

# Mental Health and Suicide Prevention:

What Everyone Should Know

# OUTLINE

- \* Mental Health and Suicide
  - \* How big is this issue?
- \* Mental Illness
  - \* Depression
  - \* Schizophrenia
- \* Suicide
  - \* Who is at risk?
  - \* Warning signs
- \* Suicide prevention
  - \* How can you help?



Mental Health and Suicide Statistics

How big is this Issue?

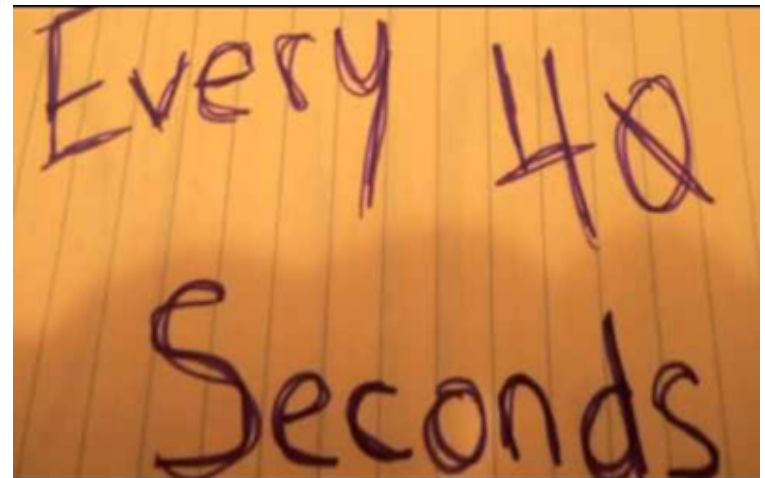
# Mental Health

- \* **1 in 5** people will suffer from depression in their lifetime
- \* **1 in 5 children** aged 9-17 suffers from mental illness.
- \* 1% of the population schizophrenia – that's **340,000**
- \* **Depression** is a leading cause of **medical disability** worldwide



# Suicide

- \* In Canada – nearly 4000 per year – **that's 11 per day**
- \* **9<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death** in Canada
- \* Worldwide – **1 every 40 seconds** – this is more than homicides/war-related deaths.
- \* **20 attempts** for every death



Every 40  
Seconds

# Mental Health and Suicide

- \* **90%** of people who die by suicide have a **mental illness**
- \* **60%** of people who die by suicide have **depression**
- \* **Leading cause of death** for a person with **schizophrenia**

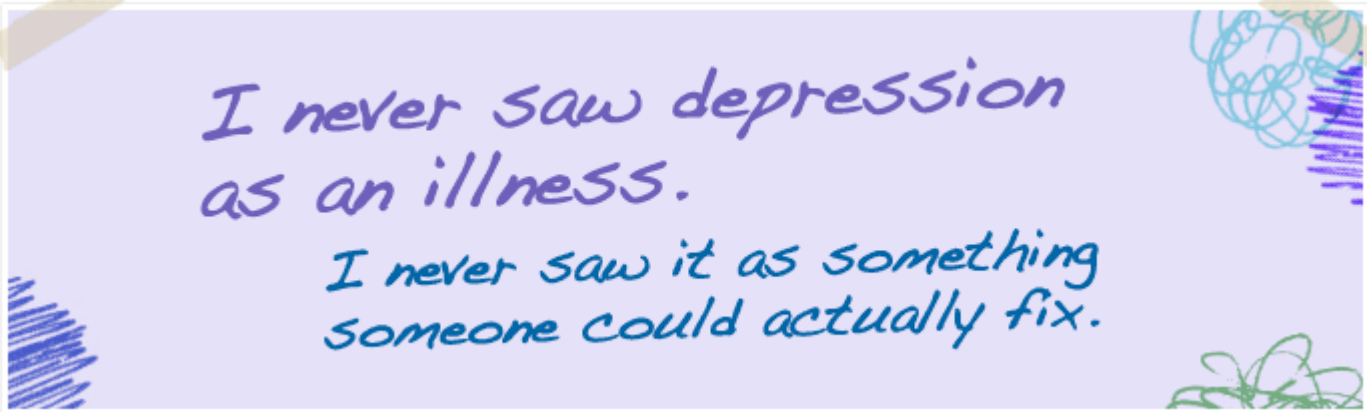


# Mental Health and Suicide

- \* **Less than 20% of children** with mental illness will **get help**
- \* **Only 25% of adults** with mental illness will **get help**
- \* 50% of people with depression will not seek help

