



# A Virtual Town Hall on Youth Suicide

BUILDING COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND PREVENTION STRATEGIES

# Purpose

*BUILDING A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF SUICIDE THROUGH A MOTHERS EYE, CREATING AWARENESS ON HOW SUICIDE IMPACTS THE U.S., FLORIDA AND FLAGLER COUNTY.*

*WE WILL COVER THE WARNING SIGNS AND RECOMMENDED PREVENTION STRATEGIES SURROUNDING YOUTH SUICIDE.*

*THE PRESENTATION WILL END WITH A LIST OF LOCAL AND STATE RESOURCES THAT MAY HELP FAMILIES DEALING WITH SUICIDE AND YOUTH BATTLING DEPRESSION.*

*ALL INFORMATION SHARED IS BASED ON RESEARCH FROM NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.*

*\*CAUTION: COLLEEN CONKLIN AND BARBARA COXWELL ARE NOT LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS. WE ARE MOMS TRYING TO RAISE AWARENESS. BARBARA IS A SURVIVOR. SHE WORKS HARD EVERYDAY TO SURVIVE THE LOSS OF HER SON DALTON COXWELL.*



U.S.  
Florida  
Flagler Stats

# National Stats: *Why Suicide Prevention is Important*

- SECOND LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH OVERALL FOR TEENS IN THE USA.
- 2,134 CHILDREN AND TEENS DIED BY SUICIDE IN 2013. (CDC, WISQARS, 2015)
- FOR EVERY SUICIDE DEATH, THERE ARE BETWEEN 50-200 ATTEMPTS  
116,211 SELF-INFLICTED INJURIES FOR TEENS IN 2013. (CPSC, NEISS, 2015)
- 18% HS STUDENTS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED SUICIDE, 13% MADE A PLAN, 8% ATTEMPTED IN 2013. (CDC, YRBSS, 2015)
- EVERY **30 SECONDS** SOMEONE IN THE U.S. **ATTEMPTS** SUICIDE; EVERY **12.3 MINUTES** SOMEONE IN THE U.S. **DIES** BY SUICIDE. EACH PERSON WHO DIES BY SUICIDE LEAVES BEHIND AN AVERAGE OF **SIX LOVED ONES OR SURVIVORS** (ESTIMATE) [2014]. (FSPC, 2014)

# Florida Stats

- In 2014, there were 2,961 reported suicide deaths in Florida. (FSPC, 2014)
- **10th** leading cause of death of Floridians. (FSPC, 2014)
- Florida has the **3rd highest number** of suicides in the Nation and **ranks #24** highest rate of all the states. (FSPC, 2014)
- Florida has more than **two times** the number of **suicides** than **homicides**. (FSPC, 2014)

# Flagler County Stats: Community wide issue

- ▶ 2014

- ▶ 20 Flagler County community members took their life in 2014

- ▶ In the following age categories:

- ▶ 15-19: 1

- ▶ 20-24: 0

- ▶ 25-34: 2

- ▶ 35-44: 1

- ▶ 45-54: 6

- ▶ 55-64: 4

- ▶ 65-74: 4

- ▶ 75+: 2

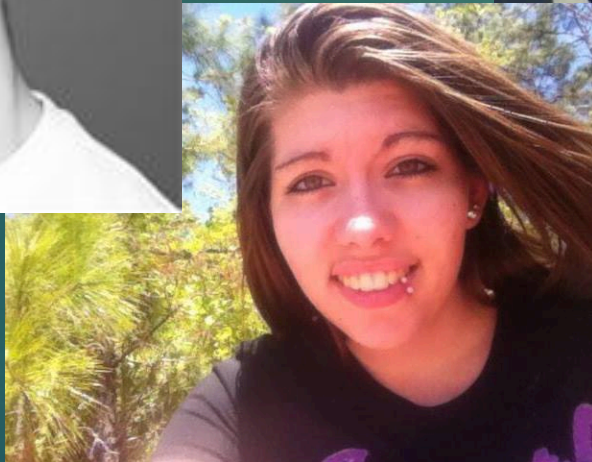
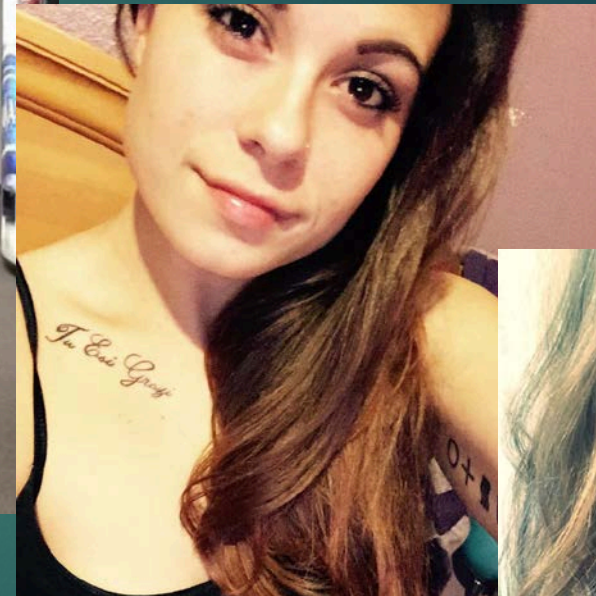
# The FACE of Youth Suicide in Flagler County 13-16

Dalton Coxwell, 15

Nicholas Catalfano, 20



Lindsey Brockhaus, 20



Alex Rodriguez, 18



Cora Engel, 18

*\* we've removed our 6<sup>th</sup> victim of suicide due to his age being outside the define youth age category of 10-24. Regardless, his loss is tragic and our hearts go out to his family and friends.*

# Defining the Problem

## **ATTEMPTED SUICIDE**

*is a potentially self-injurious act  
Completed with at least some intent  
to die as a result of the act*

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## **SUICIDE**

*is an attempt to solve a problem  
of intense emotional pain  
with impaired problem-solving skills*



# Characteristics of Suicide

1. A belief that suicide is THE ONLY solution to the problem they face
2. They are in crisis. Crisis thinking colors problem solving
3. Person is often ambivalent
4. Suicidal solution has an irrational component
5. Suicide is a form of communication

# Risk Factors / Warning Signs

*Red - Warning Signs*

*Yellow - Risk Factors*

*Green - Protective  
Factors*



# Understanding warning signs

# Warning Signs

*Teens describe common signs that a teen is considering suicide and provide encouragement for communicating directly and immediately for support and safety. It also includes suggestions for what to say to a teen who may be at risk for suicide and ways to keep them safe. Things can get better.*

