

SUICIDE PREVENTION: WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

LCPS Parent Seminar Series on Mental Health and Wellness

September 29, 2022

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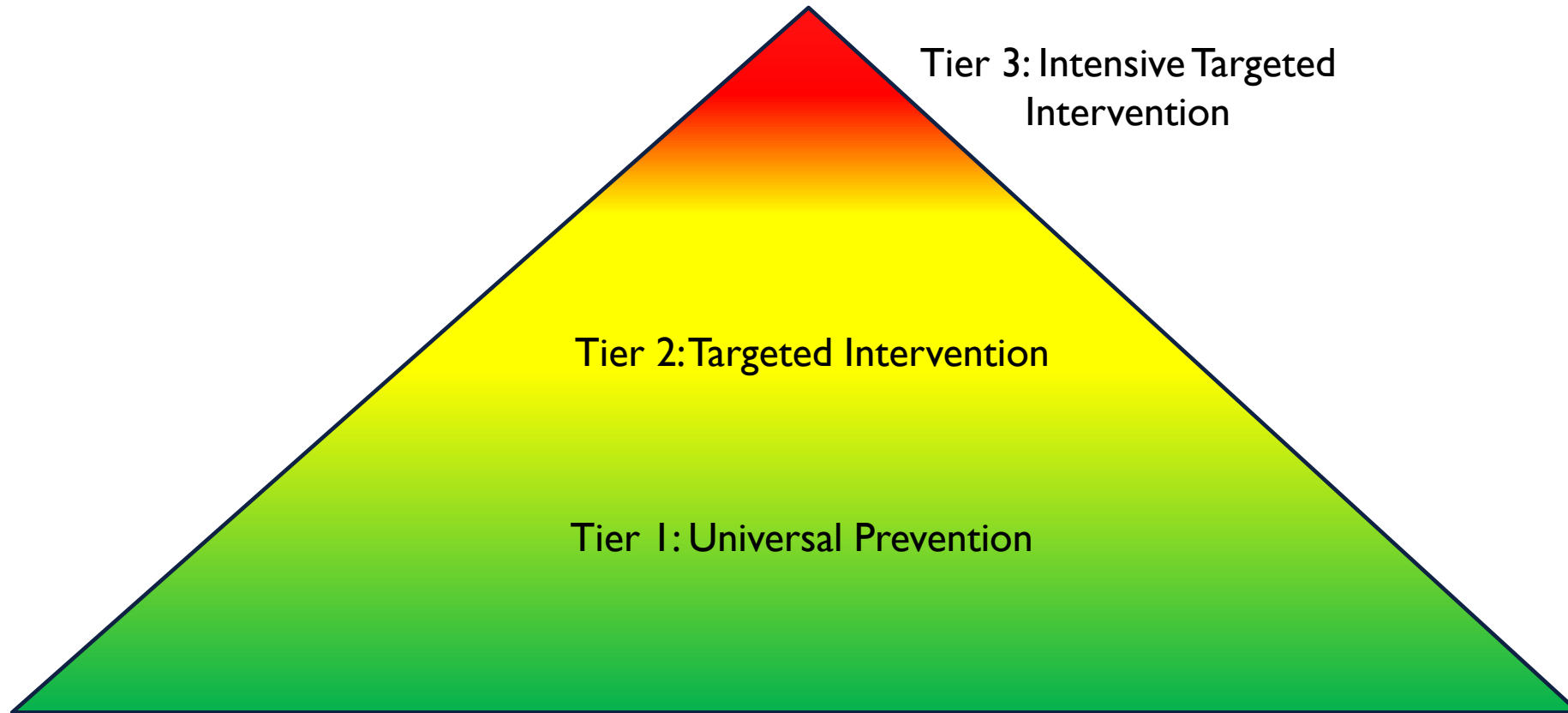
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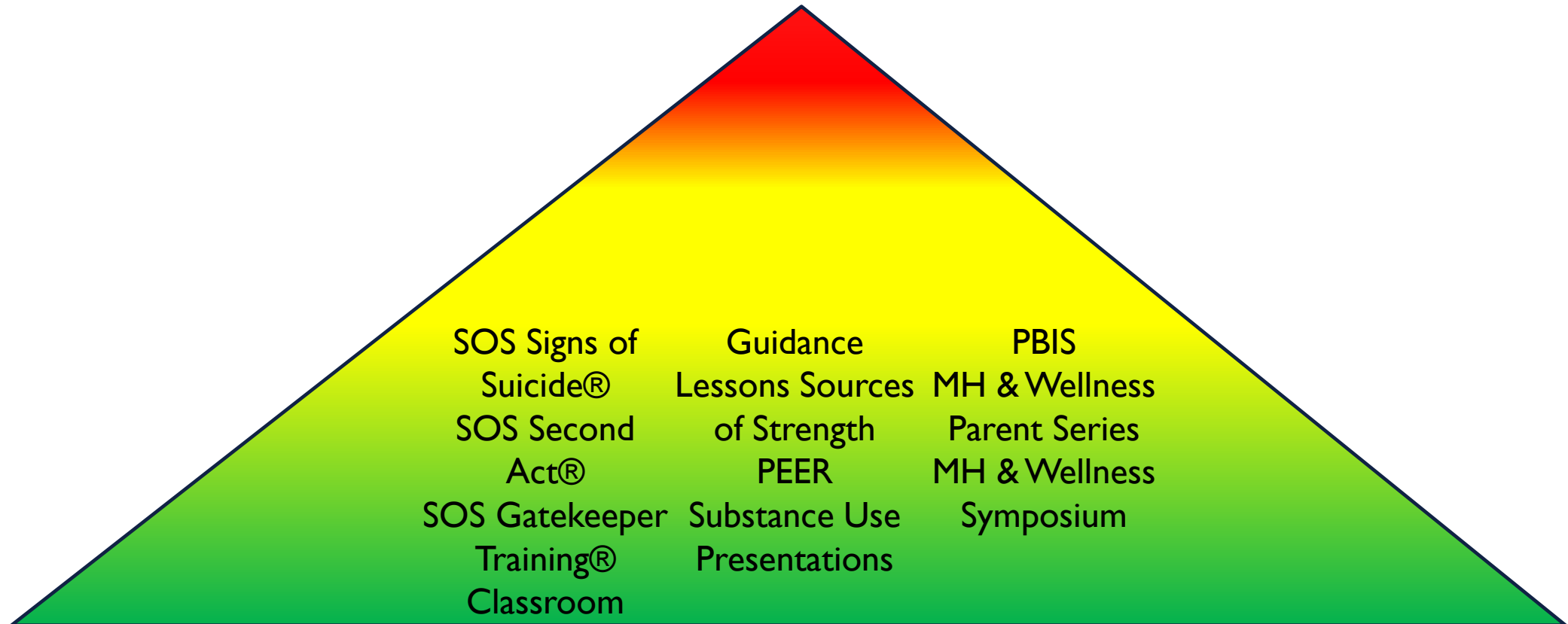
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Review LCPS's behavioral and mental health supports (not treatment) and suicide prevention strategies
- Compare and contrast school-based behavioral and mental health supports aimed at suicide prevention with community-based mental health treatment targeting suicidality
- Discuss suicide facts/fictions, risk factors and warning signs
- Identify what parents can do for suicide prevention
- Identify what evidence-based treatment for suicidal youth looks like

