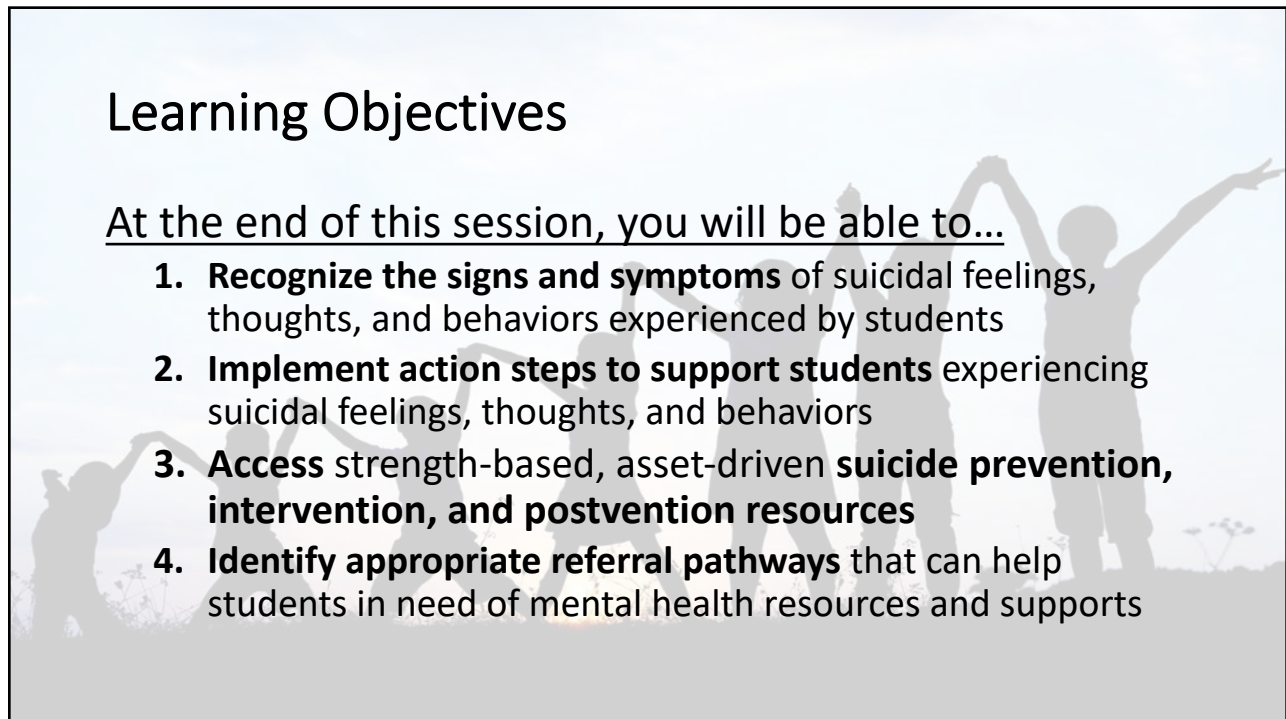




MH/SEL Summit Suicide Screening and Symptoms

Debra Robison, MA, LSW
Dawna-Cricket-Martita Meehan, Ph.D.
Center for School-Based Mental Health Programs
Miami University