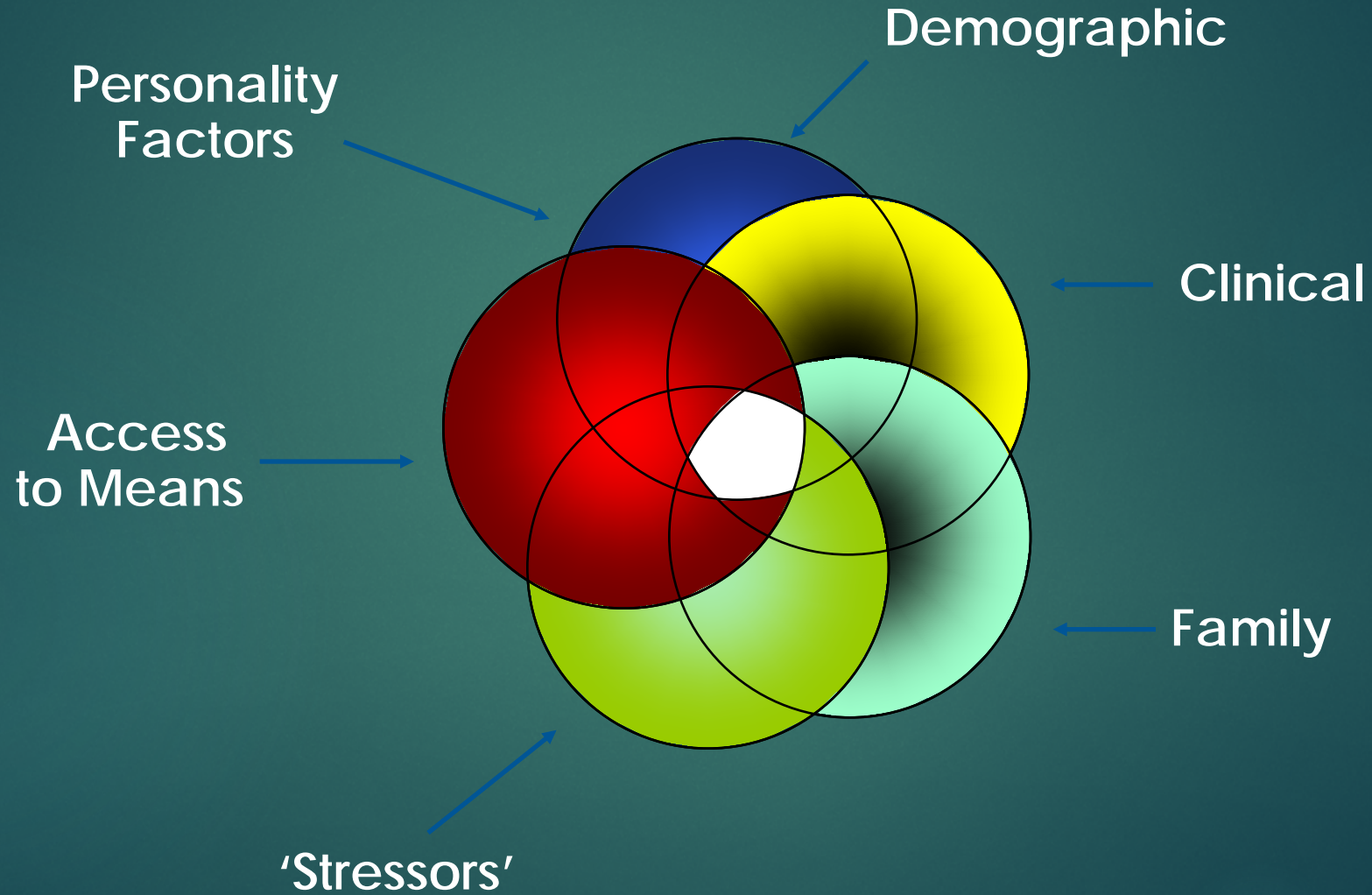
*Video developed by the Mayo Clinic:*

▶ [A Teens Perspective](#)



# Reflecting on Risk Factors for Youth Suicide

# Risk Factors for Youth Suicide



# Risk Factors

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## **DEMOGRAPHIC**

- ▶ Age
- ▶ Sex
- ▶ Gender Identity
- ▶ Race

## **CLINICAL**

- ▶ Psychiatric diagnosis
- ▶ Drug / alcohol use
- ▶ Previous attempt

## **FAMILY**

- ▶ *History of suicide*

## **EXPOSURE**

- ▶ *To suicide (personally or in media)*
- ▶ *Death of peer under any circumstance*

