
Suicide and Violence Prevention Newsletters

2012

2012 April Newsletter

Nova Southeastern University

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OFFICE OF SUICIDE AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION



Glee Takes a Chance



On Friday January 20th, 2012, Philip Parker a 14-year-old boy wrote a note to his mother. It read, "Help me mom." He threw the note in the garbage and subsequently took his own life. Jacob Rogers, Jaime Rodemeyer, Tyler Clementi, Seth Walsh, Raymond Chase also committed suicide within the past two years. What do these teens have in common? They were all homosexual individuals that were subjected to "gay bashing" at their schools. These teens endured horrendous acts. Prior to Clementi's death, his roommate allegedly posted a video of him and another man on the internet. Parker's grandfather reported that he was the victim of an endless amount of bullying. The intensity and frequency of bullying increased to the point that Rogers dropped out of school his senior year of high school.

Recently there has been a movement to expose the issue of the treatment of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (GLBTQ) students in schools. The winter finale of the FOX show Glee attempted to take the issue to the forefront of the public eye. According to the Nielsen Company, 7.46 million people tuned in to watch the season finale. In the episode, a character named David Karofsky attempted suicide after being ridiculed in the high school locker room. The camera followed him as he walked through the locker room and experienced all of his peers pointing and laughing at him. The scene culminated when he reached his locker and a homosexual slur was written in big red letters. In the show, Karofsky was a former "gay basher" himself before coming out because of a crush on another character. Controversy has surrounded Glee's attempts to bring the maltreatment of GLBTQ youth to light. Whatever your opinion on how Glee chose to represent the issue, one has to admire how they have stepped up to make this message known.

During the episode, an ad for The Trevor Project was aired, featuring Harry Potter star Daniel Radcliffe. He provided The Trevor Project's phone number and urged gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (GLBTQ) youth to seek help if they need it. He stated, "I believe that the bravest thing a person can do is seek help." The Trevor Project was founded by James Lecesne, Peggy Rajski, and Randy Stone, the creators of a short film called *Trevor*. The film is approximately 20 minutes long and revolves around a young teen named Trevor and the issues he struggles with in finding his sexuality and how the people in his life treat him. At one point in the film, he attempts suicide by taking an excess amount of an over-the-counter painkillers. He survives this attempt and by the end of the film exudes confidence and resiliency that gives the viewer hope for his future.

Before the film was to air initially in 1994 Lecesne, Rajski, and Stone realized that there might be other teens that are suffering from the same abuse as the fictional Trevor. They subsequently created the Trevor Project which was the first nationwide support organization for GLBTQ youth. In addition to a crisis hotline, this organization provides resources and programs to help educate and support the teens that desperately need it. It also includes a forum for GLBT teens to remain in communication with each other.

ISSUE 4, APRIL 2012

Look Inside:



Learn about the resources available to Nova employees

2



Learn more about making schools a safer place

3



Hear about one of the SVP members & his contributions to the community

4



Know who to call in times of crisis: The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

5

"It Takes a University to Create a Living Safety Net"

We cannot change what has happened in the past, but in memory of the teens that have suffered and passed on, it is our responsibility to reach out to and help those who may be suffering now. Glee has brought this issue to the forefront of over 7 million peoples' minds. The Trevor Project has resources available to assist individuals that may be in trouble. Now, it is up to us to spread the message. Please go to TheTrevorProject.org and look at everything the Trevor Project has to offer. The hotline number is 866-488-7386.



Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

MHNet's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a comprehensive program that provides individuals with the resources and tools available to live a healthy life at home and work.

Master's-level Clinicians are available to assist employees 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with referrals to counselors and other relevant resources.

These benefits are sponsored by Nova Southeastern University to improve the health and wellness of the employee and their dependents. MHNet also provides comprehensive Work-Life, Legal and Financial, Life Coaching, and Behavioral Health services to employees.



MHNet
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

"The only real risk is in doing nothing"

What should every employee know????

Employees can participate in up to 6 FREE sessions per year

The counseling relationship is strictly confidential and cannot be shared with your employer without your consent

An on-call counselor is available 24 hours/7 days a week in times of crisis or if you are in need of consultation