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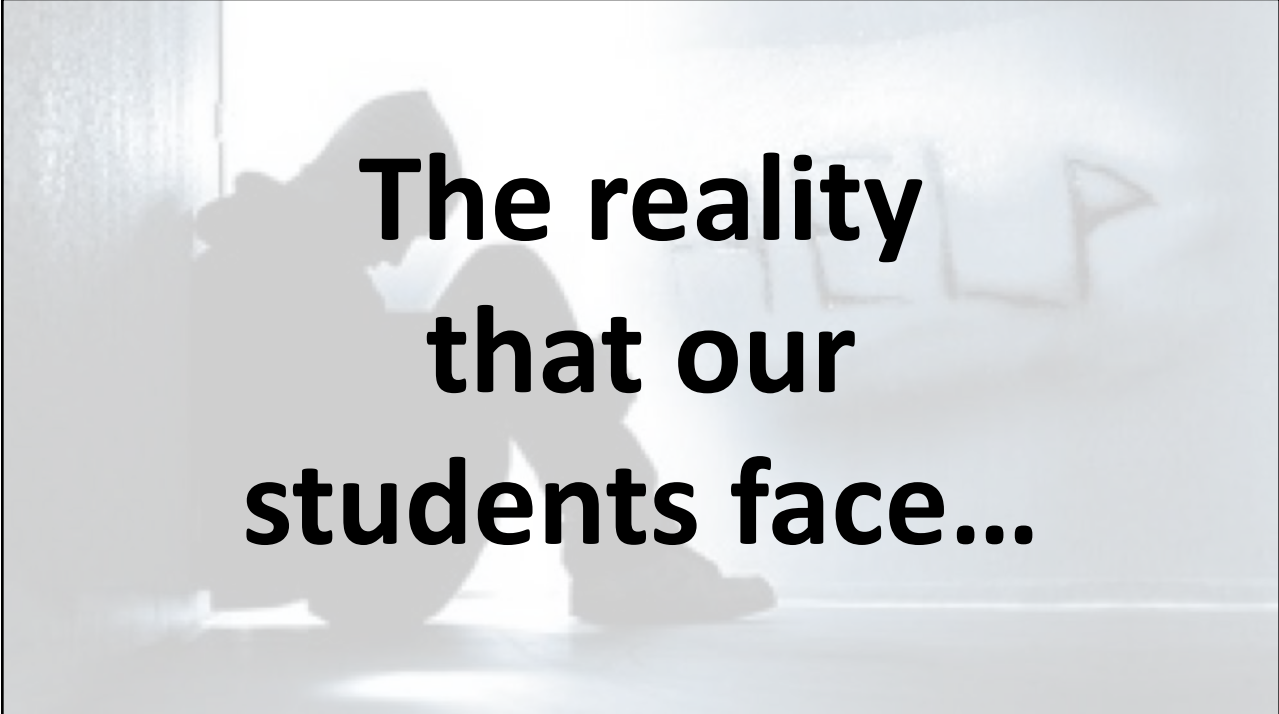


Learning Objectives

At the end of this session, you will be able to...

- 1. Recognize the signs and symptoms** of suicidal feelings, thoughts, and behaviors experienced by students
- 2. Implement action steps to support students** experiencing suicidal feelings, thoughts, and behaviors
- 3. Access strength-based, asset-driven suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention resources**
- 4. Identify appropriate referral pathways** that can help students in need of mental health resources and supports

2



The reality that our students face...

3

- **1 in 6** school-aged youth: significant impairments in life functioning due to a mental illness (e.g., ADHD, behavioral problems, conduct problems, anxiety, and/or depression)
- **1 in 4** youth: growing up in poverty and may be exposed to violence, chronic insecurity, loss, hardship, and disruption of life
- **1 in 5** youth: high levels of traumatic adverse childhood experiences
- **1 in 4** students: bullied by peers
- **1 in 10** adolescents: victim of physical violence by a dating partner
- Suicide is 2nd leading cause of death for youth (ages of 10-24)

4

- In Ohio, **most** youth who die by suicide **are male and non-Hispanic Whites**.
- Among Ohio high school students,
 - **14% seriously considered attempting suicide.**
 - **6% reported attempting suicide.**
 - **26% reported feeling so sad or hopeless they stopped doing usual activities.**
- **On average, every high school will have 1 student complete suicide every 5 years.**
- Rate of suicide is **4 times higher for lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) youth** compared to heterosexual youth.
- **90% of all people who die by suicide had at least one mental health disorder.**

5

Oftentimes, we ask...

