THE "S" WORD
SUICIDE

Chris Caulkins, MPH, MA, NRP
WORLD SUICIDE STATS

- 803,900 Suicides in 2012
- Down from over 1,000,000
- 121 (70%) countries had a reduction in suicides from 2000-2012

(World Health Organization [WHO], 2014)
2000-2012 Suicide Increases (172 WHO countries >300K Pop.)

1) Cyprus (269.8%)
2) Rep. of Korea (109.4%)
3) Morocco (97.8%)
4) Lesotho (53.7%)
5) Angola (50.3%)

6) Suriname (40.4%)
7) Montenegro (35%)
8) D. R. Congo (26.3%)
9) United States (24.2%)
10) 163 other countries

(WHO, 2014)
U.S. SUICIDE STATS

- 836,000 ED
- 10th leading cause of death (all ages)
- 13 per 100,000 deaths
- 41,149 deaths total
  - 21,175 firearms
  - 10,062 suffocation
  - 6,637 poison
  - 3,275 other means

(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2011; CDC, 2013)
FOUR MOST COMMON ILLNESSES ASSOCIATED WITH SUICIDE

- Major depressive disorder (over 90%)
- Borderline personality disorder
- Nicotine depedance
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

(Goldsmith, Pellmar, Kleinmann, & Bunney, 2002)
(Richard-Devantoy, Emilie, Sébastien, Phillipe, & Fabrice, 2012)
(Bolton & Robinson, 2010)
• What percentage of attempters die within 5 years?
  • 50% (Beautrais, 2004)
COLLEGE STUDENTS

• 25% of college students had been diagnosed with or had been treated for a mental illness
• 40% felt more than an average amount of stress
• 30% indicated they felt a profound enough level of depression that was “difficult to function.”
• 73% of those with a mental health issue reported having a mental health crisis at school

(American College Health Association [ACHA], 2012)
COLLEGE STUDENTS

- 5% seriously considered suicide in last year
- 0.8% attempted suicide in last year
- 22% reported seriously considering suicide at some point in their lives
- 79% first seriously considered suicide prior to college
- 7% attempted suicide previously with 25% of these being in the last year

(Swanbrow Becker, 2015)
Table 1

Factors Impacting Academic Performance Within the Last 12 Months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>ACHA survey percentage</th>
<th>Estimated number of Century students</th>
<th>Estimated number of MnSCU students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol use</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>19,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>2,791</td>
<td>87,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADD/ADHD</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>707</td>
<td>22,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>1,720</td>
<td>53,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug use</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>7,395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating disorder/problem</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>4,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>4,022</td>
<td>126,150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(American College Health Association, 2012)

(Boytton Health Service, 2015)
### Table 2

**Mental Health Issues Affecting Students Within the Last 12 Months**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience or Feeling</th>
<th>ACHA survey percentage</th>
<th>Estimated number of Century students</th>
<th>Estimated number of MnSCU students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hopeless</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
<td>6,283</td>
<td>197,055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overwhelmed</td>
<td>86.1%</td>
<td>11,942</td>
<td>374,535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhausted</td>
<td>81.6%</td>
<td>11,318</td>
<td>354,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lonely</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
<td>7,948</td>
<td>249,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very sad</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>8,461</td>
<td>265,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So depressed it was difficult to function</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>4,341</td>
<td>136,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overwhelming anxiety</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
<td>7,032</td>
<td>220,545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overwhelming anger</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>5,146</td>
<td>161,385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seriously considered suicide</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>985</td>
<td>30,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted suicide</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>5,220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(American College Health Association, 2012)

![Mental Health Stressors Table](image)

**Mental Health Stressors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stressor</th>
<th>Percent Who Report Experiencing within the Past 12 Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrested</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted Suicide</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankruptcy</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of Someone Close to You</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosed With a Serious Mental Illness</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosed With a Serious Physical Illness</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive Credit Card Debt</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive Debt Other Than Credit Card</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing a Class</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fired or Laid Off From a Job</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Married</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues Related to Sexual Orientation</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Health Care Coverage</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Conflict</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put on Academic Probation</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roommate/Housemate Conflict</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Physical Illness of Someone Close to You</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse/Partner Conflict (Includes Divorce or Separation)</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Termination of Personal Relationship (Not Including Marriage)</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero of the Above Stressors</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or Two of the Above Stressors</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three or More of the Above Stressors</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Boynton Health Service, 2015)
• How many college students suicide per year?
• Half as many as general pop
PROBLEMS WITH THE DATA