## **RECENT, SEVERE STRESSORS**

- ▶ *Loss*
- ▶ *Trouble*
- ▶ *Change – transition*



# Warning Signs

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*F*eelings

*A*ctions

*C*hanges

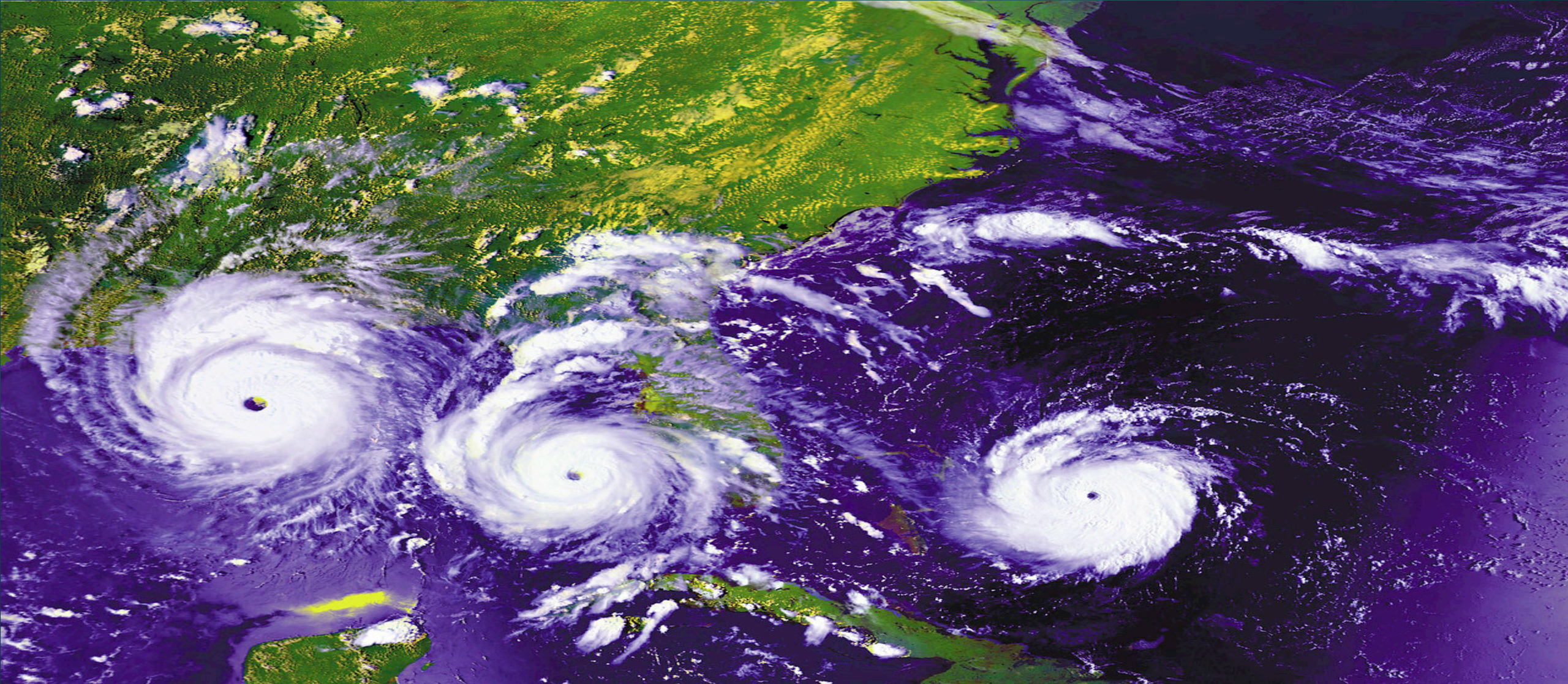
*T*hreats

*S*ituations



# THE PERFECT STORM

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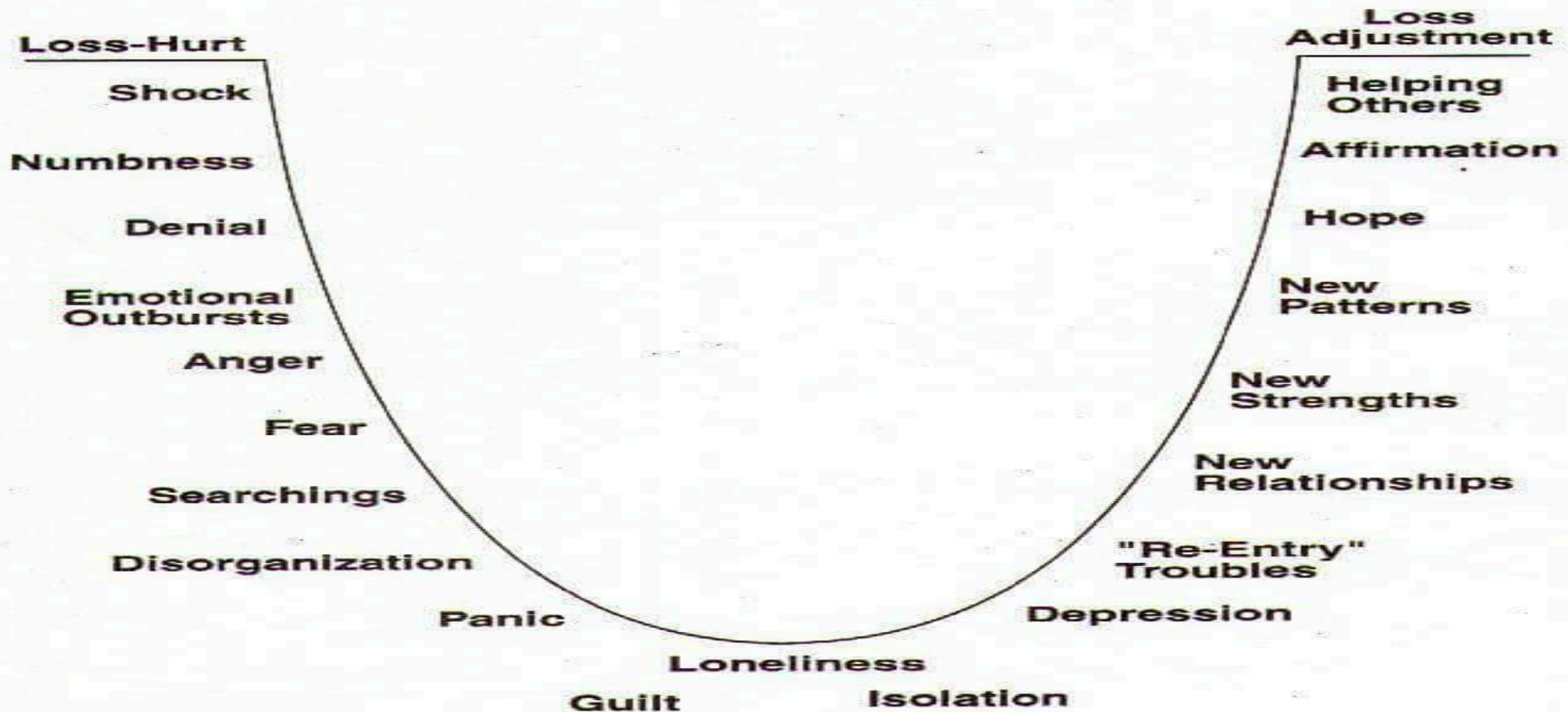
# The aftermath . . .

## A mother's story.



Teenager suicide is a devastating trauma for the surviving family and the lack of sustainable explanations for the suicide is a predominant issue in the grief process. The prolonged social and psychological isolation of the families in grief should be challenged.

