
Suicide Prevention

— Coping With Life's Challenges —

True or False?

1. Suicide happens without warning.
2. Only depressed kids attempt suicide.
3. You can help someone who is suicidal.
4. If someone tells me in secret that they are suicidal, I must keep the secret.
5. Talking about suicide makes suicidal thoughts worse.



1. False - most teens who attempt or die by suicide have communicated their distress or plans to die by suicide to at least one other person. Communications are not always direct so it's important to know the key warning signs.
2. False - While someone who is clinically depressed is at higher risk of attempting suicide, even feeling extremely "bummed out" for a short period of time can lead to impulsive suicide attempts.
3. True. Most people who are suicidal don't really want their lives to end. They just want their pain to end. The understanding, hope and support you can offer can be their most important lifeline.
4. Just no. Imagine you are playing soccer with your friends after school. One of your friends trips and breaks their leg but they are afraid of getting into trouble with mom and dad so they just want you to fix it. Can you fix their broken leg without the help of an adult or medical professional? Nope. Don't take on the stress of that secret! Never, ever keep your or someone else's suicidal thoughts and feelings secret - even if you're asked to do so. Friends never keep deadly secrets.
5. False. Asking someone who is suicidal will never give them an idea that they haven't thought about already. Most suicidal people are truthful and relieved when questioned about their feelings and intentions. Doing so can be the first step in helping them choose to live.

Middle School Probs

Social Media

Friend Drama

Family Problems

Relationship Problems

Academic Stress

Relational Aggression



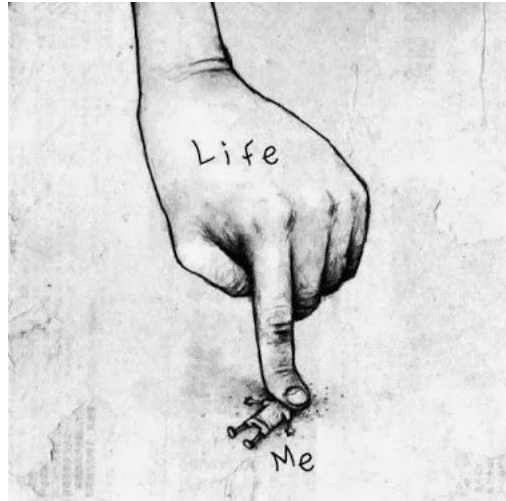
You have a lot on your plate. Stress can build quickly.

Contributors to suicidal ideation

Depression

Stress

Traumatic Life Event



Depression - Diagnosable disorder. Long term. Can be caused by genetics or environmental factors. Requires medical treatment.

Stress - Stress has very good intentions. Fight or Flight is intended to keep you alive. The stress experienced before a test, game or performance may even help you perform better because your senses are sharpened and you are ready for action. Long-term exposure to the chemicals released by stress is detrimental to your health and can lead to depression.

Traumatic Life Event - Death of a loved one, loss of a job, parent's divorce, loss of your home, loss of a longtime friend, unexpected injury or illness...anything that turns your world upside down. These can lead to suicidal thoughts or depression.

Thought Distortions

Black or White thinking

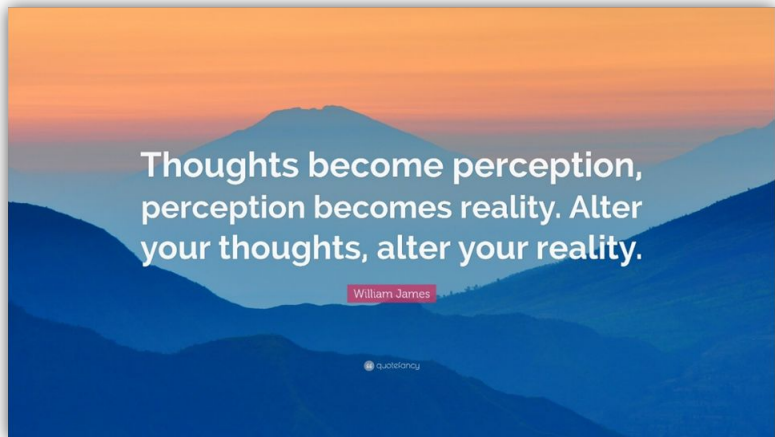
Overgeneralizations

Jumping to Conclusions

Catastrophizing

Blaming

Personalization



Explain how these are some distortions that are common in middle school-aged individuals. These distortions can lead to higher levels of stress and depression if not addressed.

Black or white thinking: I'm either perfect with straight A's or I'm a failure, no middle ground.

Overgeneralizations: After failing one assignment or test I now think that I will always fail at that subject.

Jumping to conclusions: My mom will kill me if I bring home a bad grade.

Catastrophizing: If I don't do well on this test then I won't pass this class and then I won't graduate from high school and then I won't get into college and then I won't marry the girl of my dreams and I can't have a big house and everything is ruined and my life is OVER!

Blaming: Placing the blame on others for the way I feel (no one can "make" you feel a certain way)

Personalization: Those kids laughing on the other side of the cafeteria are laughing at how I'm dressed today.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy can help counteract thought distortions. CBT says that a situation leads to a thought, which triggers an Emotion, which results in an action. This happens in a split second. If you there are people laughing when you walk into a room (situation) and you think they are laughing at you (thought), you may feel bad (emotion) and you will likely disengage from the class. CBT wants you to change the thought, which will change your emotion and action. Rather than thinking they are laughing at you to be mean (because unless you ask if they are laughing at you and

they confirm it, you are using the thought distortion of Personalization) maybe think that you came in at the tail end of a joke. That could trigger a different emotion and action entirely.

Warning Signs

No longer enjoy doing things

Difficulty concentrating

Changes to sleep or appetite

Feeling hopeless

Sudden changes to appearance, behavior, grades or attitude

Comments about being hopeless, helpless or worthless

Self harm

“It would be better if I wasn’t here”



These are some typical traits of suicidal individuals but may or may not be seen in every case. Each of these may look like in different cases. (e.g. “no longer enjoy doing things” can look like someone that was a star on the basketball team suddenly deciding he/she doesn’t want to play anymore).

Coping Skills

Breathing

Mindfulness

List of activities that will lift your mood



Insert activity of choice here.

Options of said activity:

Breathing exercise

Mindfulness activity

Make lists in small groups of things that they like to do when feeling down. (Use markers and large sheets of paper and then have a rep from each group present)

Where to get help

Parents

Teachers

Trusted Adults

Calm Harm app

Safe UT app

Friends



Note for friends - emphasize that this should be done in a healthy manner of mutual support. Don't rely on friends to fix it.

NATIONAL

SUICIDE PREVENTION

LIFELINE™

I-800-273-TALK

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Chat - CrisisLine

Opens 2 - way messaging with a SafeUT CrisisLine counselor.

Call - CrisisLine

Tap this to speak to a SafeUT CrisisLine counselor. The CrisisLine number will appear and you can call immediately.



Submit a Tip

Submit confidential tips to school administrators on bullying, threats, or violence.

Have students download Safe UT app if they have permission to do so. If not, have them enter the Suicide Prevention lifeline number into their phones.