• 4-year college sites in two studies
  (Silverman, Meyer, Sloane, Raffel, & Pratt, 1997; Schwartz, 2006)

• One study included community colleges, but that was less than 2% of N and diluted with Canadian 4-year colleges
  (Schwartz, 2011)
NOT ALL STUDENTS ARE EQUAL WHEN IT COMES TO SUICIDE

- **Sex**
  
  (Murphy, Jiaquan, & Kochanek, 2013; Goldsmith, Pellmar, Kleinmann, & Bunney, 2002)

- **Sexual orientation**
  
  (Flood, McLaughlin, & Prentice, 2013; Hertz, Donato, & Wright, 2013)

- **Race/ethnicity**
  
  (Fernquist, 2009, 2014; Rabon, Wells, & Hirsch, 2015; Brannon & Markus, 2013)

- **Military**
  
  (Harrell & Berglass, 2011; Bush et al., 2013; Walsh & Jagger, 2014)

- **Pre-existing mental health**
  
  (Agerbo; 2007; Andersson, Allebeck, Gustafsson, & Gunnel, 2008; Chenn, Tzeng, Cheng, & Lin, 2012)
RAINDROPS IN THE STORM

(IS PATH WARM)

(American Association of Suicidology [AAS], 2013)

STANDING IN THE RAIN OF SORROW WE PONDER WHAT WENT SO HORRIBLY WRONG. A PERSON HAS DIED BY THEIR OWN HAND. A PERSON WE LOVE WHOSE LIFE WAS FAR FROM LONG. SURELY THERE MUST BE A REASON. A ROOT CAUSE OF THIS CALAMITY. WE TRY IN VAIN TO FIND THAT SINGULAR CAUSE. SOMETIMES WE BLAME OTHERS. AT TIMES IT IS A FRIEND OR A RELATIVE. OR WE ACCUSE CO-WORKERS OR LOVERS. IT MUST HAVE BEEN BECAUSE OF MONEY PROBLEMS. MAYBE IT WAS EMBARRASSMENT OR HARASSMENT. OR THE DEATH OF ANOTHER. PERHAPS EVEN THE LOSS OF A CHERISHED PET. THE STRESS OF THE JOB. A FAILURE TO GET ALONG. ABUSE—SEXUAL, PHYSICAL, OR MENTAL. DRUG ABUSE. A CHEMICAL IMBALANCE IN THE BRAIN. A CULTURAL RESTRAINT OR EXPECTATION. MAYBE THE WITNESSING OF A TRAUMATIC EVENT. AN INABILITY TO NOT TAKE OFFENSE. AN EXTREME SENSITIVITY TO THE WORLD. A STRUGGLE WITH DISEASE OR THE AFTERMATH OF A SERIOUS INJURY. A RESULT OF CHRONIC PAIN. BAD GRADES. A LACK OF BELONGING. HOPELESSNESS, PURPOSELESSNESS, AND INABILITY TO FIND MEANING.

THEN IT COMES TO US. THIS IS COMPLEX. ONE THING ALONE IS RARELY EVER THE CAUSE. AN EVENT CAN TIP THE BALANCE OR BE THE ONE TOO MANY STRAWS. BUT THAT ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH. A COMBINED EFFECT OF MANY FACTORS. FACTORS THAT SWIRL AND CHURN, COLLIDE AND STRIKE. AT JUST THE RIGHT (OR WRONG) TIME.

A PERFECT STORM. NO ONE CAUSE. NO ONE PERSON TO BLAME. WE STAND IN THE RAIN. IN THE AFTERMATH OF THAT PERFECT STORM.

(Caulkins, 2013)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jtS7obfUY3E
CONNECTEDNESS

• Increases student retention and persistence  
  (Cabrera, Castañeda, Nora, & Hengstler, 1992)

• Reduces impulsivity  
  (Kleinman, Riskind, Schaeffer, & Weingarten, 2012)

• Assists in coping with external stress  
  (Goldsmith, Pellmar, Kleinman, & Bunney, 2002)

• As important as quitting smoking or losing weight  
  (Holt-Lunstad, Smith, & Layton, 2010)
QPR

- Question
- Persuade
- Refer
CONTAGION & CLUSTERS

- Werther
- Papageno

(Niederkrotenthaler, et al., 2010)


References


References


References


Strub Caulkins Center for Suicide Research

Advancing suicide awareness and prevention through research.

https://www.facebook.com/StrubCaulkins

http://www.century.edu

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