- Only certain types of people become suicidal
- Talking about suicide or asking someone if they feel suicidal will encourage suicide attempts

- The only effective intervention for suicide comes from professional psychotherapists with extensive experience in the area
 - People who attempt suicide are of weak character
 - People who consider suicide are crazy
3. Pass out one index card to each student. Once every student has an index card and they find their partner, have them sit with their partner.
 4. Say to the students “*Read over the myth on the index cards, as well as the truth written on the back of the card. Spend 5 minutes discussing the question that is written on the board. How does the suicide myth contribute to the stigma around mental health in our society?*”
 - a. Give the students 5 minutes to discuss.
 - b. Ask each group to read the myth on their index card aloud.
 - c. After a few groups share, ask the entire class the following questions: *What was the societal issue that was addressed during this activity?*” “*Which of the suicide myths changed your perspective about suicide?*” “*What information can you share with others about suicide after this activity?*”

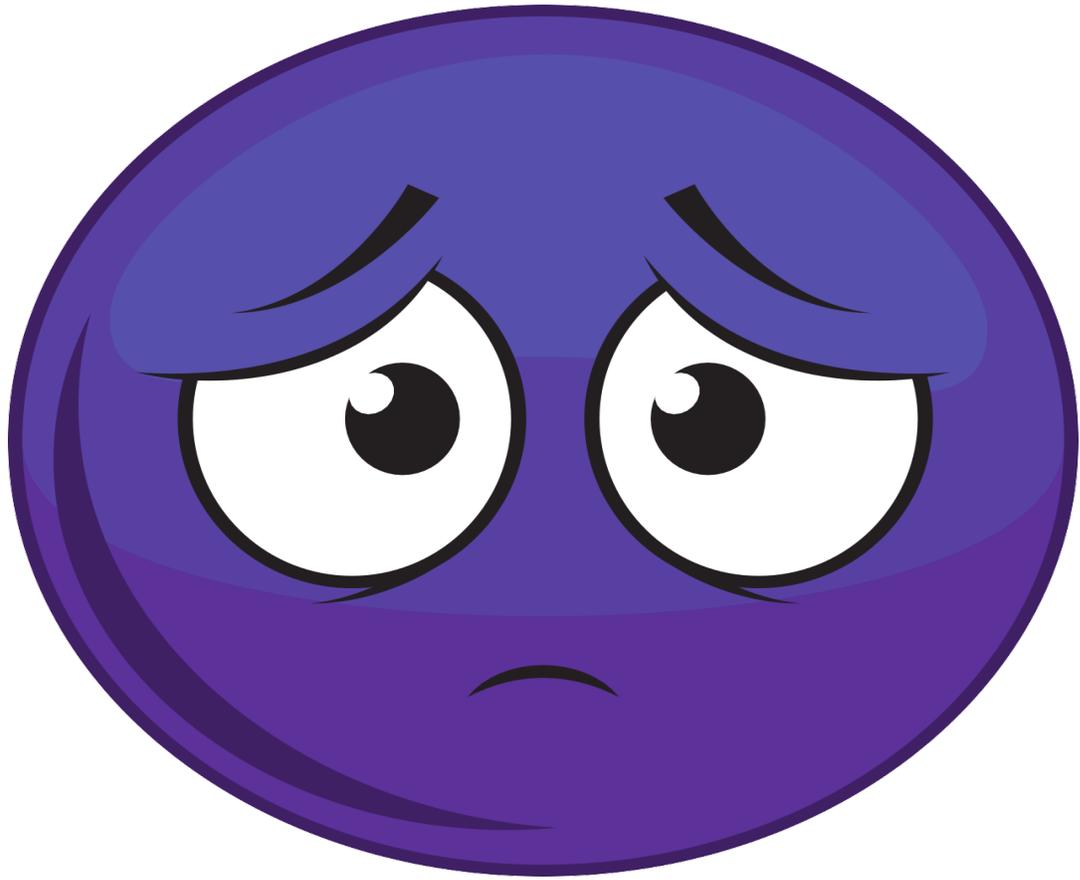