LCPS BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH TIERED SUPPORTS AND SERVICES



LCPS BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH TIERED SUPPORTS AND SERVICES



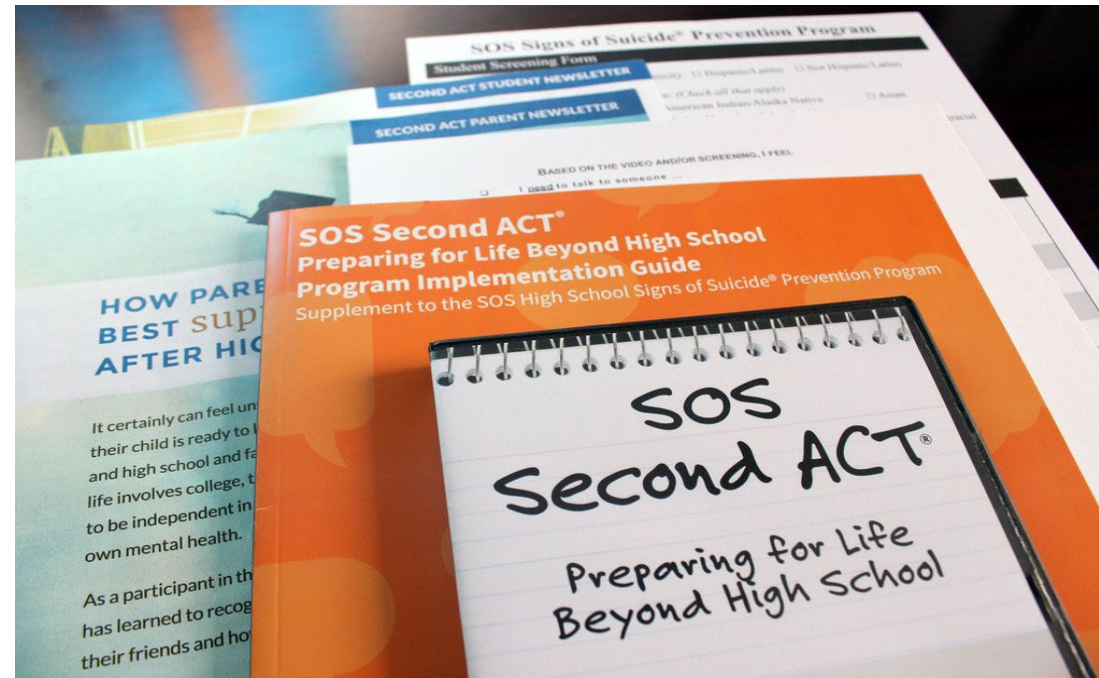
SOS SIGNS OF SUICIDE®

- Classroom-based
- 9th grade
- Depression, suicide, ACT



SOS SIGNS OF SUICIDE® SECOND ACT

- Classroom-based
- 10th, 11th, 12th
- Acknowledge – Care – Treatment

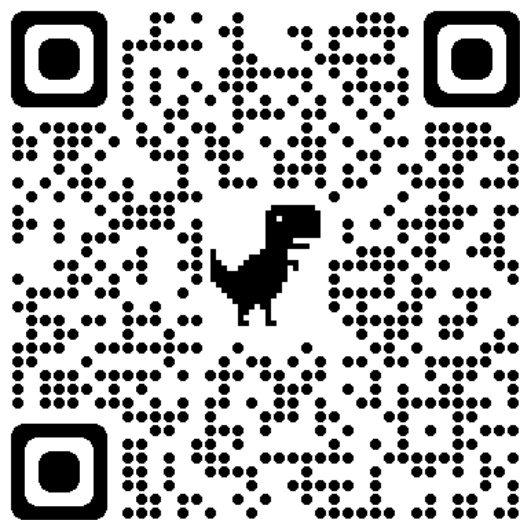


KOGNITO®

- Training simulation for all teachers to help them identify students who may need mental health support



SOS SIGNS OF SUICIDE® PARENT/GUARDIAN VIDEO PORTAL




go.microsoft.coHeather Applegate - Suggested Sites

Loudoun County Public Schools


TAKE A SCREENINGARTICLESPRIVACY POLICY

Concerned about your child?


Mental health is a key part of your child's overall health. This depression screening is the quickest way to determine if your child should connect with a mental health professional. The program is completely anonymous and confidential. Immediately following the brief questionnaire, you will receive results, recommendations, and key resources from your child's school or community.



CHECKUP



ANONYMOUS



FAST

PEER PROGRAM POSITIVE EXPERIENCES IN Educational RELATIONSHIPS

- All high schools
- PEER helper training - boundaries, ethics, confidentiality, listening, communication, assertiveness, and decision-making skills
- Students provide 1:1 mentoring to other students within the school
- Focus initiatives on bullying prevention, healthy relationships, substance use, mental health awareness
- 1-2 PEER Sponsors, a school counselor, and school social worker train and support students
- Last year, PEER Programs organized **186** initiatives focused on bullying prevention, mental health, suicide prevention, healthy relationships, and positive school climate reaching **56,237** students at the elementary and secondary level.

ANNUAL PEER CONFERENCE – ANGST FILM SCREENING



LCPS hosted the Annual PEER Conference on November 6th. Over 220 students and staff from 15 high schools attended. We showed the peer leaders and supporting staff the film *Angst* and engaged them in conversation following the film about how to recognize peers that are struggling with stress or anxiety, support one another, and encourage help seeking behaviors.

All school groups were asked to develop mental health awareness initiatives and continue the conversation about anxiety.

