

Suicide and Depression Resources

Internet Resources

The New York State Office of Mental Health website contains access to various resources for children and families throughout New York State.

<http://www.omh.state.ny.us/>

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) is a national not-for-profit organization exclusively dedicated to understanding and preventing suicide through research and education, and to reaching out to people with mood disorders and those affected by suicide.

<http://www.afsp.org/>

The Suicide Awareness Voices of Education website aims to prevent suicide through public awareness and education, eliminate stigma associated suicide and depression, and serves as a resource to those affected by suicide.

<http://www.save.org>

The Jason Foundation, Inc. is a nationally recognized leader in youth suicide awareness, education and prevention. The site provides information, education programs and resources to parents, educators, youth and others who want to help in the fight against the “silent epidemic” of youth suicide.

<http://www.jasonfoundation.org>

Yellow Ribbon is a comprehensive community-based suicide prevention program that promotes awareness and education, intervention, postvention, collaboration and community building. The desired outcomes for the program are: increased protective factors and help seeking behaviors, and decreased risk factors and suicidal ideation. Curriculums are designed for lay people, professional, EMS/fire and law enforcement and include the elementary-age module and physician's module.

<http://www.yellowribbon.org>

The Suicide Prevention Action Network USA is the nation's only suicide prevention organization dedicated to generate grassroots support among suicide survivors and others to advance public policies that help prevent suicide. SPAN USA's members are people in communities across the country: survivors; people who have attempted suicide or struggled with suicidal thoughts, and their families; professionals serving families and communities; community leaders; and concerned citizens.

<http://www.spanusa.org>

The National Association for School Psychologists’ website has extensive resources on school-focused suicide intervention, information for teens, tips for school personnel and crisis team members, and more through the NASP Crisis Resources link.

<http://www.nasponline.org>

The New York Association of School Psychologists serves children, their families, and the school community by promoting psychological well-being, excellence in education, and sensitivity to diversity through best practices in school psychology. This site provides excellent resources for dealing with troubled students, violence prevention, coping with trauma, creating safe schools, and more.

<http://nyasp.org>

America's Continuing Education Network website serves as an aid to those interested in developing or augmenting youth suicide prevention/intervention programs in their own schools and/or communities. Types of youth suicide prevention programs that are in operation or that have been proposed are described and several exemplary youth suicide prevention programs are provided.

www.ace-network.com/pasprogrmat.htm

Resources for Parents

Helping Your Depressed Teenager: A Guide for Parents and Caregivers. Oster, Gerald D. & Montgomery, Sarah S. (1995). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

The authors, who are experts in this field, have created a highly readable practical guide to dealing with teen depression and suicide. They help you distinguish the subtle and sometimes not so subtle signs that something is seriously wrong. Some of the useful information provided includes: what families can do to prevent teen depression, how to tell the difference between moodiness and depression, how to read the warning signs of a troubled teenager, how to know when professional help is needed and where to find it, and how to choose the right treatment options for your teen.

The Optimistic Child: Proven Program to Safeguard Children from Depression & Build Lifelong Resilience. Seligman, Martin E. (1995). New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Seligman's mission is to teach parents and other concerned adults how to instill in children a sense of optimism and personal mastery. He proposes that self-esteem comes from mastering challenges, overcoming frustration and experiencing individual achievement. Seligman uses anecdotes, dialogues, cartoons and exercises, and offers a concrete plan of action based on techniques of self-evaluation and social interaction.

Helping Your Child Cope with Depression and Suicidal Thoughts (The Jossey-Bass Psychology Series). Shamo, Tonia K. & Patros, Philip G. (1996).

In this book, the authors show parents: how to learn to talk, listen, and communicate effectively with a depressed child; what situations can cause a child or adolescent to wish to commit suicide; what signs to watch for; myths and misinformation about suicide; how to determine the risk of suicide; and how to intervene.

"Help Me, I'm Sad": Recognizing, Treating, and Preventing Childhood and Adolescent Depression. Fassler, David G. & Dumas, Lynne S. (1998). Penguin Books.

This book discusses how to tell if your child is at risk; how to spot symptoms; depression's link with other problems and its impact on the family; teen suicide; finding the right diagnosis, therapist, and treatment; and what you can do to help. For parents who have--or suspect they may have--depressed children, this is practical, easy-to-understand information.

But I Didn't Say Goodbye: For parents and professionals helping child suicide survivors. Rubel, Barbara. (1999). New Jersey: Griefwork Center, Inc.

This book is a highly recommended resource to help children deal with the difficult and often hidden and stigmatizing after effects of suicide. It takes a straightforward approach to helping child suicide survivors. At the end of each chapter the author has included easy to read worksheets and exercises for parents to engage in with their children. Barbara Rubel is also available for workshops, presentations, and training.