# Mental Health and Suicide

- \* There is shame, fear, misunderstanding of mental illness
  - \* Prevents people from seeking help
  - \* Prevents people from recognizing illness in loved ones

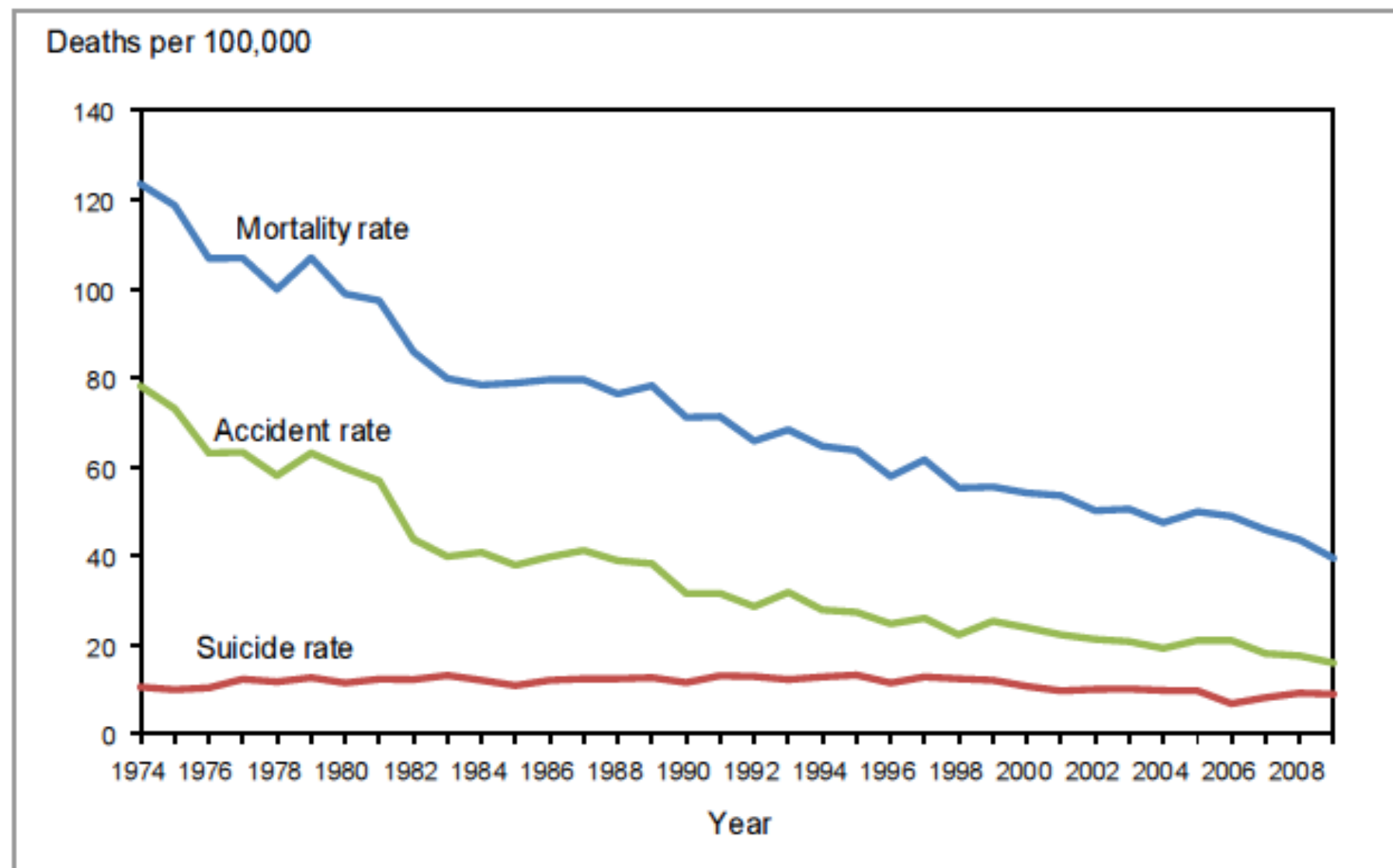


*I never saw depression  
as an illness.*

*I never saw it as something  
someone could actually fix.*



## Age-specific mortality with suicide and accident rates, per 100,000, ages 15 to 19, Canada, 1974 to 2009



Sources: Statistics Canada, *Canadian Vital Statistics Death Database*; Statistics Canada, CANSIM, table 051-0001—*Estimates of population, by age group and sex for July 1, Canada, provinces and territories.*

# SUMMARY

- \* This is a **HUGE** issue!
- \* Mental Health and Suicide effect **EVERYONE**
- \* There is a **link** between mental health and suicide

We need to talk about these issues  
so people can get help

Mental Health:  
Depression

# Depression – What is It?

- \* A mental illness but it is also:
- \* A **MEDICAL** illness
- \* A **COMMON** illness
- \* A **COMPLEX** illness – not just ‘being sad’
  - \* Physical and Emotional symptoms
  - \* Can’t just “snap out of it”
- \* A **TREATABLE** illness

# Depression – Who does it Affect?

- \* 8% of the Canadian population have depression
  - \* That is over **2,700,000** people!
- \* It affects **ANYONE** and **EVERYONE**



# Depression – Who does it Affect?

- \* **ANYONE:**

- \* All ages, education levels, incomes, cultures

- \* Anyone can be depressed, even if his or her life seems to be going well!



# Depression – Who does it Affect?

- \* **EVERYONE:**
- \* Most people have suffered or know someone who has suffered from depression



# Depression – Who does it Affect?

- \* **YOUTH:**

- \* 5% of males aged 12-19

- \* 12% of females aged 12-19

- \* Even young children