PEER - HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS INITIATIVES





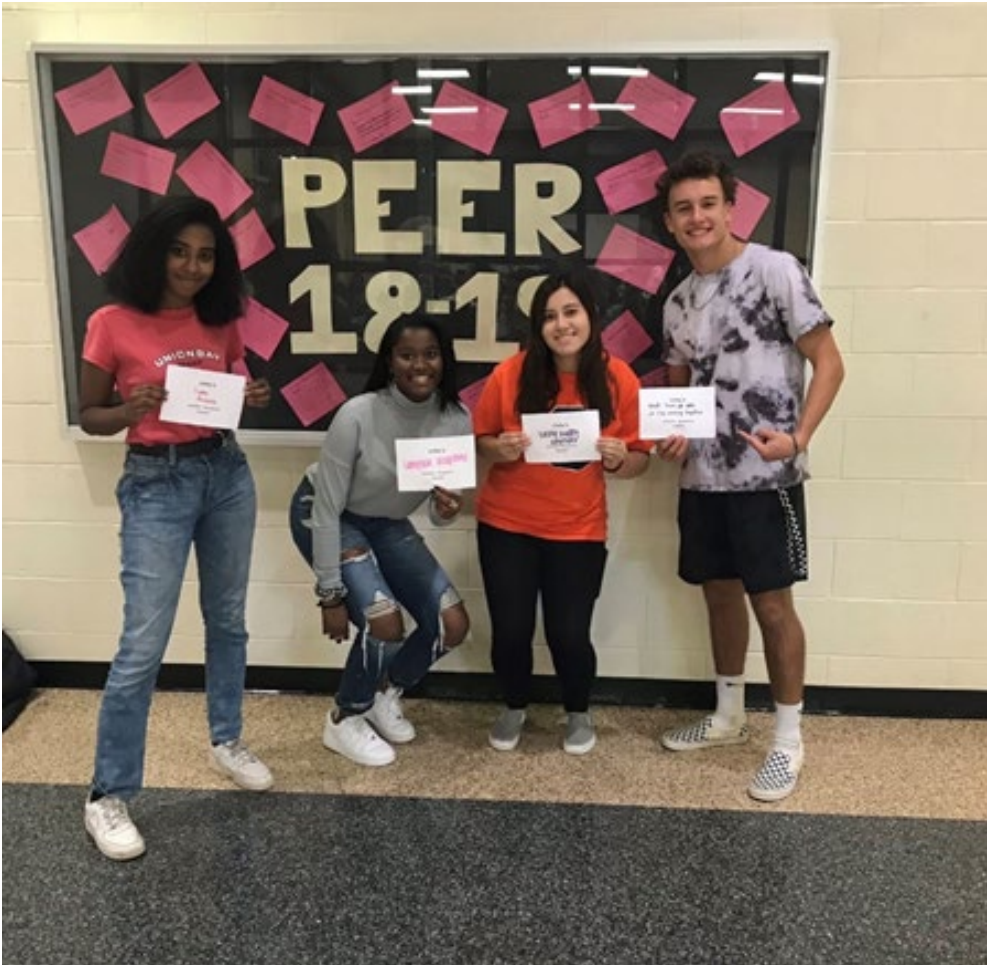
PEER - BULLYING PREVENTION INITIATIVES





PEER - MENTORING & WELCOME FOR NEW STUDENTS

PEER - SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION INITIATIVES



SOURCES OF STRENGTH PROGRAM

- Upstream, strength-based program for prevention of suicide, violence, bullying, and substance abuse
- Most high schools and middle schools have implemented the program
- Developed through partnership with the Ryan Bartel Foundation



SOURCES OF STRENGTH INITIATIVES



WOODGROVE HS – WE'RE ALL HUMAN 5K COLOR RUN WE'RE ALL HUMAN & SOURCES OF STRENGTH





Volunteers tossed colored powders at the runners as they crossed each station during the 2022 We're All Human Color Run sponsored by the Ryan Bartel Foundation

BRIAR WOODS HS WE'RE ALL HUMAN LUMINARY WALK PEER, SOURCES OF STRENGTH, & WE'RE ALL HUMAN

You're Invited

Join Briar Woods High School
for the 2nd Annual
We're All Human Luminary Walk
Briar Woods Track
Thursday, October 4th
7-9PM

Free Community Event!

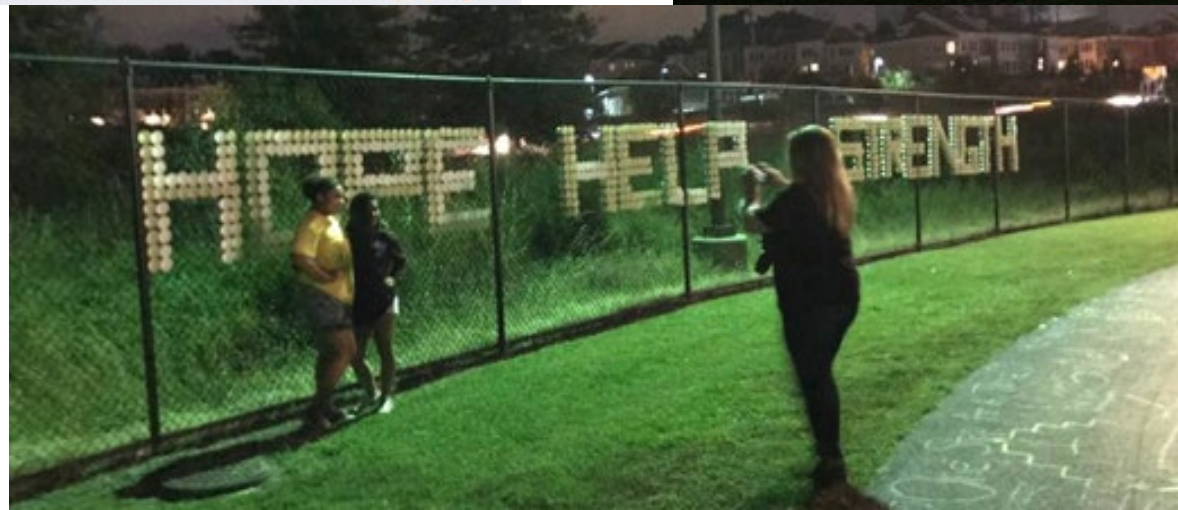
Come Shine A Light on
Mental Health Awareness
& Suicide Prevention

