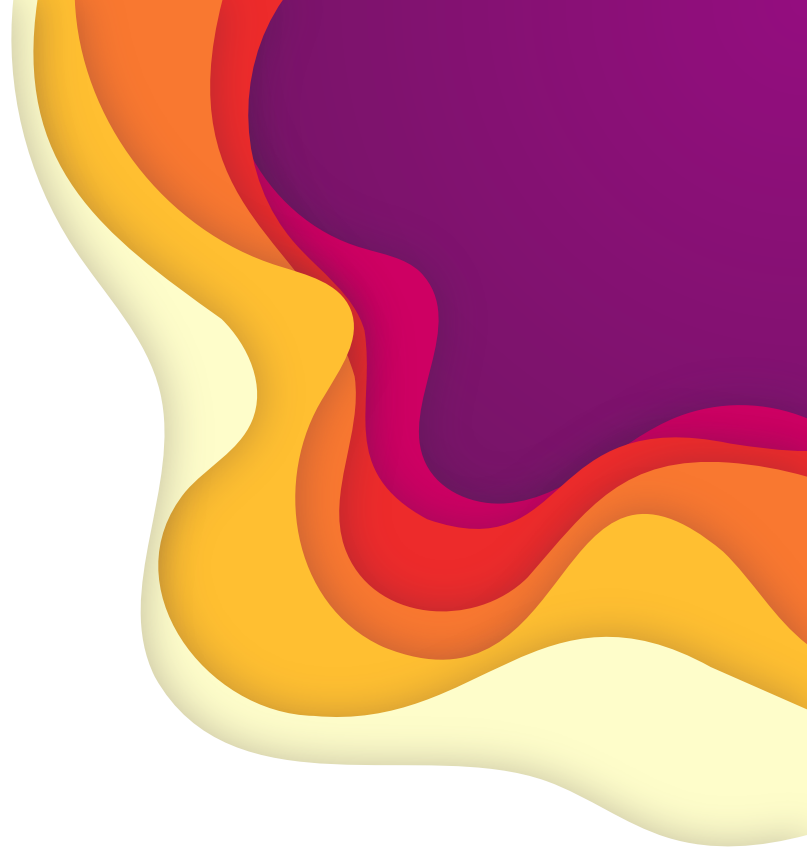# Talking About Suicide: Destigmatizing Mental Health in Healthcare Spaces

A collaboration between Patch educators and the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater Counseling department

Our plan

1. Introductions & Disclosure
2. Objectives
3. Background & Stats
4. A Kahoot!
5. How providers can reduce stigma– small group discussions
6. Wrapping up and resources

Who are we?

Ani Foreman-Ante
She/They

Patch-3 year; Senior at Edgerton HS; SAIC-Chicago

Devon Wells
He/Him

Patch-1st year; Freshman at Memorial High School; openly gay for 3 years, suicide survivor

Borka Kalanj
She/Her

Graduate Student: University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

Intern: Abegglen Counseling

Logan Stiegman
He/Him

UW-Madison Graduate- 2017
B.S. in Genetics and Plant Pathology
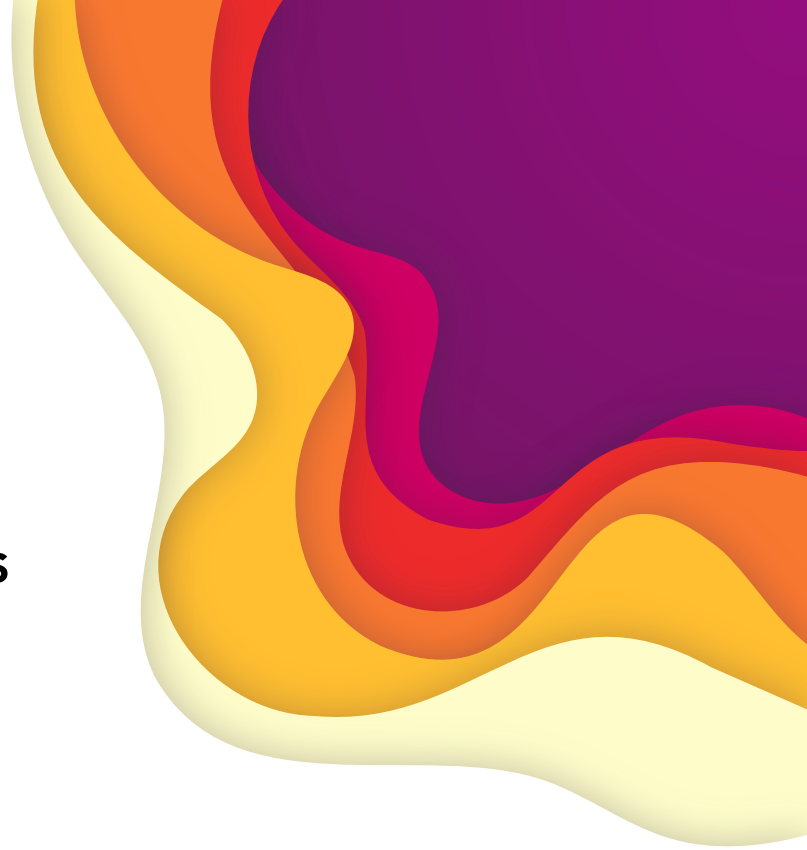UW-Whitewater Counselor Ed Student