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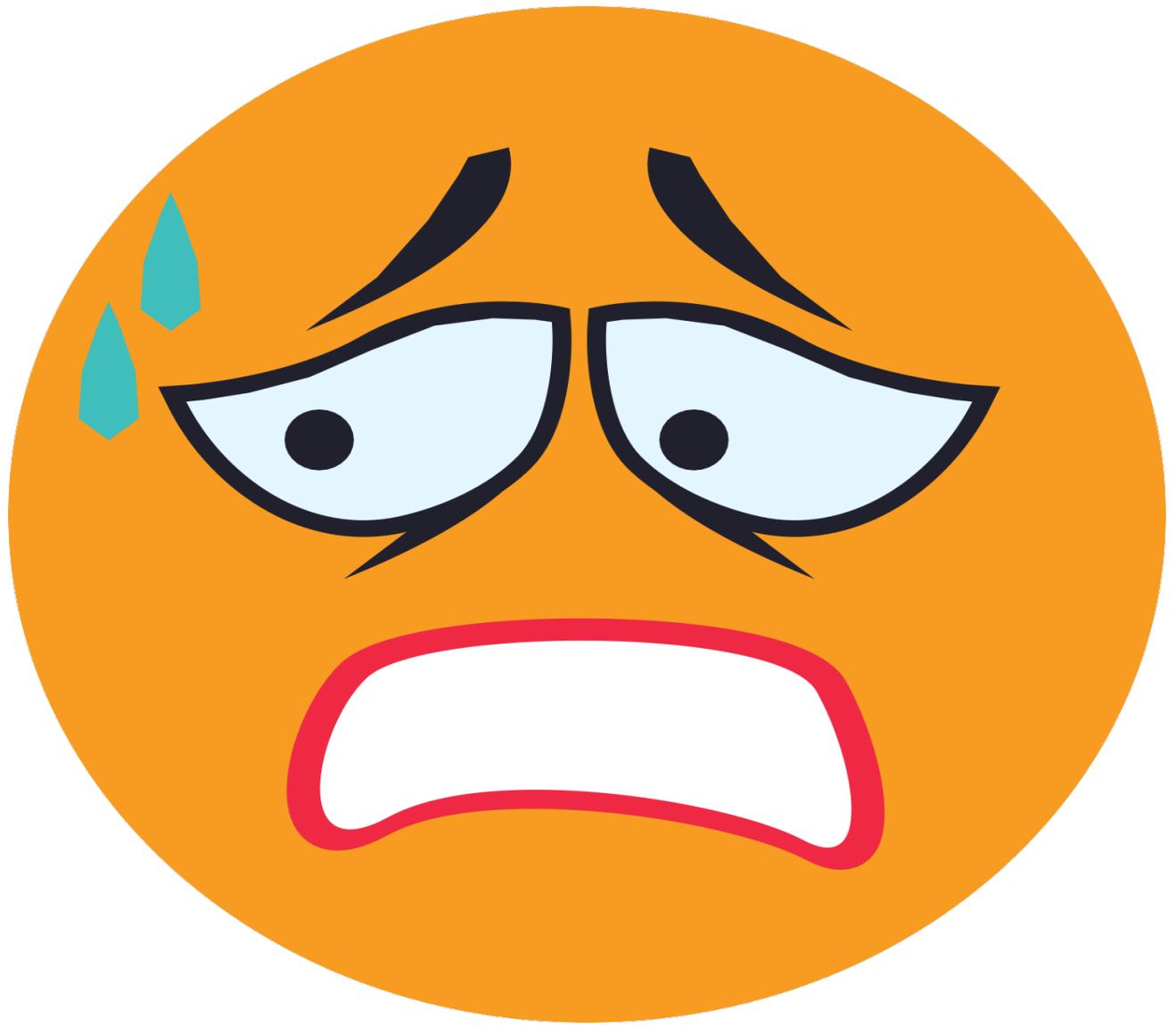
Appendix C. Emojis



HAPPY
HAPPY



SAD



STRESSED



T **I** **R** **E** **D**



WORRIED

Appendix A. Post Assessment Answer Key

1. Some possible warning signs the students could write include:

- pulling away and not hanging out anymore
- always looking like they're crying
- giving away personal belongings like the guy who gave away his grandfather's watch in the video
- hardly eating
- always sleeping
- stop doing the things they love
- started drinking everyday (increase in alcohol use)
- selling their stuff
- posting unusual messages on social media, like "soon this will all be over"
- when someone says they wish they could go to sleep and not wake up
- when someone says they are tired of being lonely
- feeling hopeless about pulling grades up
- someone saying they wish they could disappear so they wouldn't be a burden
- someone saying "you won't have to worry about me next semester"

2. Trusted resources on campus include:

- Tuttleman Counseling Services
- Wellness Resource Center

3. We would hope after our lesson that the students would answer "no" for this question.

- however everyone has their own beliefs.