Family-Friendly Activities

#WAHWALK18

All Proceeds Benefit the Ryan Bartel Foundation

Questions? renae.sterling@lcps.org

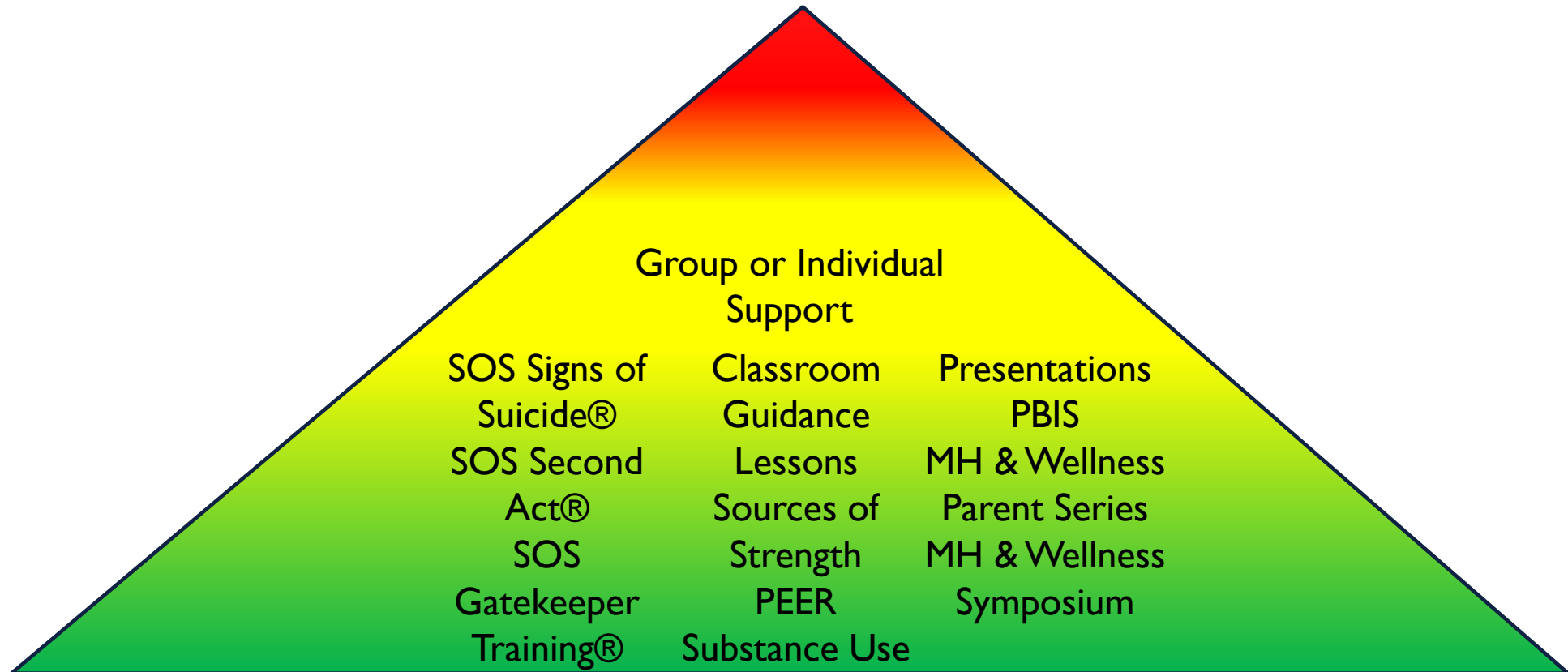


LOUDOUN VALLEY HS MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

PEER, SOURCES OF STRENGTH, & WE'RE ALL HUMAN

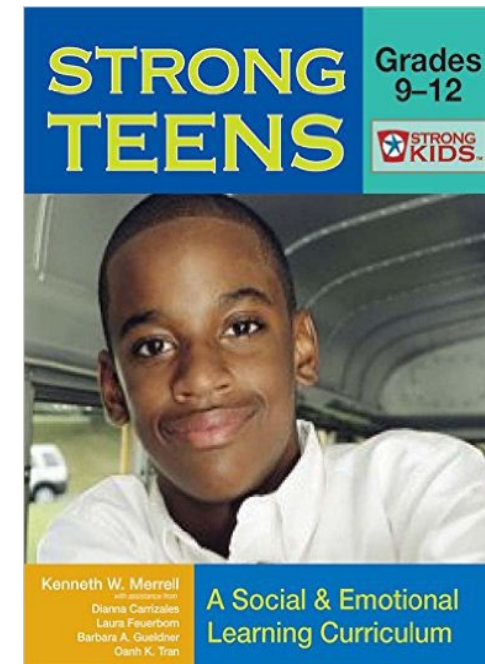


LCPS BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH TIERED SUPPORTS AND SERVICES







MANUALIZED CURRICULUM

- Prevention-oriented
- Lesson format
- No mental health training required



The ZONES of Regulation®

			
BLUE ZONE	GREEN ZONE	YELLOW ZONE	RED ZONE
Sad Sick Tired	Happy Calm Feeling Okay	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly	Mad/Angry Mean Terrified

ZONES OF REGULATION CURRICULUM

- Designed to educate elementary school students about emotions and behaviors and promote self-regulation
- Includes social thinking

the Green Zone.

on the cau

schedule change

CAUTION!
TRIGGERS AHEAD

Finding solutions to control my zones

My Trigger and/or the Situation: _____



STOP
stop before you act.

OPT
Think of your options and how they may or may not help.

My options (choices):

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

THE ZONES of REGULATION®



BLUE ZONE

Bored, Hurt, Exhausted, Sick, Tired, Sad

Blue Zone Tools

Stretch

GREEN ZONE

Calm, Good, Proud, Okay, Ready to Learn, Content

Green Zone Tools

Drink water

YELLOW ZONE

Anxious/Worried, Frustrated, Labeled, Silly, Overwhelmed, Scared

Yellow Zone Tools

Deep breaths

RED ZONE

Aggressive, Mean, Terrified, Mad, Angry, Yelling

Red Zone Tools

Take a break

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OPT and GO to control your a trigger and/or a situation ou out of the Green Zone!

a second to think.

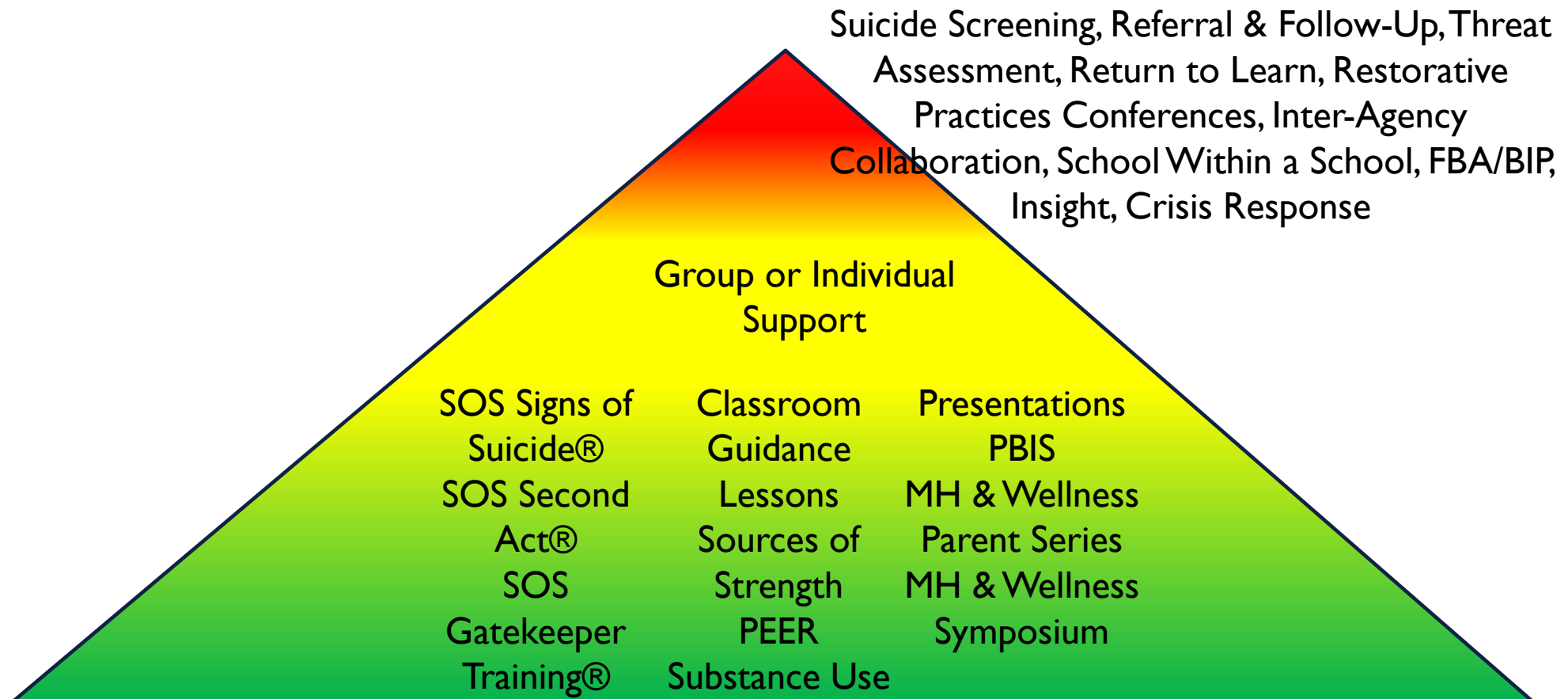
form your choices. Some are others. Think of many options!