# Depression – Who does it Affect?

- \* **YOUTH:**

- \* Most adults developed illness as teenager – not diagnosed
- \* Ignored as ‘normal’ teenage emotions
- \* NOT normal part of growing up!



# Depression – Who does it Affect?

- \* **MEN:**
- \* Societal pressure to not express emotion
- \* Less likely to seek help
- \* Harder to recognize illness
  - \* Often don't express typical 'sadness' but more anger, frustration, or irritability



# Depression – Who does it Affect?

- \* **WOMEN:**

- \* Twice as likely to suffer from depression

- \* Post partum depression – after birth of an infant



# Depression – Who does it Affect?

- \* **ELDERLY:**
- \* Go through many life changes -
- \* symptoms of depression can be ignored as ‘normal’
- \* Depression is NOT normal part of aging



# Depression – People at higher Risk

- \* Depression in family members
- \* Alcohol/drug abuse
- \* Long-term medical illness
- \* Childhood abuse
- \* Poor social support

# Summary - Depression

- \* Common medical/mental illness
- \* Affects everyone
  - \* Youth
  - \* Men
  - \* Women
  - \* Elderly

Symptoms and Warning Signs

# Depression

# Depression – Warning Signs!

\* Symptom = Depressed mood





# Depression – Warning Signs!

- \* You might notice:
  - \* Sadness
  - \* Uncontrollable crying
  - \* Numbness
  - \* Anger
  - \* Irritability



# Depression – Warning Signs!

\* Symptom = Loss of interest



# Depression – Warning Signs!

- \* You might notice:
  - \* Dropping out of activities
  - \* Not talking to friends/family
  - \* Not socializing
  - \* Relationship problems



# Depression – Warning Signs!

\* Symptom = change in sleep habit



# Depression – Warning Signs!

- \* You might notice:
  - \* Trouble sleeping – always tired
  - \* Too much sleep – can't get out of bed