**“What’s wrong
with you?”**

6

A Poem
by
Abdullah
Shoaib

Ugly Pretty

I'm very ugly
So don't try to convince me that
I am a very beautiful person
Because at the end of the day
I hate myself in every single way
And I'm not going to lie to myself by saying
There is beauty inside of me that matters
So rest assured I will remind myself
That I am a worthless, terrible person
And nothing you say will make me believe
I still deserve love
Because no matter what
I am not good enough to be loved
And I am in no position to believe that
Beauty does exist within me
Because whenever I look in the mirror I always think
Am I as ugly as people say?

7

Changing the conversation to...

“What happened
to you?”

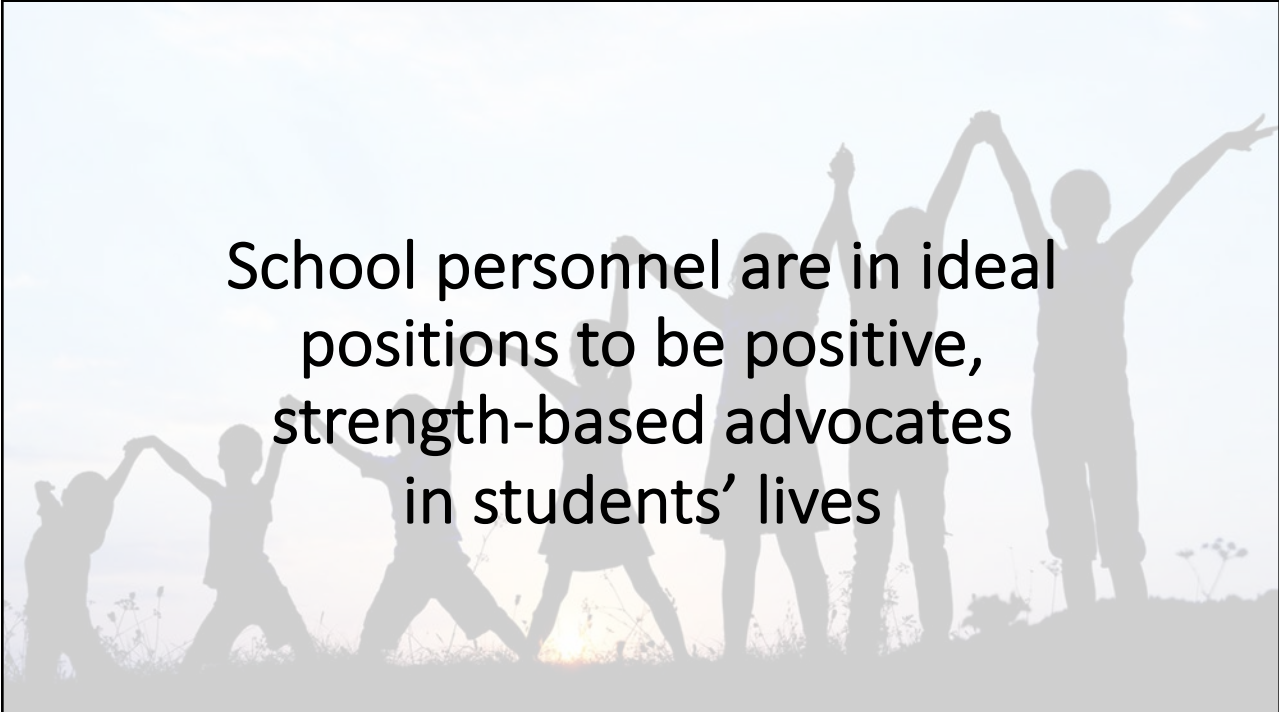
8

Now
Read
From the
Bottom
Up...

I'm very ugly
So don't try to convince me that
I am a very beautiful person
Because at the end of the day
I hate myself in every single way
And I'm not going to lie to myself by saying
There is beauty inside of me that matters
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Beauty does exist within me
Because whenever I look in the mirror I always think
Am I as ugly as people say?

