

Informative Speech Outline

Introduction

I. Attention-getter

DATE?

There are certain topics that are taboo to discuss in today's society. In the Bay Area, one such topic might be the Dodgers winning the World Series. Others are more serious and could include politics and religion, or anything controversial or upsetting to listeners, like assault or abuse. Unfortunately, suicide is one of these taboo topics. Though it's often ignored, statistics prove it's a major problem. According to the Center for Disease Control, over 38,000 people committed suicide in the United States in 2010 – an average of 105 people a day. Among teens and young adults, ages 15-24, suicide is the third leading cause of death and accounts for 20% of all deaths annually. That means that within a year, nearly a quarter of all young adult deaths are through suicide. [VISUAL AID]. That's a huge percentage. Throughout high school I worked as a counselor for a teen suicide and crisis prevention website called OnYourMind.net, and one thing I learned from there is that we can't be afraid to talk about the issues of suicide. The more we know about it the more we understand it, and the more we understand it the better we'll be able to identify, reach out, and support and save our peers in need.

II. The purpose of my talk is to inform you about teen suicide: its causes, how to identify its signs, and how to help those who are suicidal.

Body

I. My first main point is to explore the causes of teen suicide.

A. The main cause of suicide among young people is depression, other mental illnesses, and substance-related disorders.

1. According to parenting website KidsHealth.org, as many as 1 in 8 teenagers suffer from depression in the United States, which is the most common reason for suicide. (DATE?)

a. Depression, as defined by WebMD, is when feelings of intense sadness, helplessness, hopelessness, and worthlessness persist for many days to weeks at a time and prevent one from functioning normally in his or her everyday life. (DATE?)

Is this a quote?

b. There are many different types of depression, such as clinical depression and major depression, and depression-related mental illnesses like bipolar disorder. Each of these illnesses negatively impacts the mood of an individual, and, when left untreated, often lead to suicidal thoughts.

2. Substance addiction can also lead to suicide.

a. Addiction to drugs and alcohol causes the brain to slow or stop producing chemicals in the brain that make one happy, forcing an addicted person to rely on "highs" from stimulants to feel good. Once these artificial highs drop, the person is left feeling awful, low and depressed.

b. Drugs and alcohol also limit common sense and black rational decision-making, so impulsive actions, like committing suicide, can be more likely when a person is high or intoxicated.

c. Addiction to drugs and alcohol tends to isolate an individual, pushing him or her away from loved ones, school, and other positive influences, so the person in need feels he has nowhere to turn to escape his downward spiral, which can lead to suicidal thoughts.

B. Events can occur in one's life that can trigger suicidal thoughts.

1. Things like major disappointment, rejection, or failure, loss (like a death in the family or a bad breakup), or witnessing family turmoil can all trigger thoughts of suicide.

2. Triggers can lead a person into a downward spiral of hopelessness and sadness, especially when coupled with a mental illness or addiction, from which he or she feels there is no escape from.

II. My second main point is ^{to explain} how to identify the signs of suicide.

A. Common indicators are the same as the symptoms for many mental and substance-related disorders.

1. Extreme personality changes, loss of interest in activities, significant loss or gain in appetite, loss of energy, withdrawal from family and friends, poor academic performance, and giving away one's favorite belongings are a few examples of suicidal indicators. [VISUAL AID]

2. Exhibiting these symptoms doesn't automatically mean a person is suicidal.
 - a. Before confronting the person in question, judge whether or not such behavior is strange to him. If he's normally reserved, fatigued, or gets bad grades, for example, he might not be considering suicide.
 - b. Make sure to communicate with the person exhibiting suicidal signs before jumping to conclusions.
- B. Any talk of suicide should be taken seriously and paid close attention to.
 1. An estimated 80% of those who commit suicide give some warning or mention their feelings to family members or friends.
 2. Don't ignore jokes or off-handed comments about suicide.
 - a. The person may be reaching out for help or seeking comfort or worth in an underhanded way.
 - b. Contrary to popular belief, bringing up or talking about suicide will not put the idea into a person's head.
- III. My third main point is ^{to explain} how to help those who are suicidal.
 - A. If you find out that someone is considering suicide, he or she needs professional care as soon as possible.
 1. You can help the person find a suicide hotline or online chat room.
 - a. Allows the person to anonymously reach out for help.
 - b. There are many websites and hotlines, both local and national, which can give aid to a suicidal person. Google can be a great tool in finding good, legitimate resources.
 2. You can help the person find a counselor or therapist for professional help.
 - a. A professional will be able to support the person and/or prescribe medication he or she needs to live a happy, functioning life.

- b. If you're unsure where to go or to start looking, school counselors are highly trained and can be great resources to go to. They can also refer you and the person in need to good doctors, counselors, and therapists that meet the person's needs.
- B. If you find out that someone IS going to commit suicide, you must take immediate action.
 - 1. Try to figure out whether the person has a plan in place or not.
 - a. Ask questions like, "Have you thought about how you'd do it?" or "Do you have everything you're going to use?" or "When are you planning to do it?"
 - b. If there is a defined plan set up, you need to either take the person to the nearest hospital or psychiatric ward, or call 911 and alert them to the threat.
 - 2. Remember, you are trying to save a life, so you're not tattling or betraying someone's trust by keeping that person safe.
 - a. An overwhelming majority of teens that hear about a suicide threat keep it to themselves, resulting in the death of a friend or loved one.
 - b. Under such circumstances, no action on your part should be considered too extreme. Protecting another person's life is the most important thing you can do.

Conclusion

- I. The purpose of my talk today was to teach you about the causes, the identifiers, and life-saving procedures for teen suicide.
 - A. Teen suicide is usually caused by a mental illness, like depression, by substance-related disorders, and by triggers that lead to intense feelings of hopelessness and sadness.
 - B. The signs of suicide are the same for many mental illnesses and substance disorders, and any talk of suicide should be paid close attention to.
 - C. If someone is suicidal, depending on whether a plan is set up or not, he or she needs either counseling and professional support, through either a hotline, website or doctor, or needs to be taken to the hospital

immediately to prevent an immediate suicide attempt. Remember, when you're saving someone's life, you're not betraying his or her trust, no matter what action you have to take.

- II. I hope that my talk today has made the topic of suicide a lot less confusing and scary. It is a real issue, but there are real ways to solve it. The more we know about suicide, the more we'll feel comfortable talking about it, reaching out to those in needs, and helping our peers in need.

Bibliography

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Checklist for Using Presentation Aids

- ___ Will my presentation aid enhance understanding?
- ___ Is my presentation aid easy to understand?
- ___ Is there enough information on my presentation aid?
- ___ Is there too much information on my presentation aid?
- ___ Is my presentation aid neat?
- ___ Is the print on my presentation aid large enough for all audience members to read?
- ___ Is everything on my presentation aid drawn to scale?
- ___ Do I have the necessary equipment to use my presentation aid?
- ___ Do I know how to use the equipment?
- ___ Will I need tape or thumbtacks to position my presentation aid?
- ___ Have I practiced presenting my speech using my presentation aid?
- ___ Could I give my speech just as well, if not better, without my presentation aid?

(STAPLE TO OUTLINE)

NOT COMPLETED
BUT OKAY --
YOU USED
VISUAL AIDS WELL