# Depression – Warning Signs!

\* Symptom = Change in Appetite



# Depression – Warning Signs!

- \* You might notice:
  - \* Weight loss
  - \* Not enjoying favorite foods
  - \* Eating too much – weight gain

# Depression – Warning Signs!

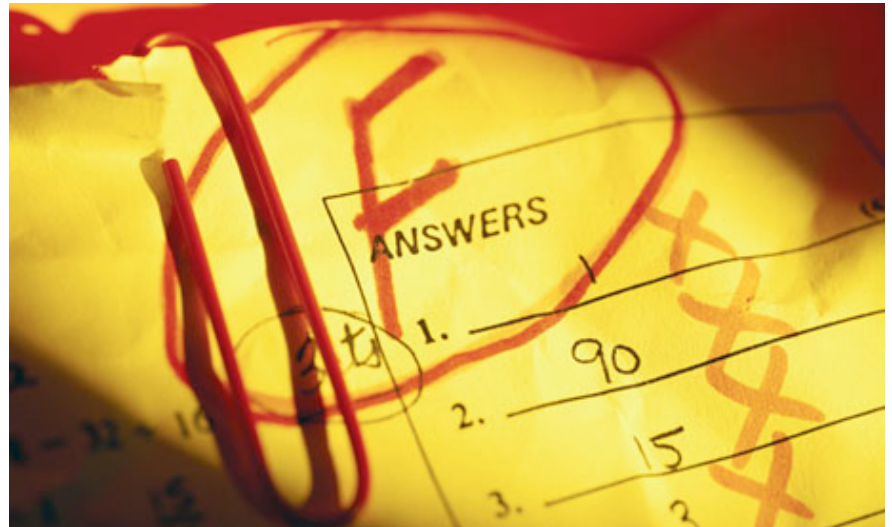
\* Symptom = poor concentration





# Depression – Warning Signs!

- \* You might notice:
  - \* Trouble at work
  - \* Trouble at school
  - \* Forgetting things –  
blamed on ‘getting older’



# Depression – Warning Signs!

- \* Symptom = Feeling Guilt/Worthless

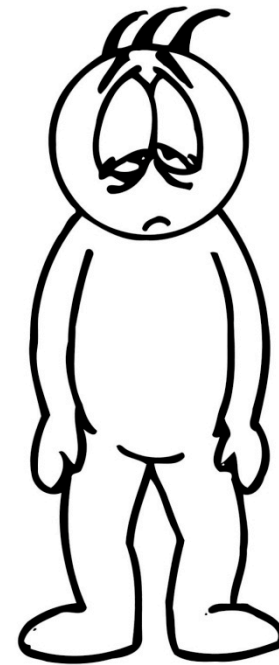


# Depression – Warning Signs!

- \* You might notice:
  - \* Low self-esteem
  - \* Person always putting themselves down
  - \* Person blaming themselves for things that are not their fault

# Depression – Warning Signs!

\* Symptom = low energy



# Depression – Warning Signs!

- \* Symptom = Suicidal Ideation
- \* We will talk about the warning signs in the next topic



# Depression – What can you Do?

- \* If you think you or someone you know could be suffering from depression
- \* Talk about it!
- \* Get help!
  - \* Friends/Family
  - \* Doctor
  - \* Counsellor
  - \* Crisis line



# Depression - Summary

- \* Depression is a **common, treatable**, medical illness
- \* Depression affects **everyone**
- \* Depressions affects a person's **whole life**

# Depression - Summary

- \* Warning signs of depression are:
  - \* Feeling sad, worthless, tired
  - \* Trouble with work, school, relationships
  - \* Trouble sleeping, eating, socializing
- \* Depression is a risk for **suicide**



Mental Health:  
**Schizophrenia**

# Schizophrenia – What is It?

- \* A medical illness
- \* Affects the brain
  - \* What you **think**
  - \* What you **feel**
  - \* What you **see**
  - \* What you **hear**
  - \* How you **act**



# Schizophrenia – What is It?

- \* NOT anyone's fault
- \* VERY disabling
- \* Person suffering needs help
- \* It is TREATABLE

