

# Suicide

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# Statistics

Age Group	Number of Suicides	Population	Rate
5-14	272	40,436,374	0.7
15-24	4,212	42,115,995	10.0
25-34	4,990	40,144,656	12.4
35-44	6,550	43,865,983	14.9
45-54	6,991	42,487,331	16.5

(Figures from the National Center for Health Statistics for the year 2005.

All rates are per 100,000 population.)

# Statistics (cont.)

Sex	Number of Suicides	Population	Rate
Males	25,907	145,973,538	17.8
Females	6,730	150,533,523	4.5
Total	32,637	296,507,061	11.0

(Figures from the National Center for Health Statistics for the year 2005.  
All rates are per 100,000 population)

# National Statistics

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- Over 32,000 people in the United States die from Suicide every year.
- Ninety percent of all people who die by suicide have a diagnosable psychiatric disorder at the time of their death.
- There are four male suicides for every female suicide, but twice as many females as males attempt suicide.
- Suicide is the fifth leading cause of death among those 5-14 years old.
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death among those 15-24 years old.
- Among young people aged 10-14 years, the rate has doubled in the last two decades.

# International Statistics

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- Approximately one million people in the world die by suicide each year.
- This toll is higher than the total number of world deaths each year from war and homicide combined.
- For every suicide there are at least 20 suicide attempts.

# Warning Signs

- **Observable signs of serious depression:**
  - Unrelenting low mood
  - Pessimism
  - Hopelessness
  - Desperation
  - Anxiety, psychic pain and inner tension
  - Withdrawal
  - Sleep problems
- **Increased alcohol and/or other drug use**
- **Recent impulsiveness and taking unnecessary risks**
- **Threatening suicide or expressing a strong wish to die**
- **Making a plan:**
  - Giving away prized possessions
  - Sudden or impulsive purchase of a firearm
  - Obtaining other means of killing oneself such as poisons or medications
- **Unexpected rage or anger**

# Monitoring Clients Over Time

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The following Standardized Assessments can be used to monitor a client over time:

- Beck Anxiety Inventory
- Beck Depression Inventory
- Beck Hopelessness Scale
- Beck Scale for Suicide Ideation

# Talk to Experts

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- Crisis Intervention of Houston, INC  
3015 Richmond Avenue, Suite 120  
Houston, TX 77098  
713-527-9864  
Contact Person: Brenda Fitch  
Group Name: SOS, 2 meetings a month, no charge
- Contact Amercian Foundation for Suicide Prevention Public Relations  
Manager Wylie Tene  
(212) 363-3500 EXT. 24

# Talk to Experts (cont.)

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Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE)

<http://www.save.org>

**(800) SUICIDE**

# Suicide Hotline

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Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

**1-800-273-TALK**

# Surviving a Suicide Loss

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- Try to focus on what you need to do to heal, rather than what you might have done differently before the suicide.
- Remember that people grieve in different ways. There is no one “right” way to mourn the death of a loved one.
- Recognize that you will heal in time.

# Cultural Sensitivity and Awareness

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- It is important to understand the culture of the clients with which you are dealing.
- If you are not sure how a particular culture deals with the loss of a loved one, do your research.
- When in doubt....ask.

# Surviving Suicide Loss: Books

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- **A Broken Heart Still Beats After Your Child Dies**  
Edited by Anne McCracken & Mary Semel Pub. Date: Sep 2000, Publisher: Health Communications Inc
- **A Time To Grieve by Carol Staudacher**  
Publisher: Harper San Francisco (1994)
- **After Suicide**  
by John H. Hewett - Published by Westminster Press, Philadelphia, PA (1980)
- **After Suicide Loss: Coping with Your Grief**  
by Bob Baugher, Ph.D. and Jack Jordan, Ph.D. - Published by Sturbridge Group (2002)
- **After Suicide: A Ray of Hope**  
by Eleanora "Betsy" Ross - Published by Lynn Publications, Iowa City, IA (1986)
- **After the Darkest Hour the Sun Will Shine Again: A Parent's Guide to Coping With the Loss of a Child**  
Author: Mehren, Elizabeth Introduction by: Kushner, Harold S. Pub. Date: Apr 1997, Publisher: Simon & Schuster

