Grade 9 Sample Lesson Plan:
Unit 11 – Suicide Prevention: Finding the Words

SOLs

- 9.1 N Identify signs and symptoms of depression, risk factors for suicide, and risk factors for other self-destructive behaviors.
- 9.3 L Determine how to help a friend exhibiting signs of depression, anxiety, disordered eating, or other self-harming behavior

Objectives/Goals

- Students will be able to identify the warning signs for depression and suicide
- Students will be able to identify risk factors for suicide
- Students will be able to know how to help a friend who is exhibiting signs of mental illness like depression.
- Students will be able to understand the importance of emotional health and will be able to identify when and where to seek support for self and others.

Materials

- Prevention of Suicide ppt
- Prevention of Suicide Kahoot.it

  https://play.kahoot.it/#/k/e479bd57-3f78-46ef-8246-63a319b1f619
- Positive Coping Skills (Printed handouts)
- Student Support (Printed handouts)
- Suicide Prevention: Exit Ticket Reflection (Printed handouts)
- Dialogue Role Play for Suicide Prevention (handout)
- Know the Signs: Pain Isn't Always Obvious (Poster)
- Projector and white screen or large monitor, and computer with online access

Procedure

- At the end of class prior to the Suicide Prevention Lesson, explain to the students you will be discussing suicide prevention. Allow students to stay after class to chat with you in case they feel uncomfortable participating in the forthcoming lesson.
  - Share Goals/Objectives:
  - Students will be able to identify the warning signs for depression and suicide
  - Students will be able to identify risk factors and warning signs for suicide
  - Students will be able to know how to help a friend who is exhibiting signs of mental illness like depression.

  - Students will be able to understand the importance of emotional health and will be able to identify when and where to seek support for self and others.
- On the projector show Student Support on Campus (handout).
- As a class, students will identify 3 trusted staff members on campus they can turn to.
- Names, email, phone #'s, office #
- On the projector show Positive Coping Skills (handout) on the screen.
- Pass out Positive Coping Skills handout have students pair up and get out of their seat and read through the handout together.
- Discuss why mental/emotional health matters.
- Analogy aspects of health lie on the outside of a wheel. If you neglect an aspect of health, the wheel will not roll well. Many people neglect their mental health but focus on their physical health.
- *Most people focus on their physical health.
- Share Prevention of Suicide-ppt

Assessment Idea

- Play Prevention of Suicide Kahoot.it https://play.kahoot.it/#/lobby?quizId=e479bd57-3f78-46ef-8246-63a319b1f619
- Dialogue Role Play for Suicide Prevention (handout)
- Suicide Prevention: Exit Ticket Reflection

References

- Suicide Prevention Dialogue Cards
- Suicide Prevention Tool kit https://www.sccgov.org/sites/bhd/Services/SP/Documents/2017/heard-toolkit-07-01-17.pdf
- Kimberly Ohara-Borowski M.Ed. Ocean View High School
- NAMI Fact Sheet: Mental Health Facts Teens and Children
- Adolescent Depression Slideshare https://www.slideshare.net/UCSFPsychiatry/adolescent- depression-what-we-all-should-know
- https://www.openpediatrics.org/course/break-free-depression

Handout

The next page includes a handout for the lesson. The handout is designed for print use only.

POSITIVE COPING SKILLS

Talking

- Talking with a parent or other family member
- Talking with a trusted staff member at school
- Calling a friend
- Calling a crisis line or helpline

Writing

- Writing in a journal or diary
- Writing with a stream of consciousness (writing all things you are feeling without stopping to think about what you're writing)
- Write poetry
- Writing a song (or lyrics to your favorite song)
- Writing a letter to a friend
- Writing a story

Exercise

- Go for a run
- Go for a walk
- Go skateboarding or rollerblading
- Do push-ups, sit-ups, pull-ups or jumping jacks
- Play a sport
- Try yoga
- Lift weights
- Hit a punching bag
- Go for a bike ride
- Go swimming
- Download a fitness app

Artistic Expression

- Sing
- Dance
- Draw or paint a picture
- Sculpt an object (using play-doh)
- Make a collage that shows how you feel
- Play a musical instrument
- Create music on an app or program
- Taking pictures of nature, friends, family of you

Relaxation

- Deep breathing
- Try a meditation app
- Listening to music
- Watching tv
- Laying in the sun
- Counting to ten backwards
- Taking a bath or shower
- Gripping a 'stress ball'
- Reading an inspirational book magazine or comic book

Miscellaneous

- Walking your dog
- Playing a board game
- Playing video games or go online
- Cooking
- Cleaning
- Yelling into the wind

Student Support

Name School Psychologist Room #	Name School Counselor Room #	Name School Counselor Room #

GET THE SUPPORT YOU NEED TO GET THROUGH EACH DAY.