# Schizophrenia – Who is at Risk?

- \* Can affect anyone
- \* Develops in young people – often age **15-25**
- \* Men 1.5 times more than women
- \* Family History



# Schizophrenia – Warning Signs!

- \* More than just  
‘seeing things’ or ‘hearing voices’
- \* Other symptoms develop earlier



# Schizophrenia – Warning Signs!

- \* Change in Behaviour:
  - \* Not showing emotion
  - \* Not showing facial expression
  - \* Not talking
  - \* No interest in spending time with people
  - \* Not taking care of self – showering, getting dressed
  - \* Not doing well at school

# Schizophrenia – What can you Do?

- \* Make sure the person gets help
  - \* Doctor
  - \* Emergency Room
- \* The person will need lots of support
- \* Need to take care of yourself
- \* Schizophrenia Society of BC – Chilliwack branch



# Schizophrenia - Summary

- \* Very **disabling** illness
- \* Affects a person's whole life
- \* Serious but **treatable** illness
- \* Very high risk of **suicide**



# Suicide

# Suicide – Who is at Risk?

- \* Can affect ANYONE
- \* All ages, income levels, education levels, cultures



# Suicide – Who is at Risk?

- \* **YOUTH:**
- \* Second leading cause of death in teenagers
- \* 16% of kids in grades 7-12 in BC have seriously considered suicide.



# Suicide – Who is at Risk?

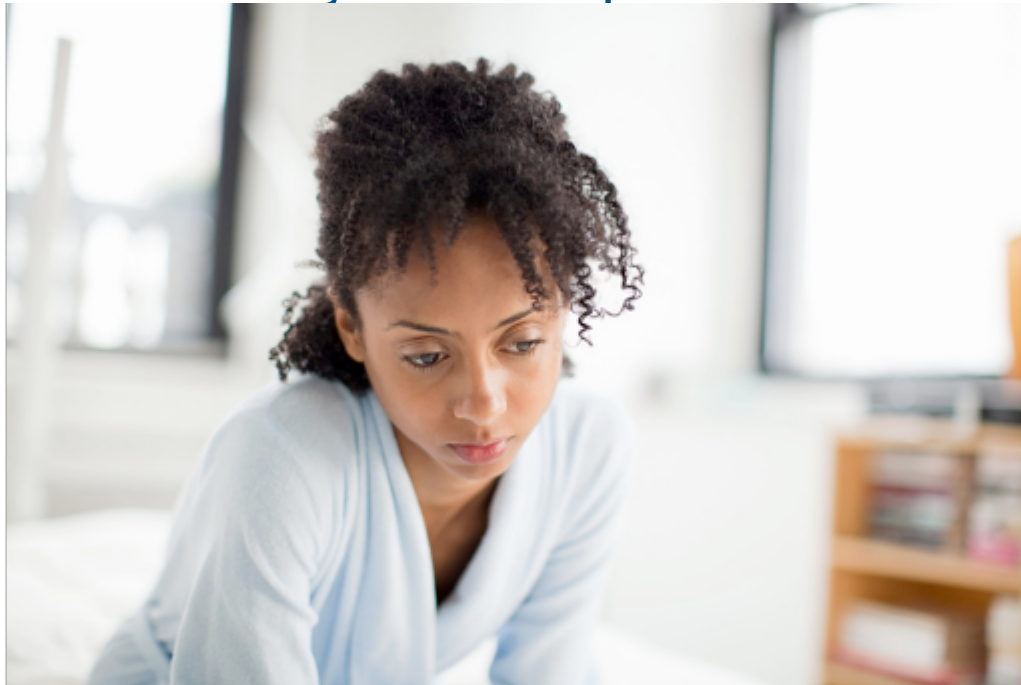
- \* **MEN:**
- \* 4 times more likely to die by suicide than women
- \* Highest rate of suicide is in men aged 44-65.