which option helps you ir emotions and behavior

I use it!

es above. Cross off any choices ms or won't help you manage options.

LCPS BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH TIERED SUPPORTS AND SERVICES





Return to Learn

Guidelines for Transitioning Students Back to School from Extended Absences

Students transitioning back to school after an extended absence due to a mental illness or chronic medical condition need support as they reintegrate back into the school learning environment. The *Return to Learn* guidelines are designed to establish the rationale, roles and responsibilities, and procedures for planning and implementing accommodations and supports that a student may need to effectively transition back to school following an extended absence. An extended absence is generally defined as missing more than a week of school.

Transitioning a student back to school from an extended absence requires coordination and communication. To effectively accomplish this, transition planning requires a system of care that involves teaming and collaboration among school staff, family members, and community treatment providers (e.g. hospital staff, psychiatrists, physicians, etc.) both prior to and after the extended absence. Ongoing communication is essential to promote a shared understanding and to develop and implement an effective plan that appropriately meets the student's educational needs for successful school reintegration. It is also important that school teams identify a point of contact for the student who can case manage the transition and facilitate ongoing communication.

For a student who is absent for an extended period of time, such as for hospitalization, it is

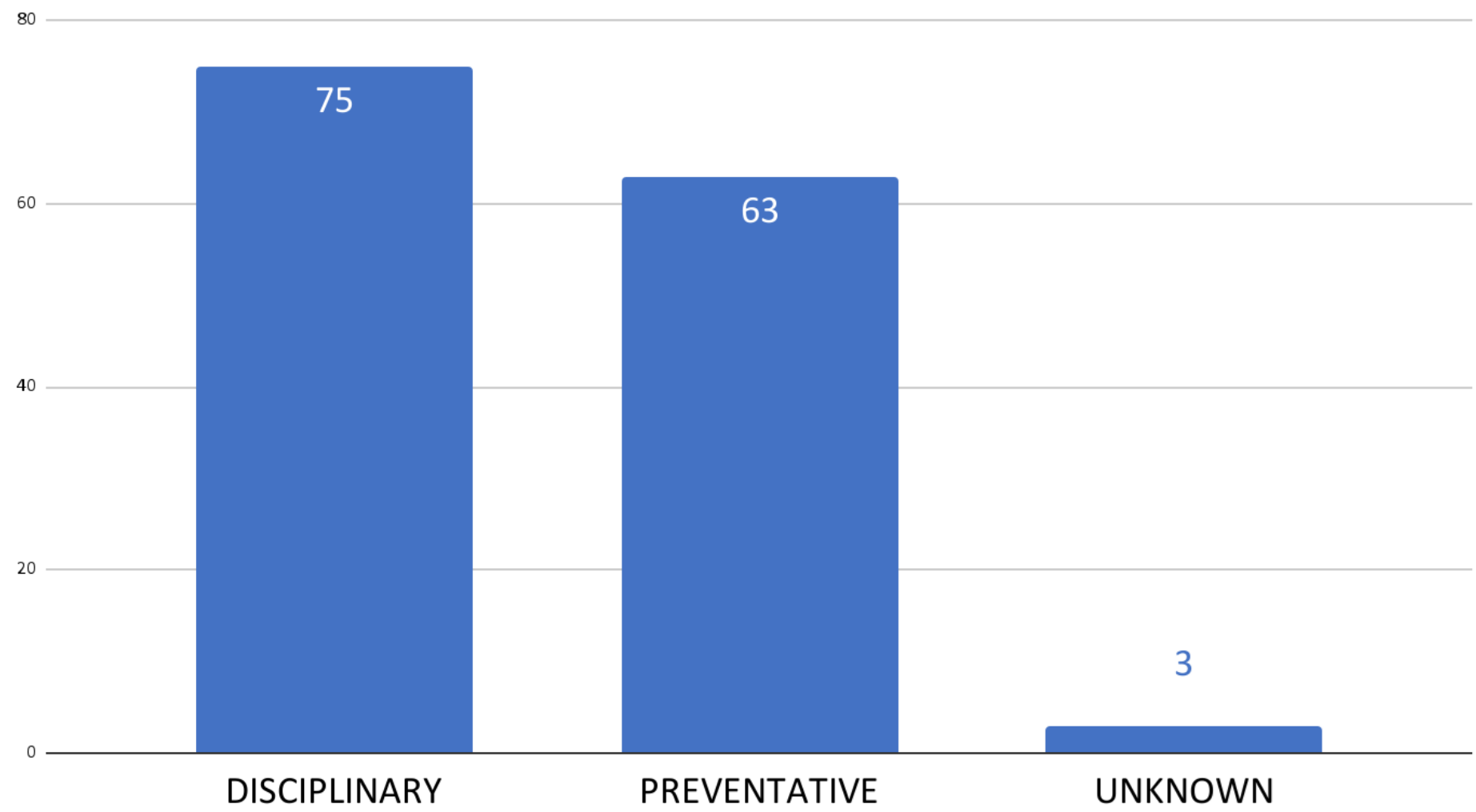
WHAT ARE RESTORATIVE PRACTICES ?