Jennifer Better-Bubon
She/Her

Associate Professor at UWW Former school counselor, current LPC

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Disclosure

We have no relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies to disclose.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session learners as members of the interprofessional healthcare team will be able to:

1. **Describe** the prevalence of teens who support peers with depression and suicidality.
2. Identify specific misconceptions about suicide
3. **Identify** actions **providers** can take to reduce stigma and **address** barriers **to** seeking **help**.

Go to **www.menti.com** and use the code **1229 7061**

ᴹ Mentimeter

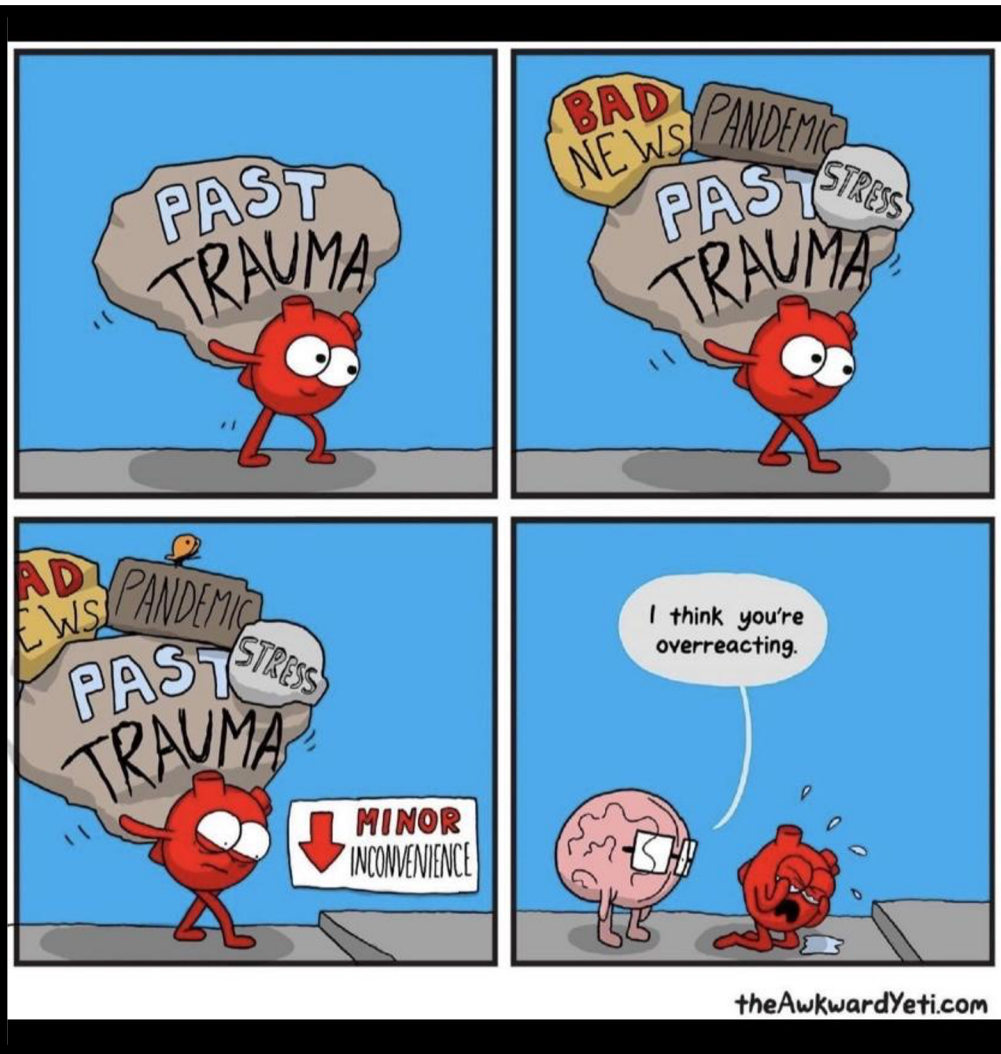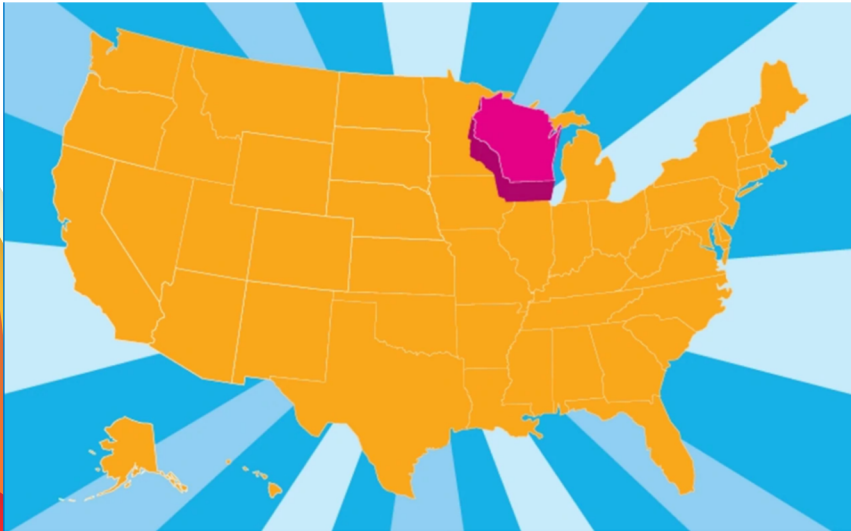# What comes to mind when you hear suicide?