National Suicide Prevention Hotline	1-800-273-TALK (8255)
National Suicide Hotline	1-800-784-2433
National Alliance on Mental Illness Warm Line	1-800-950-NAMI (6264)
National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence, Inc	1-800-NCA-CALL or 800-622-2255
National Sexual Assault Hotline	1-800-656-HOPE or 800-656-4673
National Runaway Safeline	1-800-RUNAWAY or 800-786-2929
National Human Trafficking Hotline	1-888- 373-7888
TREVOR Lifeline: LGBTQ youth-focus	1-866-488-7386

For More Help Dial 2-1-1

PHYSICAL
SOCIAL
ASPECTS OF HEALTH
MENTAL/EMOTIONAL
SPIRITUAL
I LOVE YOU GUYS
positive

Suicide Prevention Lesson Exit Ticket
Name: Period:

Describe three things you learned today from our Suicide Prevention Lesson.

Name two trusted adults you can turn to for help.
1. 2.

One friend you can turn to for help.

- ❑ **I would like to talk to someone right away.**
- ❑ **I would like to make an appointment to talk to someone.**
- ❑ **I don't need to talk to anyone at the moment but thank you.**

Remember:
A.C.T on the F.A.C.T S
1. **Acknowledge 2. Care 3.Tell**

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Finding the Words: A.C.T Suicide Prevention

Acknowledge: Start the conversation

“I've noticed that you've mentioned feeling hopeless a lot lately…"

Acknowledge: Start the conversation

"Sometimes when people feel like that, they are thinking about suicide. Are you thinking about suicide?"

Acknowledge: Start the conversation

"Are you thinking about ending your life?"

If they say, “yes”
Stay calm
Do not leave the person
Call 911
Or the Suicide Prevention Hotline Number

Care: Listen, express concern and reassure

"I can imagine how tough this must be for you. I understand when you say that you aren't sure if you want to live or die. But have you always wanted to die? Well, maybe there's a chance you won't feel this way forever. I can help"

Do:
Listen to the reasons the person has for both living and dying. Validate that they are considering both options and underscore that living is an option for them.

Care: Listen, express concern and reassure

"I'm deeply concerned about you and I want you to know that help is available to get you through this."

Do:
Let the person know you care. Letting them know that you take their situation seriously, and you are genuinely concerned about them, will go a long way in your effort to support them.

Care: Create a Safety Plan

"Is there someone you can call if you think you may act on your thoughts of suicide?"

Do: Create a safety plan together. Ask the person what will help keep them safe until they meet with a professional.

Care: Create a Safety Plan

"Do you have any weapons or prescription medications in the house?"

Ask the person if they have access to any lethal means (weapons, medications, etc) and help remove them from the vicinity. (Another friend, family member or law enforcement agent may be needed to assist with this.)

Do:
Do not put yourself in danger; if you are concerned about your own safety, call 911.

Care: Create a Safety Plan

"Will you promise me that you will not drink or at least have someone monitor your drinking until we can get you help?"

Do: Ask the person if they will refrain from using alcohol and other drugs or agree to have someone monitor their use.

Care: Create a Safety Plan

"Please promise me that you will not harm yourself or act on any thoughts of suicide until you meet with a professional."
Do:
Get a verbal commitment that the person will not act upon thoughts of suicide until they have met with a professional.

Tell: Get Help

"I understand if it feels awkward to go see a counselor. But there is a phone number we can call to talk to somebody. Maybe they can help?"

Provide the person with the resources you have come prepared with. Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline anytime at 1-800-273-8255.

If you feel the situation is critical, take the person to a nearby Emergency Room or walk-in psychiatric crisis clinic or call 9-1-1.

Tell: Get Help

"I understand if it feels awkward to go see a school counselor/psychologist. But their job is to help us. Let's walk over together and chat with them"

Things you should never say:

"Don't worry, I won't tell anyone. Your secret is safe with me."

Don't promise secrecy. The person may say that they don't want you to tell anyone that they are suicidal.

Say this instead: "I care about you too much to keep a secret like this. You need help and I am here to help you get it."

You may be concerned that they will be upset with you, but when someone's life is at risk, it is more important to ensure their safety.

"You're not thinking about suicide, are you?" OR, "You're not thinking about doing something stupid, are you?

(Don't ask in a way that indicates you want "No" for an answer)

"Fine! If you want to be selfish and kill yourself then go right ahead! See if I care."

Don't tell the person to do it. You may want to shout in frustration or anger, but this is the most dangerous thing you can say.

Suicide Prevention Dialogue
Find the Words
At School

John: "I've noticed that you've mentioned feeling hopeless a lot lately..."

Sam: "I have. There is a lot going on in my life right now."

John: "I am sorry you are hurting. I could only imagine what you are going through."

Sam: "It's a lot."

John: "I'm really concerned about you and I want you to know that help is available to get you through this."

Sam: "I thought of asking for help but..."