Approach derived from the
Restorative Justice
philosophy

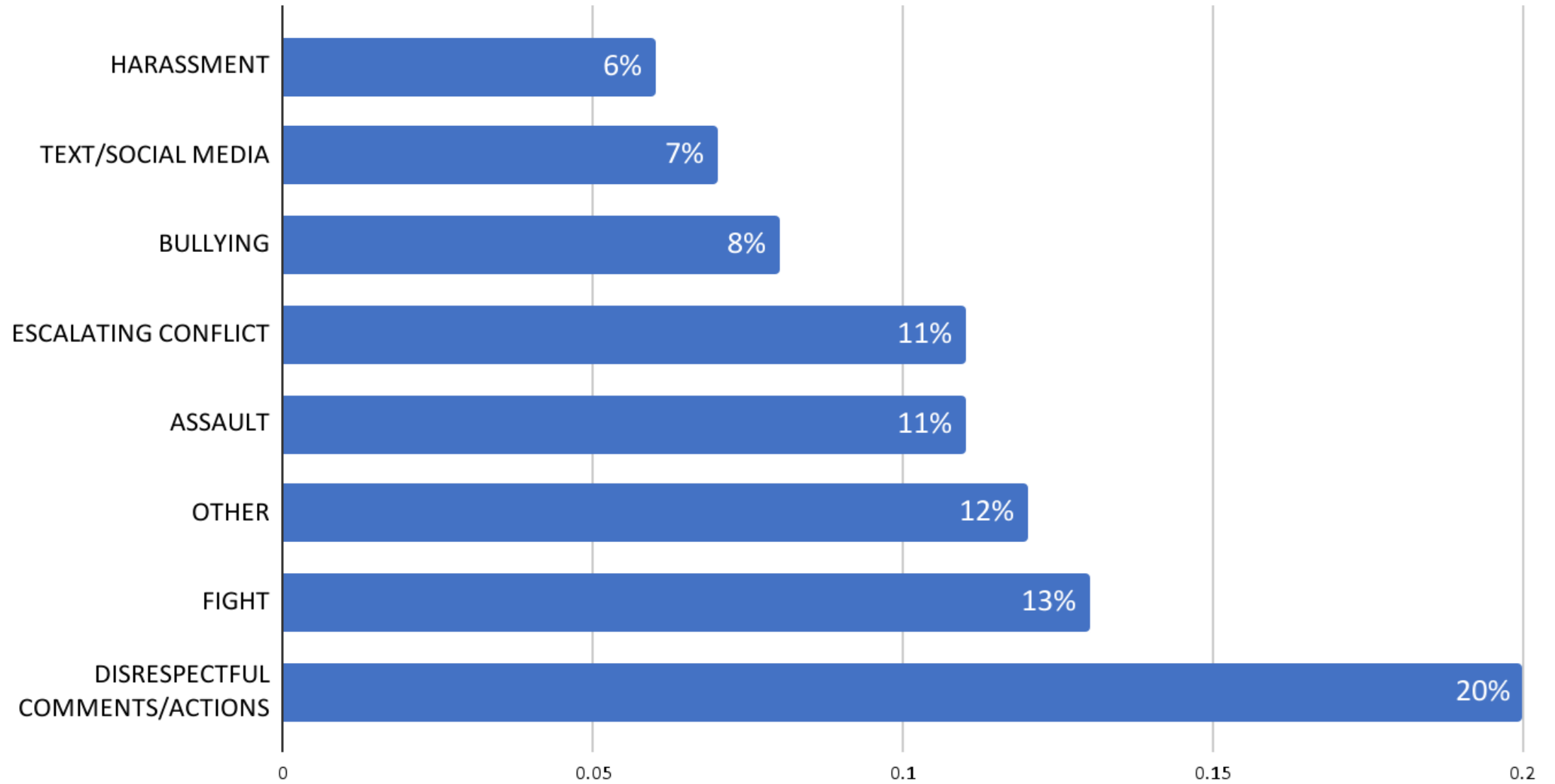
RP in the schools develops
community and manages
conflict and discipline by
repairing harm and restoring
relationships

Our students are happier,
more productive, and more
cooperative when people in
positions of authority do
things **WITH** them rather
than **TO** them or **FOR** them