Just call **877.398.5816!**

STOP Cyberbullying

Resources for Bullying Prevention

STOP BULLYING .gov

- Bullying.org
 - Dedicated to increasing awareness of bullying.
 - Offers presentations, courses, and other resources to educate about bullying prevention.
 - Includes support groups for victims of bullying.
- www.Stopbullying.gov
 - Lists risk factors for bullying.
 - Offers bullying prevention techniques.
 - Includes suggestions for discussion topics with students about bullying.
 - Describes possible interventions that may be implemented after bullying has occurred.
- www.bullyingacademy.org/default.cfm?Page=Educators
 - Free online program that trains schools in bullying prevention.
 - Teaches preventative measures for bullying.
 - Includes links for parents, educator, and students.
- Cyberbullying.us
 - Cyberbullying Research Center
 - Provides the latest research on cyberbullying.
 - Includes posts and blogs about cyberbullying headlines.
 - Contains resources for presentations and multimedia.
- www.workplacebullying.org
 - Workplace Bullying Institute
 - Includes resources for individuals who have been bullied.
 - Provides preventative resources for the workplace.
 - Informs individuals about trainings for employers.
- www.thetrevorproject.org
 - The Trevor Project
 - Trevor Hotline: 866.4U.Trevor (866-488-7386)
 - Includes resources for GLBTQ teens.



Making Our Schools a Safer Place By Oren Schwartz

In the wake of the high school shooting in Chardon, Ohio on February 27, 2012, it is pertinent to ask, how do schools create a safer environment for students? In 2002, the Secret Service conducted an exhaustive study of diverse cases of school violence. The results were published in a report entitled, "Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in America." Some of the findings suggested that school shootings are rarely impulsive and they can typically be traced back to an understandable thought process by the attacker. The Secret Service did not find a prototypical

school shooters; however, there are discernible risk factors and warning signs that have been identified. For example, most shooters engaged in some type of violent activities before the attack. Additionally, in many cases the shooters was bullied in school. In some other cases school shooters had a history of suicide attempts. Furthermore, a majority of the incidents involved other students.

Dr. Scott Poland, co-founder and co-director of the Office of Suicide and Violence Prevention at Nova Southeastern University, writes that in many cases students will inform other students of their plans to perform a violent or suicidal act. Frequently, students who are informed of the future violent behaviors do not inform an adult. There are a few explanations for these behaviors: students do not think violence or suicide will actually happen, fear retaliation, do not think that adults can/will do anything about the situation, or they do not trust the school staff enough to confide in them. This last point was supported by the Secret Service's research that suggested that a positive connection at school can act as a protective factor when discussing the likelihood of school violence.

Peter Langman in his book *Why Kids Kill: Inside the Minds of School Shooters*, described that shooters can be best understood by their personalities and their histories. He speculated that there are three types of school shooters. The psychopathic type is narcissistic and acts without a conscience. This type of shooters considers himself/herself to be god-like and has many anti-social personality traits. A second type of shooter is labeled the psychotic type. This individual may experience hallucinations and delusions and he/she may also exhibit avoidant, schizotypal, or dependent personality traits. The third type of school shooter is the traumatized type. This type of shooter has reportedly experienced traumatic events in his/her life. He/she may have suffered emotional or physical abuse or may have been bullied at school. These traumatic experiences are hypothesized to lead to suicidal thoughts. It is important to note that research suggests that two-thirds of school shooters are suicidal, as well as homicidal. Therefore, suicide prevention should be an integral part of a school safety plan.

School attacks are preventable events; however, schools must establish certain initiatives. The Secret Service indicated that students can be an integral part of the prevention process. As noted earlier, other students are often the first to know about an impending attack. When students feel as if they are part of the prevention process they may be more willing to inform an adult about a potential attack. Schools should also implement a system that enables students to inform authority figures of an impending attack without fear of retaliation or anxiety revolving around the reactions of administrators. If students fear the effects of informing authorities, they will most likely be less apt to approach them. School administrators should respond to all threats; however, it is important to be able to tell the difference between a real threat and a call for attention. Administrators would benefit from knowing which students have risk factors that may put them at risk for a violent act. It is also essential to know which students are exhibiting violent behavior in person or online. Most attacks are not stopped by law enforcement, but rather by school administrators, teachers, or students. For this reason, every school should have established protocols of how to act in the case of an attack.

Suicide Prevention Lobbying

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) is urging Congress to increase suicide prevention efforts through the following legislation:

Legislation to reduce bullying and cyber-bullying

- In the past, bullying was not seen as a problem but merely an aspect of childhood. In the last two decades this view has changed drastically. In some cases, cyber-bullying has led to suicide. For example, there have been four suicides in the United States that have been attributed to cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying is not limited to school age children as there have also been instances of cyber-stalking and cyber-harassment among the adult population. Legislation is required to limit the effect of internet-related bullying.