(Now read bottom up)

9

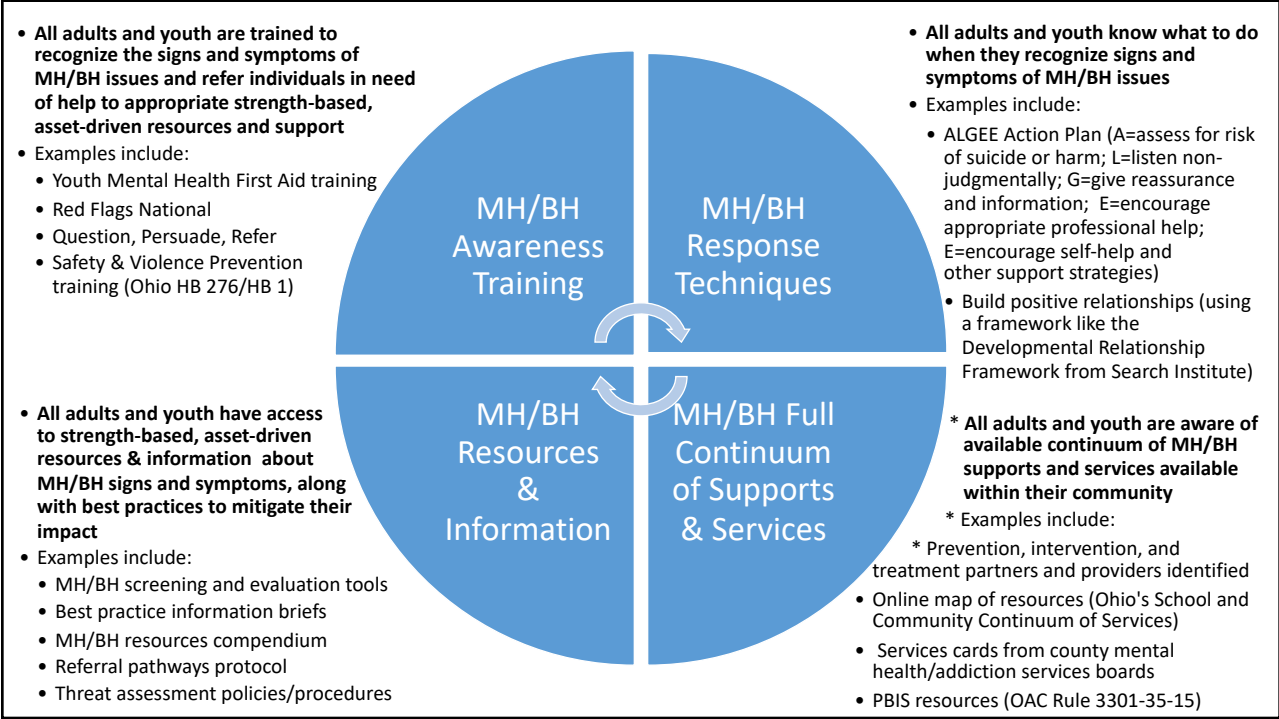


School personnel are in ideal
positions to be positive,
strength-based advocates
in students' lives

10

Building a Strength-Based Approach for Positive Youth Development through a Comprehensive Continuum of Mental & Behavioral Health Supports

11



12

MH/BH Awareness Training

- **All adults and youth are trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of MH/BH issues and refer individuals in need of help to appropriate strength-based, asset-driven resources and support**



Examples include:

- Youth Mental Health First Aid training
- Red Flags National
- Question, Persuade, Refer
- Safety & Violence Prevention training (Ohio HB 276/HB 1)

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MH/BH Awareness: Action Steps for School Personnel

- **Pay attention** to and notice what students are experiencing in their lives
- **Recognize and identify the signs and symptoms** of suicidal feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in students
- Please note:
 - You are NOT being asked to *diagnose* MH/BH concerns
 - You are NOT being asked to *treat* MH/BH concerns