## STAGES OF GRIEF



Taking Action

# Building Protective Factors

# Protective Factors: Young people need

- ▶ Contact with a caring adult – list out of 3 to 5 adults
- ▶ Sense of connection or participation within school or community
- ▶ Positive self-esteem and coping skills
- ▶ Access to and care for mental / physical / substance disorders



# Fostering Protective Factors

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- ▶ Share that it is okay to ask for help
- ▶ Acknowledge and allow for the discussion of traumatic events like suicide
- ▶ Help identify trusted adults – remember list them out
- ▶ Encourage participation in school & community activities
- ▶ Acknowledge efforts made by your child
- ▶ *Be a good listener, as often as you can*



# Taking ACTION: Reaching OUT

Reach out to prevent teen suicide. *This positive music video, created by Mayo Clinic, encourages troubled teens to communicate with an adult for help and support. It also depicts how teens can talk to adults in a variety of situations. Things can get better.*

▶ [REACHING OUT](#)





A quick review

FACTS About Suicide

## Facts around suicide

Are people who talk about or attempt suicide just trying to get attention?

# NO

- ▶ People who talk about or attempt suicide need immediate attention. They are trying to call attention to their extreme emotional pain. Many believe that we should ignore these "cries for help" and "attention-seeking behaviors" because the attention will only encourage the behaviors. Suicidal individuals are trying to get attention the same way people shout if they are drowning, or are injured.

Will talking about suicide give people the idea to do it? Could we do more harm than good?

# NO

- ▶ Talking about suicide does not cause suicide to occur. In fact, it can be an excellent prevention tool. People who are not suicidal reject the idea, while people who may be thinking about it usually welcome the chance to talk about it. Often they are relieved because they feel that someone else recognizes their pain.
- ▶ Talking breaks the secrecy that surrounds suicidal behavior, and lets people know that help is available. By not talking about suicide, we increase the isolation and despair of individuals thinking about it.

Doesn't suicide happen mostly in troubled individuals who come from difficult family situations?

# NO

- ▶ It is really important to understand that suicidal behavior occurs in all socioeconomic groups. People of all ages, races, faiths, and cultures die by suicide, as do individuals from all walks of life and all income levels.
- ▶ Popular, well-connected people who seem to have everything going for them and those who are less well off both die by suicide. Suicidal youth come from all kinds of families, rich and poor, happy and sad, two-parent and single-parent.
- ▶ To suggest that suicidal youth come only from "bad," "sick," or "neglectful" families is like saying that only these kids get cancer. Historically, our culture has blamed the families of people who die by suicide and this behavior must stop. Suicide can happen in any family. We all must work together to identify and prevent suicidal behavior.

Don't most suicides  
happen without any  
warning signs?



# NO

- ▶ Nine out of ten adolescents who die by suicide give clues to others **before** their suicide attempt.
  - ▶ Warning signs for adolescent suicide include depressed mood, substance abuse, loss of interest in once pleasurable activities, decreased activity levels, decreased attention, distractability, isolation, withdrawing from others, sleep changes, appetite changes, morbid ideation, offering verbal cues (i.e., "I wish I were dead"), offering written cues (i.e., notes, poems), and giving possessions away.
- ▶ One study has shown that as much as 86% of parents were unaware of their child's suicidal behavior. Another study found that parents were unaware of their children's depressive symptoms, as well as their alcohol use, both risk factors for youth suicidal behavior.
- ▶ There are almost always warning signs, but unless we know what they are, they can be very difficult to recognize. That is why suicide prevention education is so important.

Is suicide preventable?

# YES

Suicide may often be prevented. Many people believe that if someone is suicidal, there is nothing that anyone can do to stop them from killing themselves.

Some also believe that those who don't kill themselves on the first attempt will keep trying until they die.

The truth is that most young people face a suicidal crisis only once in a lifetime. **A suicidal crisis is usually very brief, lasting from a few hours to a few days.** With intervention and help, future attempts may be prevented.