https://www.menti.com/rdoyv5o55r

What do we know?

What do Wisconsin students say?

Their friends and peers are experiencing high (and increasing) levels of stress, anxiety and depression. COVID-19 exacerbated existing mental health challenges

Perceived increases in use of drugs, alcohol and vaping as coping mechanisms

They experienced significant challenges with virtual learning, which contributed to their stress, anxiety and/or depression

Feelings of grief surrounding the loss of the high school experience, sports, clubs, etc.

https://wipps.org/research/the-voices-of-wisconsin-students-project-final-reports-released/

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There's no recognition of the mental health. It's hard to find the school-life balance. There's a lot of mental weight on me. I can't socialize. There's no clubs. I am feeling left behind by school and friends.

I feel, depression-wise and [that] sad feeling, that was more towards the beginning of the pandemic when everything was being canceled. Now I feel like it's more COVID fatigue and just being sick of everything. And we're all so used to things being canceled at this point, but we're just kind of numb to it, which is, it's so upsetting...everything is canceled, so, you know, there isn't that sad feeling, because we're all so used to being sad now.

ors helped students feel more and peers

connection and belonging

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What about the statistics?

- Youth and young adults ages 10–24 years account for 14% of all suicides.

- For youth ages 10-14, suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death.

- In 2019, 9% of high school students reported attempting suicide during the previous 12 months

- Approximately 1 in 5 youth seriously considered attempting suicide, and 1 in 6 made a suicide plan

https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/facts/disparities-in-suicide.html

51%

The increase in ER visits for suicide attempts by adolescent girls in the U.S. in early 2021, as compared to the same period in 2019. The figure rose 4% for boys.

Source: U.S. Surgeon General Report | Dec. 7, 2021

@nytgender and @nytimes

Non-white teens reported more concern than their white peers about nearly every re-emergence issue, including negative impact of the pandemic on focus and academic progress, coping with loss and grief, economic struggles or food insecurity, and mental health challenges.

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21) & Surgeon
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crises in our
ties based on
poverty,
tus, ability
, immigration

(Osgood et al., 2021)

LGBTQ+ Protective Factors

Saewyc et al. 2014

Gay-Straight Alliances reduce the risk of suicide and suicidal ideation for LGB students and <u>heterosexual males</u> in schools.

Inclusivity is good for everyone!