14

Recognize the Signs and Symptoms of Suicide

- Preoccupation with death (e.g., recurring themes of death or self-destruction in artwork or written assignments)
- Intense sadness and/or hopelessness
- Not caring about activities that used to matter
- Social withdrawal from family, friends, sports, social activities
- Sleep disturbance (either not sleeping or staying awake all night)
- Giving away possessions
- Risky behavior
- Lack of energy
- Inability to think clearly/concentration problems
- Declining school performance/increased absences from school
- Increased irritability
- Changes in appetite
- Substance abuse

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Verbal, Behavioral, and Situational Cues:

- *Direct verbal cues*
 - “I wish I were dead”
 - “I am going to end it all”
- *Indirect verbal cues*
 - “I’m tired of life, I just can’t go on”
 - “My family would be better off without me”
 - “Who cares if I’m dead anyway”
- *Situational cues*
 - Being expelled from school or fired from a job
 - Victim of assault
 - Death of someone close, especially by suicide
 - Public shame to family or self
- *Behavioral cues*
 - Previous suicide attempt
 - Acquiring means (such as pills, weapons, etc.)
 - Giving away possessions
 - Drug abuse or relapse
 - Increased apathy
 - Physical symptoms (change in appearance, change in sleep patterns, headaches)
 - *Sudden* improvement in mood or optimism (can occur when an individual has made a decision to attempt suicide and feels ‘at peace’ with that decision)

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Screening Tools: Signs/Symptoms of Suicide

Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating
Scale (Screen Version)

https://www.integration.samhsa.gov/clinical-practice/Columbia_Suicide_Severity_Rating_Scale.pdf

Adapted SAD PERSONS

<http://www.heardalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Suicide-Risk-Assessment-SAD-Persons.pdf>

17

Suicide Prevention Training

Question. Persuade. Refer.

<https://qprinstitute.com/>

Red Flags National

<https://www.redflags.org/>

Kognito: Youth Suicide

Prevention Initiative

<https://ohio.kognito.com/>

Youth Mental Health First Aid

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/population-focused-modules/youth/>

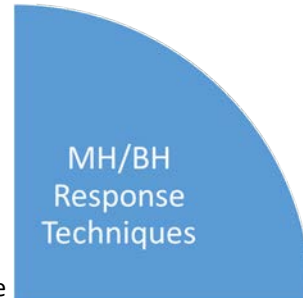
18

MH/BH Response Techniques

- **All adults and youth know what to do when they recognize signs and symptoms of MH/BH issues**

- Examples include:

- ALGEE Action Plan
 - A=assess for risk of suicide or harm
 - L=listen non-judgmentally
 - G=give reassurance and information
 - E=encourage appropriate professional help
 - E=encourage self-help and other support strategies
- Build positive relationships using a framework like the
 - Developmental Relationship Framework from Search Institute



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MH/BH Response Techniques: Action Steps for School Personnel

- **Build positive relationships** with your students
- When you recognize and identify the signs and symptoms of suicidal feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in students, **take action** to help:
 - **Talk** with students about their suicidal feelings, thoughts, and behaviors
 - **Listen** (without distraction) to what they have to say
 - **Teach** them how to recognize the signs and symptoms of suicidal feelings, thoughts, and behaviors
 - **Educate** them about concerns they may be experiencing
 - **Help** them identify coping strategies to mitigate their symptoms
 - **Advocate** for them if they are in need of professional mental health help

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Developmental Relationships Framework

Search Institute has identified five elements—expressed in 20 specific actions—that make relationships powerful in young people’s lives.