# Resources

MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE



# Technology to help

[FACEBOOK APP HOPES TO SAVE LIVES](#)

# Community Resources: SAMH Resource Directory 2015

<p>Break the Cycle** 4721 E. Moody Bv Suite 107 Bunnell, FL 32110</p>	<p>Janet Johnson, CEO (386) 437-0026 <a href="mailto:breakthecycle12@gmail.com">breakthecycle12@gmail.com</a> Robert Mogar Tuesday &amp; Friday hrs. (386) 333-9622 <a href="mailto:breakthecycle12robert@gmail.com">breakthecycle12robert@gmail.com</a></p>	<p>Self pay; most insurances taken <b>Substances abuse</b> evaluation, Outpatient treatment, onsite drug/alcohol testing, Anger Management, Intensive Out Patient treatment</p>
<p>Dr. Imani Sankoffa, PhD** 381 SW Palm Coast Pkwy Palm Coast, FL 32137</p>	<p>(386) 214-4757</p>	<p>Substance abuse counseling.  Cash, Money Orders</p>
<p>Stewart Marchman Act** Outpatient Services 301 Justice Lane Bunnell, FL 32110</p>	<p>Denise Otero for Flagler Substance Abuse Programs at 386-254-1201</p>	<p>Adolescent Substance Abuse outpatient services, ages 13-18  Call for payment options.</p>
<p>Ygeia Medical Institutes** 145 Cypress Point Parkway Suite 105 Palm Coast, FL 32164  Hammock Wellness** 4440 N. Oceanshore Blvd. Suite 105 Palm Coast, FL 32137</p>	<p>John G. Symeonides, MD, FAAFP, CMD, (Medical Director) (386) 283-5654 <a href="mailto:ygeiapatients@gmail.com">ygeiapatients@gmail.com</a></p>	<p>Addiction Board Certified Physician providing outpatient assessments, evaluations, counseling and medical treatment. Random onsite drug and alcohol screens</p>
<p>Coastal Mental Health** 31 Lupi Court Suite 210 Palm Coast, FL 32137</p>	<p>(386) 675-4694 (800) 614-4124</p>	<p>Mental Health Treatment 4 &amp; up  Accepts Medicaid or Private Pay</p>
<p>Flagler Mental Health Center, PA** 2729 E. Moody Bv, Suite 103 Bunnell, FL 32110</p>	<p>(386) 313-1989 Please call to make an appt. or to ask about the numerous insurance plans we do accept.</p>	<p>Psychiatric Evaluations; Medication Management; Individual, Family, Group Counseling for all ages. Accommodating Self -Pay Rates and accepts many insurances such as full Medicaid, CMS, Healthy Kids, etc.</p>

# National Resources

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- ▶ [www.sptsusa.org](http://www.sptsusa.org)  
*Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide*
- ▶ [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)  
*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline*
- ▶ [www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org)  
*Suicide Prevention Resource Center*
- ▶ [www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org)  
*American Association of Suicidology*
- ▶ [www.thetrevorproject.org/](http://www.thetrevorproject.org/)  
*The Trevor Project*
- ▶ [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)  
*American Foundation for Suicide Prevention*

*Survivor resources, research, and awareness*



# Flagler County School Resources

- ▶ School Counselors and psychologists
  - ▶ District: Dr. Tracy Umpenhour (386) 437-7526
  - ▶ Each School has a student counselor on hand
  - ▶ MHS:
    - ▶ Sorrell Mercoglan (Mental Health Counselor)
    - ▶ Tayika Miller (School Psychologist)
  - ▶ FPC:
    - ▶ Shoshana Mercardo (School Psychologist)
  - ▶ Stewart Marchman (800) 539-4228
  - ▶ Halifax Behavioral Services





# GREAT Advice out there for teens

BY JACI CENTOFANTI

# Words of wisdom

- ▶ Life gets better.
- ▶ Life also hurts.
- ▶ Stop trusting everything you see on social media.
- ▶ You matter.
- ▶ And most importantly: talk to someone.
- ▶ Oh, and you're beautiful.

ALWAYS REMEMBER

YOU ARE **BRAVER**

THAN YOU BELIEVE

**STRONGER**

THAN YOU SEEM

**SMARTER**

THAN YOU THINK

**& TWICE AS**

**BEAUTIFUL**

AS YOU'D EVER

**IMAGINED**