# Suicide – Who is at Risk?

- \* **WOMEN:**

- \* 3 times more likely to attempt suicide than men



# Suicide – Who is at Risk?

- \* **ELDERLY:**

- \* Second highest rate of suicide is in the elderly



# Suicide – Who is at Risk?

- \* Higher risk groups :
  - \* Mental illness
  - \* Alcohol/drug abuse
  - \* Have attempted suicide in the past
  - \* Have been exposed to suicide in the past
  - \* Childhood abuse
  - \* No social support
  - \* Long term medical illness
  - \* Aboriginal population

# Warning Signs Suicide



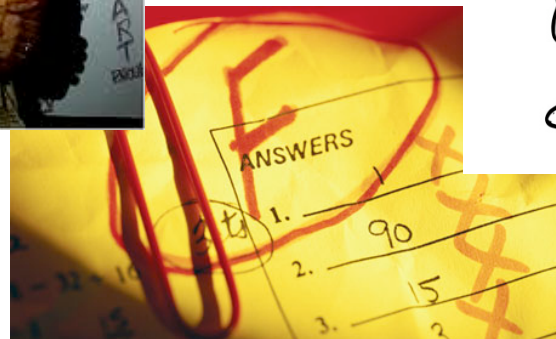
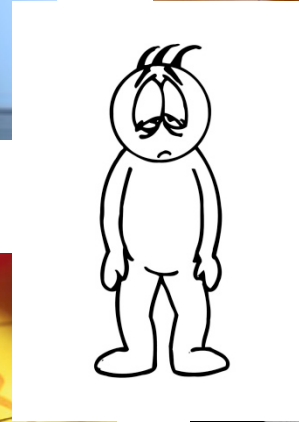
# Suicide – Warning Signs!

**\* Change in Behaviour!**



# Suicide – Warning Signs!

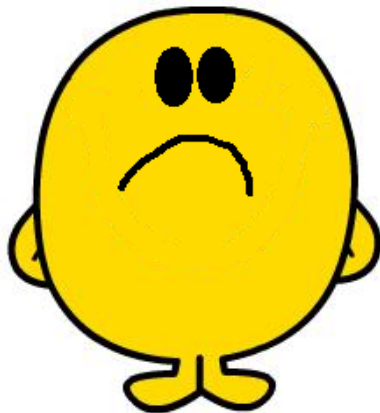
- \* Change in Behaviour:
  - \* Signs of depression



# Suicide – Warning Signs!

- \* Change in Behaviour:

- \* In someone who has seemed really down → Sudden change to very cheerful



# Suicide – Warning Signs!

- \* Change in Behaviour:
  - \* Starting to use drugs/alcohol



# Suicide – Warning Signs!

- \* Change in Behaviour:
  - \* Reckless – taking risks where they might get hurt



**DANGER**

# Suicide – Warning Signs!

- \* Change in Behaviour:
  - \* New interest (reading, writing, talking) in topics like death or dying



# Suicide – Warning Signs!

- \* Change in Behaviour
  - \* Giving away prized possessions
  - \* Unexpectedly making a will



# Suicide – Warning Signs!

- \* **Things someone might say:**
- \* “Everyone would be better off without me”
- \* “I feel so alone”
- \* “Life is not worth living”
- \* “I feel so helpless”

**ANY expression of thoughts of suicide  
should be taken seriously.**



# Suicide - Summary

- \* Serious problem
- \* Common problem
- \* There are warning signs
- \* Take warning signs and threats seriously

# Suicide Prevention

The bottom of the slide features a decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping, wavy lines in various shades of light blue, creating a sense of movement and depth against the white background.

# Prevention – What can you do?

- \* BE AWARE OF WARNING SIGNS
  - \* Don't assume it is a 'phase'



# Prevention – What can you do?

- \* WARNING SIGNS - Things to watch for:
  - \* Physical –
    - \* lack of interest/enjoyment in activities
    - \* Lack of energy
    - \* Lack of sleep
    - \* Loss of appetite
    - \* Physical health complaints



# Prevention – What can you do?

## \* WARNING SIGNS - Things to watch for:

### \* Behaviors:

- \* Crying
- \* Emotional outbursts
- \* Alcohol/drug misuse
- \* Recklessness
- \* Fighting/law breaking
- \* Isolating self
- \* Dropping out of activities/school
- \* Putting affairs in order