Express Care
 Challenge Growth
 Provide Support
 Share Power
 Expand Possibilities

21

Express Care

Show me that I matter to you

- *Be dependable*—Be someone I can trust
- *Listen*—Really pay attention when we are together
- *Believe in me*—Make me feel known and valued
- *Be warm*—Show me you enjoy being with me
- *Encourage*—Praise me for my efforts and achievements

22

Challenge Growth

Push me to keep getting better

- *Expect my best*—Expect me to live up to my potential
- *Stretch*—Push me to go further
- *Hold me accountable*—Insist I take responsibility for my actions
- *Reflect on failures*—Help me learn from mistakes and setbacks

23

Provide Support

Help me complete tasks and achieve goals

- *Navigate*—Guide me through hard situations and systems
- *Empower*—Build my confidence to take charge of my life
- *Advocate*—Stand up for me when I need it
- *Set boundaries*—Put in place limits that keep me on track

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Share Power

Treat me with respect and give me a say

- *Respect me*—Take me seriously and treat me fairly
- *Include me*—Involve me in decisions that affect me
- *Collaborate*—Work with me to solve problems and reach goals
- *Let me lead*—Create opportunities for me to take action and lead

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Expand Possibilities

Connect me with people and places that broaden my world

- *Inspire*—Inspire me to see possibilities for my future
- *Broaden horizons*—Expose me to new ideas, experiences, and places
- *Connect*—Introduce me to people who can help me grow

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**MH/BH Response Techniques:
Action steps for school personnel
when you recognize the signs and symptoms
of suicidal feelings, thoughts, and behaviors
in K-12 students**

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How to Help Students who are Suicidal

- Pay attention to warning signs
- Always take suicidal thoughts seriously (no matter how minor they may seem, or if you think the student does not mean them)
- Talk openly with students about your concerns for their safety
- Never leave someone who is suicidal alone
- Remove access to any harmful objects
- Seek professional help right away (911, nearest emergency room, suicide hotline)
 - Crisis Text Line: text "4HOPE" to 741-741
 - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

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Classroom Strategies to Help Students who are Suicidal

- Promote emotional well-being and connectedness among all students
- Identify students who may be at risk for suicide and assist them in getting help
- If a student attempts suicide at school,
 - Render first aid until professional medical services and/or transportation can be received, following district emergency medical procedures
 - Supervise the student to ensure safety
 - Move all other students out of the immediate area as soon as possible
 - Immediately notify the principal or school suicide prevention coordinator regarding the incident of in-school suicide attempt
 - Engage the crisis team (if available) to assess whether additional steps should be taken to ensure student safety and well-being
 - Advocate for the student to receive a mental health assessment as soon as possible
- Be prepared to respond when a suicide death occurs

29

MH/BH Resources & Information

- **All adults and youth have access to strength-based, asset-driven resources & information about MH/BH signs and symptoms, along with best practices to mitigate their impact**



Examples include:

- MH/BH screening and evaluation tools
- Best practice information briefs
- MH/BH resources compendium
- Referral pathways protocol
- Threat assessment policies/procedures

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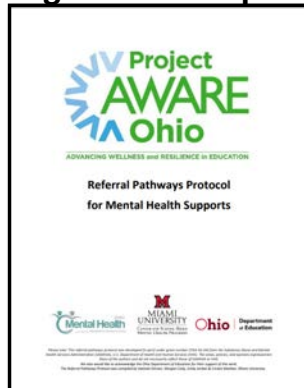
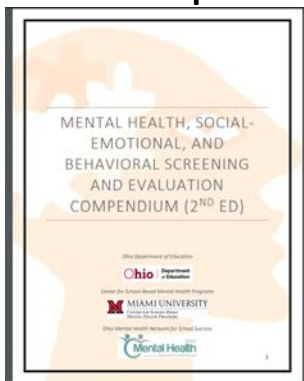
MH/BH Resources and Information: Action Steps for School Personnel

- **Know where to find resources and information** related to suicidal feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in students
- **Share resources** with students to help educate them about ways to help when they experience suicidal feelings, thoughts, and behaviors

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MH/BH Resources & Information

- **All adults and youth have access to strength-based, asset-driven resources & information about MH/BH signs and symptoms, along with best practices to mitigate their impact**