smithsonianmag.com

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Connection Matters

FIGURE. Persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness, perceptions of mental health, and suicidal thoughts and attempts among high school students during the COVID-19 pandemic, by feeling close to persons at school* and being virtually connected† — Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey, United States, January–June 2021
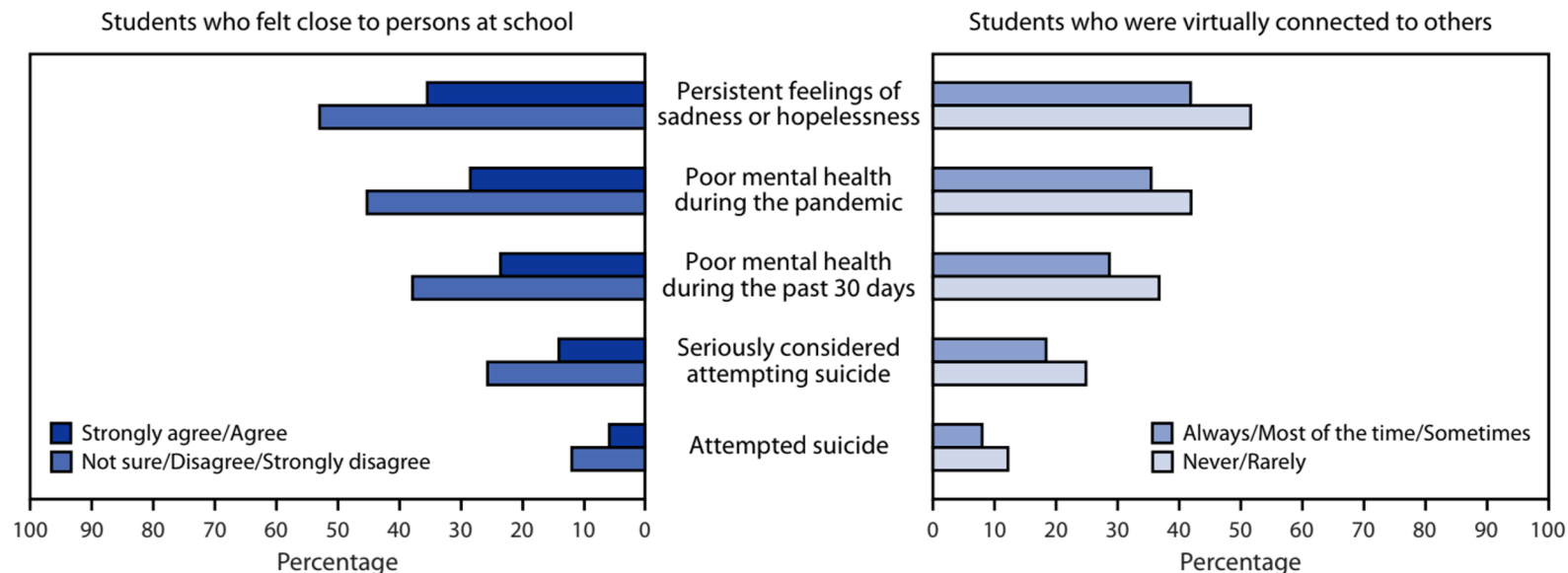
* All comparisons of having felt close versus not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree they felt close were significantly different, based on *t*-test analysis (p<0.05).
† All comparisons of being connected versus never or rarely felt connected were significantly different, based on *t*-test analysis (p<0.05).

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Let's learn!

Let's Discuss

What happens next?

Prompts

How do you think teens view suicide?
- How does the storytelling industry like shows affect it? – 13 reasons
- How does social media affect it? – idolization

Why do you think teens are more comfortable with telling their peers about it?
- Gen Z nihilist culture
- Power dynamics between parent and child
- Comfort – it's not because they don't trust adults

What are some barriers to mental health care in schools?
- LGBTQ+
- Racism

What is the barrier between teens and providers?
- Power dynamics
- This idea of mandated reporting that is inherent and without name
- Storytelling general bad provider experiences

How do you make them comfortable enough to talk to you?
- Relationship building – comfort like pronouns,, eyes, language – contact info
- Explaining rights
- One-on-one time – HEADSS model
- Offering to be the buffer

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Wrapping Up

What are you leaving with?

Mentimeter

https://www.menti.com/rdoyv5o55r

Resources

Saewyc et al. 2014

Osgood, K., Sheldon-Dean, H., & Kimball, H. (2021). 2021 Children's Mental Health Report: What we know the COVID-19 Pandemic's on Children's Mental Health and what we don't know. Child Mind Institute.

Fuller, K. (2020, September 30). *5 common myths about suicide debunked*. NAMI. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from https://www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/September-2020/5-Common-Myths-About-Suicide-Debunked

Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service (2021). *The Voices of Wisconsin Students.* Retrieved from: https://wipps.org/research/the-voices-of-wisconsin-students-project-final-reports-released/

Surgeon General (2021): https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/12/07/us-surgeon-general-issues-advisory-on-youth-mental-health-crisis-further-exposed-by-covid-19-pandemic.html

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. (2021). Supporting Child and Student Social, Emotional, Behavioral, and Mental Health Needs. Washington, DC. https://www2.ed.gov/documents/students/supporting-child-student-social-emotional-behavioral-mental-health.pdf

Thanks!

Any questions?

Credits

Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:

- Presentation template by SlidesCarnival
- Photographs by Unsplash