# Prevention – What can you do?

- \* **WARNING SIGNS - Things to watch for:**
  - \* Listen for certain thoughts/feelings:
    - \* Wanting to escape
    - \* Feeling they have no future
    - \* Feeling alone, worthless, lonely,
    - \* Feeling helpless, hopeless
    - \* Feeling damaged
    - \* Feeling desperate, angry



# Prevention – What can you do?

- \* ASK –
  - \* invite person to share problems/emotions
  - \* Examples of how to start conversation:
    - \* “You haven’t seemed like yourself lately, is anything wrong?”
    - \* “It seems like something is bothering you, are you ok?”
    - \* “I am worried about you, how have you been doing lately?”



# Prevention – What can you do?

- \* ASK – about suicide
  - \* It is OK to ask
  - \* It will not ‘put the idea in someone’s head’
  - \* Can ask directly,  
“Are you thinking of killing yourself?”





# Prevention – What can you do?

## \* LISTEN

- \* Just listen
- \* Do not judge person's situation
- \* Explore reasons for wanting to die
- \* Show understanding/compassion
- \* Explore reasons for wanting to live



# Prevention – What can you do?

- \* OFFER SUPPORT AND MAKE A SAFE PLAN
  - \* Let person know you care and their life matters to you
  - \* Help person think of other supports in case you aren't available in time of need
  - \* Give them a crisis line number



# Prevention – What can you do?

- \* OFFER SUPPORT AND MAKE A SAFE PLAN
  - \* Safe plan:
    - \* Person can have thoughts of suicide BUT
    - \* Person agrees to not act on suicidal thoughts
    - \* Promises to phone you, friend, crisis line, 911 if feeling like they might act on thoughts
    - \* No alcohol or drugs
    - \* Planned follow up (eg will meet with you, will go to counselling or doctor at specified time)

# Prevention – What can you do?

- \* GET HELP

- \* This is too much for one person to handle!
- \* Assist the person to seek help
  - \* Other friends/family
  - \* Church
  - \* Counsellor
  - \* Doctor
  - \* Crisis line
  - \* Emergency room



# Prevention – What can you do?

IF YOU ARE WORRIED GET HELP IMMEDIATELY

The person may be mad at you but this is better than the person getting hurt or losing their life!

# Prevention – What can you do?

- \* ASSESS RISK

- \* Ask about a plan
- \* Ask about whether they have obtained the means to carry out plan
- \* Ask if they feel they have any support/ resources



# Prevention – What can you do?

- \* GET HELP – when to get help immediately
  - \* If the person has a plan
  - \* If the person has obtained the means to carry out the plan (pills/weapon)
  - \* If the person feels completely alone



# Prevention – What can you do?

- \* GET HELP

- \* Take care of yourself too
- \* You may feel: panic, fear, frustration, anger, resentment, helpless, hopeless
- \* You may need someone to talk to





# Prevention - Resources

- \* Crisis lines:
- \* 24 hour crisis line Chilliwack:
  - \* 1-604-951-8855
  - \* Toll free – 1-877-820-7444
- \* Province wide:
  - \* 1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433)
- \* Kids Help Phone
  - \* 1-800-668-6868



# Prevention - Resources

- \* Family Doctor
- \* Emergency room
- \* Counselling services:
  - \* Child and Youth Mental Health – School Street
  - \* Chilliwack Community Services – Wellington Ave
  - \* Chilliwack Counselling Centre – Patten Ave
  - \* Chilliwack Mental Health – Menholm Road

# Summary – Suicide Prevention

- \* Be aware of the warning signs
- \* Act on warning signs:
  - \* Ask
  - \* Listen
  - \* Offer support
  - \* Assess risk
  - \* Get help

# Summary

- \* Mental Illness and Suicide are common problems
- \* Mental illness is treatable
- \* Suicide is preventable
- \* It is OK to talk about these issues
- \* We should encourage people to talk about these issues and get help!

Thank-you for coming

ANY QUESTIONS?