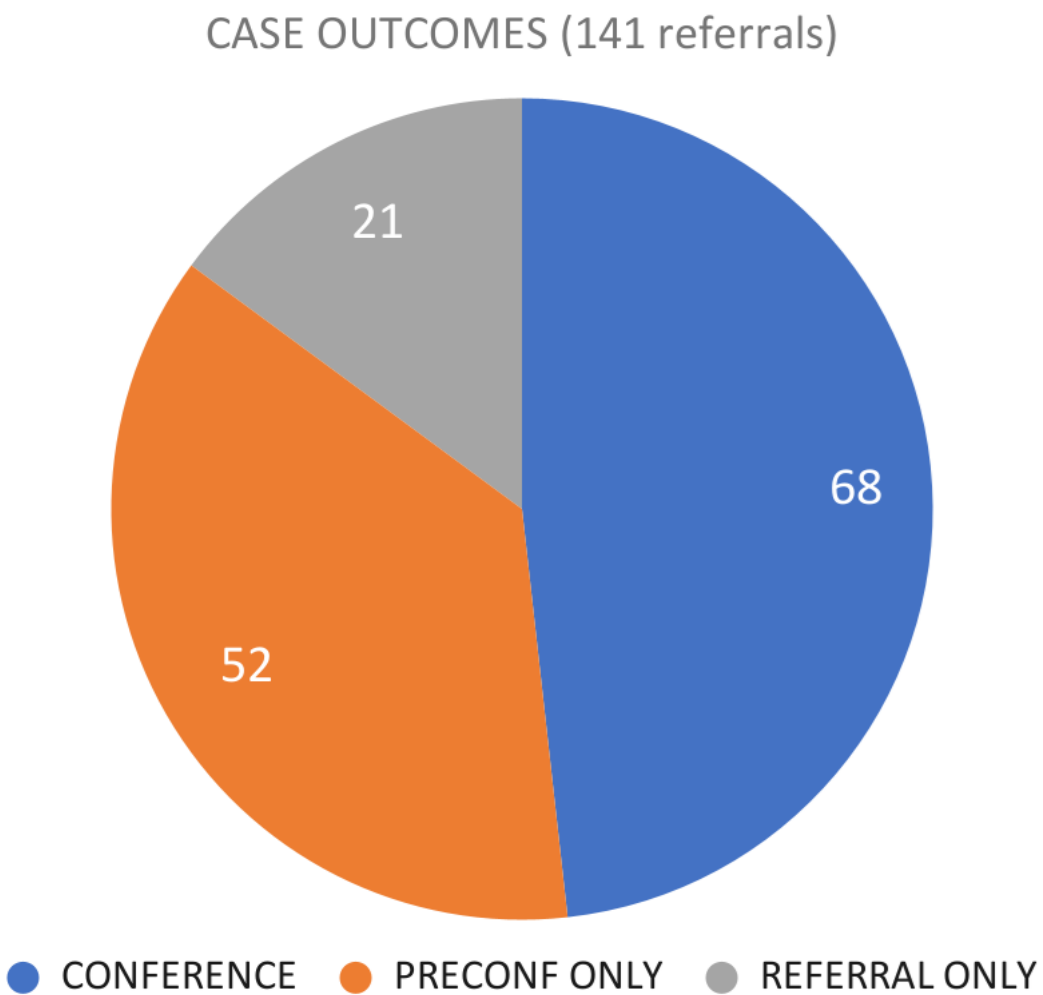
Referral Type



TYPE of INCIDENT



Outcome	Percentage
Conference	48%
PreConf Only	37%
Referral Only	15%



SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION & EDUCATION PROVIDED BY STUDENT ASSISTANCE SPECIALISTS

- Awareness presentations to 6th, 8th, 10th grade students, as well as staff and parents within school and community settings
- Substance use assessments for at-risk students and make referrals for appropriate school and community-based services;
- Facilitate school-based prevention and intervention groups and individual support
- Facilitate the three-day Substance Use Education Insight Class for students who violate the school alcohol and drug policy throughout the year
- Facilitate meetings for parents of LCPS students referred to the Insight Class. Conduct appropriate follow-up services for students

SCHOOL-BASED SUICIDE PREVENTION COMPARED TO TREATMENT

SCHOOL-BASED PREVENTION

- School-wide, classroom-based or small group prevention education
- May involve suicide screenings using approaches that do not require any mental health background or training
- Are not equipped to treat the root cause of the suicidal ideation/behavior

TREATMENT FOR SUICIDAL YOUTH

- Highly individualized and tailored treatment that addresses the underlying reasons for suicidal ideation/behavior
- Involves careful suicide assessment by a mental health professional with specialized knowledge and training
- Requires evidence-based approaches by licensed behavioral health providers with a unique set of skills (not generalists)

SCHOOL-BASED SUICIDE PREVENTION VERSUS TREATMENT FOR YOUTH SUICIDAL IDEATION AND BEHAVIOR

SCHOOL-BASED PREVENTION

- May involve skill-building using one-size-fits-all, manualized curricula
- Never involves a mental health assessment of factors contributing to the suicidal ideation/behavior
- Does not involve monitoring suicide status
- Child focused

TREATMENT FOR SUICIDAL YOUTH

- Involves skill-building within a biopsychosocial framework with continuous assessment and adaptation as necessary for the individual
- Always involves a mental health assessment that contributes to and informs treatment of the suicidal ideation/behavior
- Involves close monitoring of suicide status, substance use, and family factors, with modification of treatment as needed
- Child focused, but family based

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Professor, GMU
Adjunct Faculty, Brown University
Licensed Clinical Psychologist



FACT OR FICTION?

- Asking teens if they are thinking about killing themselves will plant the idea in their head. **FICTION**
- Most teens who die by suicide have talked about it with someone. **FACT**
- If teens really wants to kill themselves, there is nothing that can be done. **FICTION**
- Improvement in a suicidal teen means the most dangerous time is past. **FICTION**
- Only teens with depression kill themselves. **FICTION**
- Most suicidal teens ask for help with their problems. **FACT**

WHO IS AT GREATEST RISK FOR SUICIDE?

- Those with prior suicide attempt (18-fold risk)
- Suicidal thoughts
- Mental health & substance abuse disorders
- Non-suicidal self-injury
- Impulsivity and aggression (including bullying)
- Trauma history (peer victimization, child abuse, etc.)
- Sexual and gender minority status
- Family and peer suicidal behavior
- Perfectionism

Context of a difficult family environment

SUBSTANCE USE AND SUICIDALITY

- SUD associated with a 3-4 fold increase in suicidal behavior
- Substance dependence most consistently associated with the most serious suicidal behaviors
- More impairing use, "advanced" use, or use of "harder" drugs more likely to be associated with suicidality

(Esposito-Smythers & Spirito, 2004; Goldston, 2004)

PERFECTIONISM & SUICIDE

- Psychological autopsy studies - 50% to 85% of adolescents died by suicide described as “perfectionistic”
- Socially prescribed perfectionism, concern about mistakes, doubt about actions, & self-criticism all associated with suicidality
- Urgent public appeal in communities with multiple suicides...
 - Educate about pressure of achieving perfectionistic standards
 - Encourage teachers and parents to look for & seek help for perfectionistic teens

(Flett, Hewitt, & Heisel, 2014; O'Connor, 2007)

SOCIALLY PRESCRIBED PERFECTIONISM

- Socially prescribed perfectionism
 - Perception that others demand perfection from oneself
 - Heightened sensitivity to criticism & social comparison feedback
 - Perfect performance will only lead to even higher expectations
 - Ruminative and brooding style
 - Preoccupation with thoughts of not living up to “ideal” self or others expectations fuels feelings of inferiority, deficiency, & hopelessness
 - Tendency to believe one is a disappointment & burden on others

(Flett, Hewitt, & Heisel, 2014)

TRAUMA & SUICIDE

- Childhood sexual, physical, emotional abuse and neglect
- Relation with sexual and emotional abuse strongest
- Additive effects with each form of abuse
- Sexual abuse associated with greater suicidality

- Greater severity of sexual abuse
- Closer degree of relatedness to victim
- Parental denial
- Parental anger toward child rather than perpetrator
- Low satisfaction with current supports

Miller, Esposito-Smythers, Weismore,
& Renshaw (2013)

TRAUMA & SUICIDE

- Dating violence
- Peer victimization
- Sexual assault
- Exposure to domestic violence

WARNING SIGNS FOR IMMINENT SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR

- Talking about or making plans for suicide.
 - Via words, writing, artwork, posts, etc.
 - Putting affairs in order (e.g., giving or throwing away favorite belongings)
 - Stock piling medications, internet research
- Expressing hopelessness about the future.
 - Verbal hints (e.g., “Why try?” “Things will never change”, “I won’t be a problem much longer”)
- Displaying severe/overwhelming emotional pain or distress.