John: "Let's talk with our school [insert:nurse/psychologist/counselor/trusted adult]. I am going to walk with you to their office now. Nobody should have to go through what you are going through alone."

John stays with Sam and walks them to a trusted adult on campus.

Suicide Prevention Dialogue

Find the Words

Friday night

Cameryn: "I've noticed that you've mentioned feeling sad and hopeless lately based on your insta and snap posts. It made me scared when you started talking about death and dying."

Brook: "I have been really sad but don't worry about it. It's none of your business."

Cameryn: "It is my business because I care about you. Are you thinking of ending your life?"

Brook: "I've thought about it."

Cameryn: [Stays calm & takes a deep breath]. "I am not leaving you alone. I can imagine how tough this must be for you. I understand when you say that you aren't sure if you want to live or die. But have you always wanted to die? Well, maybe there's a chance you won't feel this way forever. I can help you get through this."

Brook: "Nobody can help me or will understand my situation."

Cameryn: "Please promise me that you will not harm yourself or act on any thoughts of suicide until you meet with a Professional."

Brook: "Ok, I can do that but who is up this late at night to call?"

Cameryn: "We can call the Suicide Prevention Hotline number together

1-800-273-8255. I understand it might feel awkward to call a hotline and to speak to a counselor. But I am confident they can help us."

Brook and Cameryn call the Suicide Prevention Hotline together.

Pain Isn't Alway Obvious

A.C.T on the Facts

*Withdrawal *Changes in Sleep *Reckless Behavior
*Personality Change *Neglect Physical Appearance
*Physical Pain *Substance Abuse *Loss of Interest
*Sudden Mood Changes *Giving Away Belongings

1 Acknowledge: Start the Conversation

"I have noticed you have been sad lately?"

2 Care: Listen, Express, Concern & Reassure

"I can imagine how tough this must be for you."

3 Care: Create a Safety Plan

"Is there someone we can call if you have thoughts of hurting yourself?"

Do you have any weapons or drugs available at your house?

4 Tell: Get Help

- If they are going to hurt themselves right there "Call 911"
- Find a Trusted Adult who can Find Professional Help
- Suicide Prevention Hotline Number 1-800-273-8255

http://www.suicideispreventable.org/

Mental Health Facts
CHILDREN & TEENS

Fact: 1 in 5 children ages 13-18 have, or will have a serious mental illness.[1]

20% — 20% of youth ages 13-18 live a with mental health condition[1]

11% — 11% of youth have a mood disorder[1]

10% — 10% of youth have a behavior or conduct disorder[1]

8% — 8% of youth have an anxiety disorder[1]

Impact

50% — 50% of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14 and 75% by age 24.[1]

10 yrs — The average delay between onset of symptoms and intervention is 8-10 years.[1]

37% — 37% of students with a mental health condition age 14 and older drop out of school—the highest dropout rate of any disability group.[1]

70% — 70% of youth in state and local juvenile justice systems have a mental illness.[1]

Suicide

3rd — Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death in youth ages 10 - 24.[1]

90% — 90% of those who died by suicide had an underlying mental illness.[1]

Warning Signs

- Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than 2 weeks (e.g., crying regularly, feeling fatigued, feeling unmotivated).
- Trying to harm or kill oneself or making plans to do so.
- Out-of-control, risk-taking behaviors that can cause harm to self or others.
- Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart, physical discomfort or fast breathing.
- Not eating, throwing up or using laxatives to lose weight; significant weight loss or gain.
- Severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships.
- Repeated use of drugs or alcohol.
- Drastic changes in behavior, personality or sleeping habits (e.g., waking up early and acting agitated).
- Extreme difficulty in concentrating or staying still that can lead to failure in school.
- Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities like hanging out with friends or going to classes.

4 Things Parents Can Do

- Talk with your pediatrician
- Get a referral to a mental health specialist
- Work with the school
- Connect with other families

[1] This document cites statistics provided by the National Institute of Mental Health. www.nimh.nih.gov

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twitter.com/NAMIcommunicate

NAMI
National Alliance on Mental Illness
www.nami.org

Feelings Chart

	How I Feel	What I can do:
5	**I need some help!**	❏ Talk it out with a trusted adult. ❏ Ask to take a break ❏ Use your favorite positive coping strategy
4	**I'm really upset.**	❏ Talk it out with a trusted adult if needed ❏ Take a deep breath and count backwards from 10 ❏ Ask to take a break ❏ Walk it out

3	**I've got a problem.**	❏ Take a deep breath and count backwards from 10
		❏ Identify the problem
		  ❏ Find a positive solution to your problem
		  ❏ Is it something that can wait or do you need to solve it now?
		❏ Still need help solving the problem ask a trusted adult

2	**Things are pretty good.**	★ Be in the moment. ★ Remember in life all humans experience ups and downs.
1	**Feeling Great!**	★ Enjoy the feeling! ★ Be in the moment. ★ Identify how your body feels when you are feeling great!