Appendix B. Case Studies

Case Study: Latosha

WHAT'S GOING ON? - LATOSHA'S STORY

Latosha was a 15-year-old girl who lived in the Midwest.

Her parents had recently divorced, which forced her to move to a new community of 3,000 people.

She hated the small town atmosphere, and didn't make any new friends. Her sister Tiffany, her 'only' friend, was going away to college in the fall, which made her feel even worse.

Latosha was having trouble sleeping, her grades were falling, and she was crying almost every day.

She tried to tell her dad and new stepmom that she was feeling terrible, but they said that things would get better if she would just give it some time. She gave her sister her birthstone ring and said she wouldn't need it anymore.

Case Study: Haley

WHAT'S GOING ON? - HALEY'S STORY

Haley was sixteen and had been dealing with depression since she was 12 years old. She never felt 'quite right' in middle school, feeling like she didn't fit in. She started using alcohol on a regular basis, and then marijuana. Most of her old friends didn't do this, so she started hanging around with a different group of teenagers. She put herself at risk by having unprotected sex with friends in the group. Since school didn't seem important anymore, she started skipping classes. She was sinking lower and lower, and thinking that it was not going to get any better. She told her mom that she accidentally threw away her prescription anti-depressant drugs, and needed a new bottle. Her mom

got the bottle refilled. She told her friends that "life wasn't worth living," and said she was going to run away the next weekend.

Case Study: Ryan

WHAT'S GOING ON? - RYAN'S STORY

Ryan was a 17-year-old who seemed to "have it all." He was popular at school, had lots of friends, and his grades were always straight "A's". He was a member of the soccer and golf teams, and president of a school club. He strived to be the very best that he could, since his father had died and he wanted to be a good example for his younger siblings. He filled out many college applications, but because of a poor SAT score, just couldn't seem to get admitted to the top colleges. His family thought that he should study harder and retake the test. Ryan started to feel very anxious, sad, and desperate. He told his brother and sisters that "it just wasn't worth it anymore."

Case Study: Peter

WHAT'S GOING ON? - PETER'S STORY

Peter, 16 years old, never did very well at school. In fact, he was barely passing. But he was a very talented musician, and wrote many songs about death and the life hereafter. He changed his appearance, colored his hair, and experimented a little with drugs. During his 9th grade year, he realized that his feelings about his friends were different. He felt an attraction to his male friends, but never addressed the feelings. He knew that they wouldn't understand, and the worst thing in the world would be to be called a "fag." He started to use heavier drugs to help him handle the feelings. He bought a gun from one of his new friends. He began writing a song called, "I Found The Way."

Appendix D. Case Study Answers

WHAT'S GOING ON? - LATOSHA'S STORY - ANSWERS

At-Risk Group:

- **Teen suffering from depression**
- **Teen who is failing in school**

Warning Signs:

- **Recent losses: moving and sister leaving**
- **Gives away prized possession (ring)**
- **Can't sleep, crying a lot**

Verbal Warning:

- **"I won't need this ring anymore"**

WHAT'S GOING ON? - HALEY'S STORY - ANSWERS

At-Risk Group:

- **Teen suffering from depression**
- **Teen with little self-esteem (risky sexual behavior)**
- **Teen who abuses drugs**

Warning Signs:

- **Changes in chemical use and school behavior**
- **Gathering of weapons (pills)**

Verbal Warning:

- **"Life isn't worth living."**

WHAT'S GOING ON? - RYAN'S STORY - ANSWERS

At-Risk Group:

- **Perfectionist**

Warning Signs:

- **Recent loss (father)**
- **Depression (sad, anxious, desperate)**
- **Change in behavior (recklessness)**
- **Traumatic event**

Verbal Warning:

- **"It just isn't worth it."**

WHAT'S GOING ON? - PETER'S STORY - ANSWERS

At-Risk Group:

- **Teen who fails in school**
- **Teen struggling with sexual orientation**

Warning Signs:

- **Change in appearance**
- **Change in chemical use**
- **Preoccupation with death**
- **Gathering of weapons**