



Development of a Suicide Prevention Program for Youth in the Community



- Collaboration between Boys and Girls Clubs, Nationwide Children's Hospital and AAS
- Goal to create gold standard suicide prevention model for out-of-school space
- Evaluated existing models with a focus on youth needs, club resources, effectiveness, and scalability
- Workgroup has been meeting regularly for past 6 months to refine model

Effective Suicide Prevention Should:

- **Decrease** youth risk by increasing knowledge about depression and suicide warning signs
- **Reduce** stigma: mental illness, like physical illness, requires timely treatment
- **Encourage** help-seeking for oneself or to obtain support for a friend
- **Engage** parents and club staff as partners in prevention through education and action steps

SOS Teaches Students to:

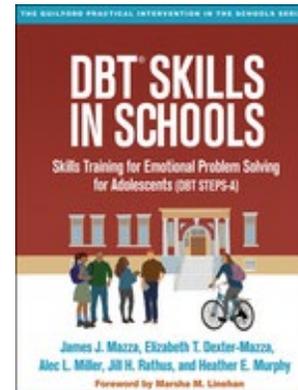
1. Know the symptoms of depression including changes in thinking, feeling, and behavior
2. Understand that suicide is usually a symptom of a mental health condition and is to be responded to quickly and thoughtfully
3. Take steps to help a friend in need
4. Reach out to a trusted adult if signs of depression or suicide are present

Evaluation of a School-Based Model

- In 3 separate randomized controlled studies, SOS Program has shown a reduction in self-reported suicide attempts by 40%-64%
- A recent replication study published in 2016 found SOS to be associated with:
 - Increased knowledge and adaptive attitudes about depression and suicide
 - 64% fewer suicide attempts among intervention youths relative to untreated controls
 - decrease in suicide planning for “high risk participants” with a lifetime history of suicide attempt (Schilling et al., 2016)

An Upstream Skills Model

- Based on a program called DBT STEPS A: Skills Training for Emotional Problem Solving in Adolescence
(Mazza et al., 2016)
- Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) skills help youth manage intense distress and reduce suicidal behavior
- Modified strategies that help youth learn basic social and emotional life skills
- Program is used to help youth to:
 - Increase mindfulness
 - Identify distress and stay safe in a crisis
 - Regulate intense emotions
 - Strengthen relationships and communicate needs



Gatekeeper Training

- Staff and administrators will learn about:
 - current statistics and trends in youth suicide
 - myths and misconceptions
 - how to identify risk factors & warning signs of suicide
 - protective factors and how to enhance these for youth
 - setting appropriate boundaries to ensure youth safety and personal wellness
 - maintaining a trauma-informed approach
 - steps for helping a youth access support, manage distress, and increase safety during a crisis
 - role-plays to increase skill and comfort when engaging at-risk youth

Facilitator Training

- Support select adult allies with the following tasks for implementation:
 - Increasing knowledge and comfort in discussing youth suicide in accordance with safe messaging guidelines
 - Delivering suicide prevention program modules with fidelity
 - Build skills to recognize warning signs of suicide in youth
 - Learn how to respond when concerned or during a crisis
 - Linking youth to resources following engagement
 - Maintaining self-care and boundaries

Program Modules

- Youth training will occur for 1 week for 120 min/day (shorter duration for younger ages)
 - 90 minutes of activities and content
 - Additional 30 minutes for skills practice and debriefing
- Core elements include:
 - Module 1: Youth Awareness and Peer Learning
 - Module 2 (DBT STEPS A): Core Mindfulness
 - Module 3 (DBT STEPS A): Emotion Regulation
 - Module 4 (DBT STEPS A): Interpersonal Effectiveness
 - Module 5: Managing Crisis / Universal Safety Planning

Module 1: Awareness & Peer Learning

- Youth will gain an understanding of the following:
 - suicide risk factors, protective factors, and warning signs
 - critical skills to identify when they or a friend are in need of support
 - how to engage support from trusted adults to enhance safety
 - “S3” – See, Say, Support
- Discussion of myths about depression and suicide
- Roleplay scenarios to identify risk factors and respond to warning signs of suicide using “S3” approach
- Perspectives from AAS Youth Advisory Board with Q&A
 - teens with lived experience of suicidal thoughts and/or behaviors
 - survivor of suicide loss in her family,
 - an individual who benefitted from suicide prevention programming

Module 2: Core Mindfulness

- Goal: introduce mindfulness skills that can serve to increase ability of youth to pay attention “in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment nonjudgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn, 1994)
- Content
 1. Define mindfulness and describe benefits
 2. Differentiate “emotional mind,” “reasonable mind,” and “wise mind”
 3. Observe and describe reactions in the present without judgement
 4. Learn to be effective in all situations without focusing on how things “should” be

Module 3: Emotion Regulation

- Goal: Youth will identify and manage distressing emotions. Youth will develop improved emotion vocabulary and learn to identify intensity of emotions. They will learn strategies to evaluate whether their reactions are helping vs harmful.
- Content
 1. Understand the function and goals of emotions
 2. Review and observe basic emotions
 3. Learn to slow down and decide if emotions fit situation
 4. Apply “opposite action” to change negative mood states
 5. Learn to “ride the wave” of emotions

Module 4: Interpersonal Effectiveness

- Goal: Youth taught to communicate effectively, understand goals in relationships, ask for help, cope with conflict, be assertive, & maintain self-respect.
- Content
 1. DEARMAN skill used to get or keep a good relationship
 2. GIVE skill used to get or keep a good relationship
 3. FAST skill used to keep or improve liking for self
- All skills will have videos, roleplays, skits, and feedback opportunities

Module 5: Managing a Crisis and Universal Coping Plan

- Goal: Youth will understand their own response to a crisis and how to increase personal safety through coping, connection, means safety and crisis resources
- Content
 1. What is a “crisis” and how can we respond?
 2. Managing “fight or flight” response
 - Survival skills help us tolerate pain (accept/distract)
 - TIP skills focus on how body responds to intense emotion
 - Temperature
 - Intense exercise
 - Paced breathing
 3. Each member will develop a coping plan in a way that is personal and creative