A Broken Heart Still Beats. McCracken, Anne & Semel, Mary. (1999). Minnesota: Hazeldon Publications.

This is an anthology of poetry, fiction, and essays compiled from the literature of loss and grief. The authors have included pieces from everyone from William Shakespeare to Dwight D. Eisenhower whose works explore the shock, the grief, and the search for meaning that come with the death of a child. Each piece is clearly introduced explaining the details surrounding the person's loss.

Resources for Teachers and Administrators

Teachers may use literature as a way to understand and help students with problems they may be experiencing. Through the exploration of stories, discussion, and reflections on their own experiences, students can begin to recognize and understand the complexities of their world.

Developing Resiliency Through Children's Literature: A Guide for Teachers and Librarians, K-8. Cecil, Nancy L. & Roberts, Patricia L. (1992). MacFarland & Company.

This book details about 200 selections from children's literature featuring characters who demonstrate positive coping behaviors. The selections are divided into four parts: folk literature, historical fiction, biographies and contemporary fiction. Professionals who work with children may utilize this book in teaching and building resiliency.

Helping Students Overcome Depression and Anxiety: A Practical Guide. Merrel, Kenneth, W. (2001). New York: The Guilford Press.

This guide contains thorough, specific discussions of techniques that teachers can use with students to alleviate common emotional stresses, without being either overly technical or too general. It lists guidelines for teacher assessment, target behaviors for students, steps in social skills training, and more. The book provides useful, practical methods for teachers and counselors to help students resolve a variety of problems that they experience, particularly in adolescence.

School-based Suicide Prevention Programs

BRIDGES: Building Skills to Reach Suicidal Youth. (908) 463-4109

Bridges is a training program for selected school personnel (e.g., guidance staff, child study teams, and teachers) to help them to develop skills in assessing suicide risk, to intervene in the crisis of suicidal youth, to intervene with families and peers of suicidal youth, to follow referral procedures, and to develop school policies and procedures for suicide prevention and postvention.

SOS (Signs of Suicide): Suicide Prevention Program for High Schools. (781) 239-0071

The SOS Signs of Suicide Program is a nationally recognized program for secondary school students. The main teaching tool of the SOS program is a video that teaches students how to identify symptoms of depression and suicidality in themselves or their friends and encourages help-seeking. The program's primary objectives are to educate teens that depression is a treatable illness and to equip them to respond to a potential suicide in a friend or family member using the SOS technique.

Team Up to Save Lives CD-ROM. 1-800-627-7646

The Team Up to Save Lives CD-ROM program is an informational resource that addresses adolescent suicide and provides a framework from which schools can develop an effective suicide prevention program. It includes instructional videos which show teachers how to communicate with at-risk youth and their parents, detailed lessons, and an interactive evaluation component.

Resources for Children and Teens

Glad Monster, Sad Monster. Miranda, Anne & Emberley, Ed (Illustrator). (1997).

Children who lack the vocabulary to distinguish the emotions they're feeling may find some comfort in this book, which makes use of masks to unmask feelings. Monsters of different colors explain what makes them feel glad, sad, loving, worried, silly, and angry.

Fold-out masks encourage readers to talk about their feelings. Children and adults can discuss feelings in an easy and non-threatening way.

When Nothing Matters Anymore: A Survival Guide for Depressed Teens. Cobain, Bev. (1998). Minnesota: Free Spirit Publishing, Inc.

A guide to understanding and coping with depression, discussing the different types, how and why the condition begins, how it may be linked to substance abuse or suicide, and how to get help. The author, a cousin of singer Curt Cobain, wrote this book to help make sense of her cousin's suicide. It helps adolescents understand what they might be feeling when they are depressed. It discusses how to interrupt the downward spiral and find a way out. The book covers both social and biological aspects of depression.

The Adolescent Depression Workbook. Copeland, Maryellen & Copans, Stuart. (1998). Peach Press.

This book was written to help adolescents who are depressed, sad, thinking about hurting themselves, dropping out of their old activities that used to make them feel good about themselves, and irritable and/or angry with their parents. Used successfully by other young adults, this book will help you through the process of finding help for yourself and getting on the road to feeling happy and healthy.

The Power to Prevent Suicide: A Guide for Teens Helping Teens. Nelson, Ph.D., Richard E. & Galas, Judith C. (1994). Free Spirit Publishing.

For grade 6 and up, this book is an excellent, practical manual that is easy to read and understand. The authors' premise is that, as trusted and caring friends, young adults have a special role in the prevention of suicide among their peers, and discuss what to do if they observe the danger signals. Suggestions are given for assessing the degrees of concern and tips on "active listening."

Suicide Hotlines

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433): National Suicide Hotline

1-888-290-7233: Safe Place