32

MH/BH Resources & Information

- **All adults and youth have access to strength-based, asset-driven resources & information about MH/BH signs and symptoms, along with best practices to mitigate their impact**

<http://resources.oberlinkconsulting.com/>

<http://education.ohio.gov/>

[Keyword Search = Project AWARE]

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Resources & Information

- **After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools:**
<http://www.sprc.org/sites/default/files/migrate/library/AfteraSuicideToolkitforSchools.pdf>
- **Children's Safety Network: Youth Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention: 2017 Resource Guide:** <https://www.childrensafetynetwork.org/resources/youth-suicide-self-harm-prevention-2017-resource-guide>
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Lifeline Online Prevention Manual:**
<http://www.sprc.org/sites/default/files/migrate/library/LifelineOnlinePostventionManual.pdf>
- **Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools:**
<https://www.store.samhsa.gov/product/Preventing-Suicide-A-Toolkit-for-High-Schools/SMA12-4669>

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MH/BH Continuum of Supports & Services

- **All adults and youth are aware of the available continuum of MH/BH supports and services available within their community**

Examples include:

- Prevention, intervention, and treatment partners and providers identified
- Online map of resources (Ohio's School and Community Continuum of Services)
- Services cards from county mental health/addiction services boards
- PBIS resources (OAC Rule 3301-35-15)



MH/BH Full
Continuum
of Supports
& Services

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MH/BH Continuum of Supports & Services: Action Steps for School Personnel

- **Know where to find prevention, intervention, and treatment** supports and services
- **Share MH/BH supports and services** with students so that they have access to appropriate social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health support

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MH/BH Continuum of Supports & Services

- All adults and youth are aware of the available continuum of MH/BH supports and services available within their community



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MH/BH Continuum of Supports & Services

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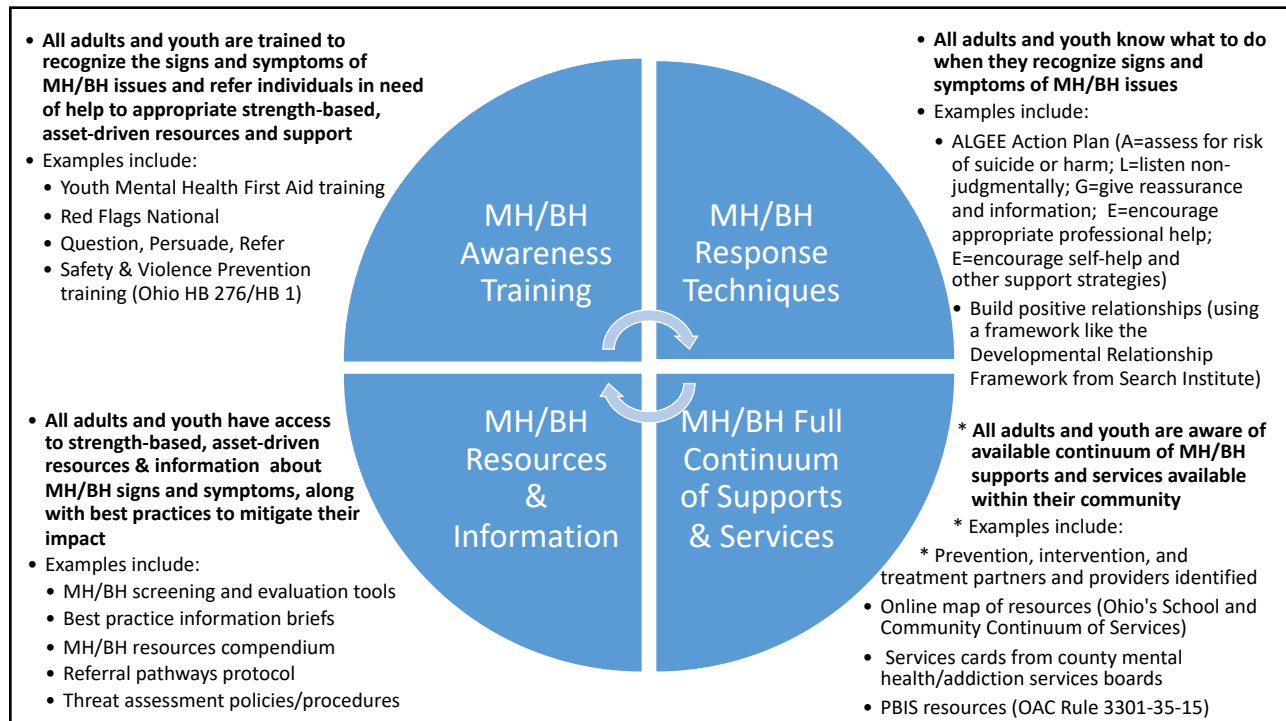
<http://continuum.oberlinkconsulting.com/>