# Surviving Suicide Loss: Books

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- **Andrew, You Died Too Soon**  
by Corinne Chilstrom - Published by Augsburg Fortress (1993)
- **Bart Speaks Out About Suicide by Linda E. Goldman & Jonathan P. Goldman**  
Publisher: Western Psychological Services; (September 1998)
- **Before Their Time: Adult Children's Experiences Of Parental Suicide**  
by Mary Stimming Publisher: Temple Univ Press (1999)
- **Borne On Eagle's Wings**  
Agnes O'Neil Published by Pine Hill Press 1999
- **Breaking the Silence**  
by Mariette Hartley - Published by Mass Market, NY (1991)
- **Healing After The Suicide of a Loved One**  
by Ann Smolin & John Guinan - Published by Simon & Schuster (1993)
- **Helping Children Cope With Grief**  
by Alan Wolfelt - Published by Accelerated Development, Inc. (1983)
- **How To Go On Living When Someone You Love Dies**  
by Therese A. Rando - Published by Lexington Books (1988)

# Group Interventions

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- Discuss the stages of grief and how the stages can present themselves in many different phases and independent of each other.
- Encourage the members of the group to ask each other for emotional support.
- Discuss other sources of emotional support such as parents, counselors, teachers, etc...
- Assign the members to write a letter to the lost person expressing farewell.

# Therapeutic Interventions

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- Facilitate a working alliance with the client.
- Maintain level eye contact and speak slowly and clearly.
- Encourage the expression of the client by asking open ended questions.
- Educate the client on the self-focus of suicide and how no one person influences or causes another's choice of suicide.

# Group Interventions (cont.)

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- Ask the group members to share stories of their lost loved ones and highlight positive personal traits. They may also bring pictures and memorabilia.
- Have the group compile a list of self nurturing activities.
- Help group members plan a ceremony to memorialize their loved one.

# Self Awareness

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- The counselor must make sure that he/she has enough self-awareness and understanding to hold it together during this type of crisis.
- It is important to maintain a healthy rapport with the clients who are grieving.
- The counselor's personal opinion and religious beliefs about suicide should not interfere with their professional ability to help their client.

# Dead Poet's Society : "I'm trapped"

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**Dead Poet's Society : "I'm trapped"**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a3eYi3Aoigc>

**Dead Poets Society Part 10**

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H\\_K5BHI  
ME3Y&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_K5BHI<br/>ME3Y&feature=related)

# Treatment Plan

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## **Behavioral Definitions:**

- Suicide of own child
- Suicide of student, youth athlete, or neighbor
- Behavioral reactions of agitation, aggression, tense muscles, clinging to a possession of the child's and/or social withdrawal
- Shock reactions such as denial, confusion, poor concentration, shaking, fainting
- Emotional reactions of crying, hysteria, disbelief, or anger
- Physical reactions of weakness, shortness of breath, chest pain/pressure, headaches, nausea, and/or diarrhea

# Treatment Plan (cont.)

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## **Long Term Goal:**

- Accept the child's death realistically, and overcome shame, guilt, or denial

# Treatment Plan (cont.)

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## Short Term Objectives

- Openly describe all emotional and behavioral reactions experienced

## Therapeutic Interventions

- Establish rapport by maintaining eye contact with the individual, speak clearly and slowly, and from the same position.
- Inform of the wide range of emotional reactions.
- Encourage the expression of emotions

# Treatment Plan (cont.)

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## Short Term Objectives

- Stop blaming self for the suicide

## Therapeutic Interventions

- Identify whom the child is blaming in the suicide note, and help client to understand the child's individual choice to kill himself and how the person identified as being blamed is not responsible.
- Educate on the self focus of suicide and how no one person influences or causes another's choice of suicide.

# Treatment Plan (cont.)

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## Short Term Objectives

- Abstain from seeking answers to the question, Why did the child commit suicide?

## Therapeutic Interventions

- Inquire about the religious/spiritual beliefs and encourage to use this resource for support

# Treatment Plan (cont.)

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## Short Term Objectives

- Say good-bye to the child

## Therapeutic Interventions

- Encourage talking to the deceased child, sharing dreams, and saying good-bye; utilize an empty chair technique
- Write a good-bye letter.
- Utilize symbolic healing tactics (balloons up in the sky to represent letting go)

# References

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