Authorization of depression centers of excellence

- According to the National Institute of Health (NIH) most people experiencing symptoms of depression can be treated through medication, therapy, or a combination of these treatments. However, one third of these people do not receive treatment. This is often due to the fact that they cannot afford it, do not believe treatment is necessary, are afraid of societal reaction, or they do not know about the available resources. To assist these individuals the ENHANCED act was introduced to the Senate and the House. This legislation focuses on expanding the depression center of excellence. The goals of these centers are to increase access to efficacious treatments for individuals living with depression, develop evidence-based treatments for depression, and improve accurate and timely diagnosis of depression. If passed, this legislation would provide The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) with the funds to operate 20 center of excellence in the first year and up to 30 centers within five years.

Appropriations for the Garret Lee Smith Memorial Act

- Suicide is the third leading cause of death for individuals between the ages of 15 and 24. In 2004, President Bush signed the nation's first suicide prevention act entitled the Garret Lee Smith Memorial Act (GLMSA). SAMHSA receives federal appropriations to operate two significant youth suicide prevention programs and a resource center. SAMHSA, with the help of GLMSA, funds programs throughout the country. Some of these programs include are as follows. The Garret Lee Smith State/Tribal Youth Suicide Prevention and Early Intervention Grant Program. The Garret Lee Smith Campus Suicide Prevention Program provides funding to institutes of higher learning to educate college campuses about suicide and to assist in suicide prevention. The Garret Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) develops effective strategies and best practices to ensure that the field has access to information that is crucial for suicide prevention. SAMHSA also funds the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline which fields calls from over 43,000 people a month and routes them to local crisis centers.

SVP Spotlight



Dr. Douglas Flemons
Professor, SHSS

In addition to serving as Co-Director of the Office of Suicide and Violence Prevention, Dr. Douglas Flemons is a Professor of Family Therapy in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. He, Dr. Poland, and Dr. Procacci have completed two high-production videos on suicide prevention, as part of their three-year SAMHSA grant, and they are getting ready to complete the filming for their third and last training. This last video features Dr. Flemons conducting a thorough suicide assessment, interspersed with a commentary supplied by him and Dr. Poland.

Dr. Flemons is currently finishing a co-authored book, *Relational Suicide Assessment*, with Dr. Len Gralnik, a professor of psychiatry at FIU. The book, which will be published by W. W. Norton, offers readers a new way of approaching the challenging task of assessing for suicidality. Readers will learn how to balance attention to the client's risks with curiosity about his or her resources, and to make sense of both within the context of the risks and resources of the person's significant others. Despite the high stakes involved in such interviews, it is possible for them to be experienced by the client as therapeutic, particularly when the clinician strives for empathic understanding and looks for opportunities to invite possibilities for immediate safety and constructive change.

Last fall, Dr. Flemons presented his work on suicide assessment at the national conference of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy in Fort Worth, Texas, as well as at the Third International Congress of Psychology in Puebla, Mexico. At the family therapy conference, he also offered (with his wife and colleague, Dr. Shelley Green) a day-long workshop on transforming paradoxes in intimate couple relationships, and in Mexico, he also spoke about hypnosis and therapeutic change.

How do you Remember the Warning Signs of Suicide?
Here's an Easy-to-Remember Mnemonic:

IS PATH WARM?

I	Ideation
S	Substance Abuse
P	Purposelessness
A	Anxiety
T	Trapped
H	Hopelessness
W	Withdrawal
A	Anger
R	Recklessness
M	Mood Change



If you or someone you know is in a crisis, do not wait to seek help! Call 9-1-1 and seek out additional help from resources on this page.

Suicide Prevention Resources

National Suicide Prevention Lifelines
1-800-SUICIDE or 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

The Ganley Foundation
<http://ganleyfoundation.org/>

The Trevor Project
<http://www.thetrevorproject.org>

American Association of Suicidology
www.suicidology.org/

American Association for Suicide Prevention
www.afsp.org

Suicide Prevention Resource Center
www.sprc.org

Florida Office of Suicide Prevention
www.helppromotehope.com

Florida Initiative for Suicide Prevention
www.fisponline.com

Mobile Crisis Response Teams

Broward - Henderson:

954-463-0911

Palm Beach:

North: 561-383-5777

South: 561-637-2102

Miami-Dade - Miami Behavioral:

305-774-3627

Henderson Student Counseling

Student counseling provides the opportunity for students to benefit from working on personal issues with experienced professionals.

The counseling center is staffed by licensed mental health professionals, a licensed psychologist, and a psychiatrist

3538 S. University Drive Davie, FL 33328
Located at the University Park Plaza
(Just east of the NSU Bookstore)

Phone (954) 424-6911

Fax: (954) 424-6915

Hours of Operation

Monday..... 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Tuesday..... 9:00 am - 8:00 pm

Wednesday..... 9:00 am - 8:00 pm

Thursday9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Friday9:00 am - 5:00 pm