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Suicide Prevention, Intervention, and Postvention Supports and Services

- **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention:** The *More than Sad* program offers prevention education for students, parents, and teachers: <https://afsp.org/our-work/education/more-than-sad/>
- **Crisis Text Line:** Text "4HOPE" to 741741 to receive a response from a live, trained volunteer within 5 minutes ("Code Orange" – more severe texts – are handled in an average of 1.8 minutes). Volunteers can then help the texter move from a moment of crisis to a calmer place.
- **Mindpeace: Suicide, Education, Research, Advocacy (SERA):** <http://mindpeacecincinnati.com/suicide/>
- **National Children's Hospital Center for Suicide Prevention & Research:** <http://www.nationwidechildrens.org/suicide-research>
- **Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation:** Free training and education resources, coalition contact information, LOSS team contact information, and up-to-date statistics and news: <http://www.ohiospf.org/>
- **Signs of Suicide:** Prevention (focused on screening and identification), intervention, and postvention: <https://mentalhealthscreening.org/programs/sos-signs-of-suicide>
- **Sandy Hook Promise:** Offers their "Know the Signs" programming for both youth and adults at no cost. Programs include Start With Hello, Say Something, Signs of Suicide, and Safety Assessment and Intervention: <http://www.sandyhookpromise.org>
- **Suicide Prevention Resource Center:** <http://www.sprc.org>

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Did We Meet Our Learning Objectives?

Are you able to...?

1. **Recognize the signs and symptoms** of suicidal feelings, thoughts, and behaviors experienced by students
2. **Implement action steps to support students** experiencing suicidal feelings, thoughts, and behaviors
3. **Access strength-based, asset-driven **suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention resources****
4. **Identify appropriate referral pathways** that can help students in need of mental health resources and supports

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42

- **1 in 6** school-aged youth: **significant impairments** in life functioning due to a **mental illness** (e.g., ADHD, behavioral problems, conduct problems, anxiety, and/or depression)
- **1 in 4** youth: growing up in **poverty** and may be **exposed to violence, chronic insecurity, loss, hardship, and disruption of life**
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- **1 in 4** students: **bullied by peers**
- **1 in 10** adolescents: victim of **physical violence by a dating partner**
- **Suicide** is 2nd leading cause of death for youth (ages of 10-24)

43



44

Just Read From the Bottom Up...

Ugly Pretty

I'm very ugly
 So don't try to convince me that
 I am a very beautiful person
 Because at the end of the day
 I hate myself in every single way
 And I'm not going to lie to myself by saying
 There is beauty inside of me that matters
 So rest assured I will remind myself
 That I am a worthless, terrible person
 And nothing you say will make me believe
 I still deserve love
 Because no matter what
 I am not good enough to be loved
 And I am in no position to believe that
 Beauty does exist within me
 Because whenever I look in the mirror I always think
 Am I as ugly as people say?

(Now read bottom up)

by Abdullah Shoaib

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