WARNING SIGNS FOR IMMINENT SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR

- Showing worrisome behavioral cues or marked changes in behavior, particularly in the presence of the other three warning signs. Specifically, this includes significant:
 - Withdrawal from or change in social connections/situations (e.g., friends, family, activities)
 - Changes in sleep (increased or decreased)
 - Anger or hostility that seems out of character or out of context
 - Recent increased agitation or irritability

OTHER CONCERNING SIGNS

- Suddenly cheerful after period of depression
- Complaint of being a bad person
- Change in eating habits
- Significant weight loss or gain
- Frequent complaints of physical symptoms
- Loss of interest
- Persistent boredom
- Difficulty concentrating

OTHER CONCERNING SIGNS

- Acting out behavior, delinquent behavior, truancy, and/or running away
- Alcohol and drug use
- Decline in grades
- Neglect of personal appearance
- Personality change
- Signs of psychosis (hallucinations, delusions)
- Intolerance for praise or reward

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

- Get help for your teen before suicidal thinking develops.
- If you recognize imminent warning signs for suicidal behavior...
 - ALWAYS take warning signs, including suicide related statements, seriously
 - Ask teen if he/she is ok or if he/she is having thoughts of suicide
 - Express your concern about what you are observing in the teen's behavior
 - Listen attentively and non-judgmentally
 - Reflect on what the teen shares and let teen know he/she has been heard
 - Tell the teen he/she is not alone
 - Immediately share this information with your teen's therapist or seek immediate help, as needed, after hours.

(See <https://www.youthsuicidewarningsigns.org/parents caregivers>)

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

- **Remove/lock up means** of a suicide attempt in the home
 - Firearms, all medications (including over-the-counter), razors, etc.
- All medications should be given to the teen **by the parent** and must make sure it is swallowed
- These changes are only temporary while the teen is in a high-risk period

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

- Create a **monitoring plan**
 - Teen should not be left home alone.
 - Brief planned check-ins each day, after any negative events, and if any warning signs are noticed.
- Engage in and maintain **strategies** that support your teen
 - Avoid heated arguments
 - Attend all therapy and doctor appointments
 - Seek own mental health, substance abuse, and/or marital counseling, if needed
 - Protect teen from encounters with individuals who are abusive or neglectful

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

- Know how to seek immediate help
- Write down or enter phone numbers of **professionals** who can help in your cell phone
- Know the numbers and/or locations for 24-hour suicide hotlines, 24-hour crisis centers, and local ERs
- Familiarize yourself with after-hour policies of therapists and doctors
- If your teen does not have a therapist, know how to find one who has expertise in treating suicidal thoughts and behavior

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A PROVIDER FOR SUICIDAL YOUTH

- First, do your homework.
- Requires special training.
- Treatment should be evidence-based.
 - What does that mean?
 - What treatments are evidence-based?

HOW CAN YOU TELL IF A PROVIDER OFFERS EVIDENCE-BASED CARE FOR SUICIDALITY?

1. Follows best practices in suicide risk assessments
2. Obtains a thorough medical and mental health history, including family history and substance use history
3. Assesses parental thoughts about the teen's suicidal ideation and behavior and plans accordingly
4. Develops a suicide safety plan with the teen AND parent
5. Relies on research-based treatments
6. Consistently involves parents and initiates collaboration with other providers (e.g., psychiatrists, pediatricians, school counselors)

EVIDENCE-BASED PROVIDERS WILL ENGAGE IN BEST PRACTICES IN SUICIDE RISK ASSESSMENT

- Intensity, frequency, duration
- Precipitants to suicidal thoughts
- Intent
- Reasons for living
- Methods (including perceptions of lethality)
- Expected outcome
- Details of planning
- Intoxication
- For previous attempts, was the underlying goal achieved?
- Lifetime history of suicidal ideation and behavior, including family members

EVIDENCE-BASED PROVIDERS OBTAIN A THOROUGH MEDICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH HISTORY

- Obtains thorough medical history
 - Recommends physical exam and bloodwork if not up to date to
 - Important to rule out potential medical causes of symptoms
- Obtains a lifetime history of mental health conditions and substance use among teens and family members
 - NOT just those associated with presenting problem
 - Includes assessment of teen trauma history
 - Provides parents with mental health referrals as needed

EVIDENCE-BASED PROVIDERS ASSESS PARENTAL THOUGHTS ABOUT THE TEEN'S SUICIDAL IDEATION AND BEHAVIOR AND PLANS ACCORDINGLY

- Stresses the importance of taking all suicidal statements seriously
- Makes sure parents can provide for safe keeping
 - Can remove means, monitor, avoid volatility, protect
- Develops a safety plan with parents and teens

EVIDENCE-BASED PROVIDERS DEVELOP SAFETY PLANS WITH THE TEEN AND PARENT

Make the Environment Safe: Remove Access	Warning Signs and Vulnerabilities	Things I Can Do on my Own	People who Can Help Distract Me	Adults I Can Ask for Help

Phone numbers of professionals I can ask for help:
Therapist, Emergency services, 24-hour hotlines, 911

EVIDENCE-BASED PROVIDERS RELY ON RESEARCH-BASED TREATMENT FOR MANAGING SUICIDALITY

- Providers have explicit training in the treatment of youth suicidality
- Knows the youth suicide literature and can speak intelligently about treatment
- Uses research-based therapeutic approaches to treat the suicidal ideation and behavior and can describe the studies that support their effectiveness
- Begins each individual session with an assessment of current suicidality
- Asks about events and stressors over past week and prioritizes work on those that increase suicide risk
- Teaches teen skills that will aid in own improvement
- Assigns practice assignments between session
- Knows when to refer teen to a higher level of care

EVIDENCE BASED PROVIDERS CONSISTENTLY INVOLVE PARENTS IN TREATMENT

- Meets with parent(s) every session
- Reviews warning signs for acute suicide risk
- Updates parents on level of suicide risk at every session (per teen report)
- Asks parent about child's mood, suicidal thoughts/behavior, substance use, and stressors
- Engages parent in safety planning and skill instruction
- Updates parents on nature of skills covered with teen
- Initiates and coordinates care with other providers (psychiatrists, pediatricians, **school counselors**, hospital staff, etc.)

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS – WEBSITES TO HELP IDENTIFY EVIDENCE-BASED THERAPISTS

- <http://effectivechildtherapy.org/>
- <http://effectivechildtherapy.fiu.edu/parents>
- <http://www.abct.org/Help/?m=mFindHelp&fa=HowToChooseTherapist>

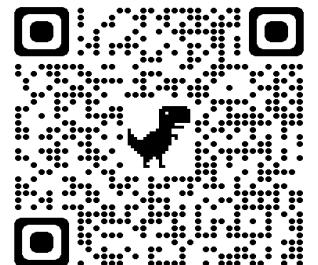
LOCAL RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

EXPERTISE IN EVIDENCE-BASED TREATMENT FOR SUICIDALITY

- George Mason University Center for Psychological Services
 - <http://psyclinic.gmu.edu/>
- Potomac Behavioral Solutions
 - <https://www.pbshealthcare.com/>
- Dr. David Jobes
 - <http://www.wpcdc.com/jobes>

Mental Health Crisis Resources

- Loudoun County Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) 703-777-0320:
24 hours/7 days
- Additional local resources located at Loudoun County Public Schools:



PRIMARY SOURCES

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