



Helping the Hurting

**Suicide Intervention
Training**

Suicide is less about death.....

and more about...

wanting the pain to end,

spirit sickness,

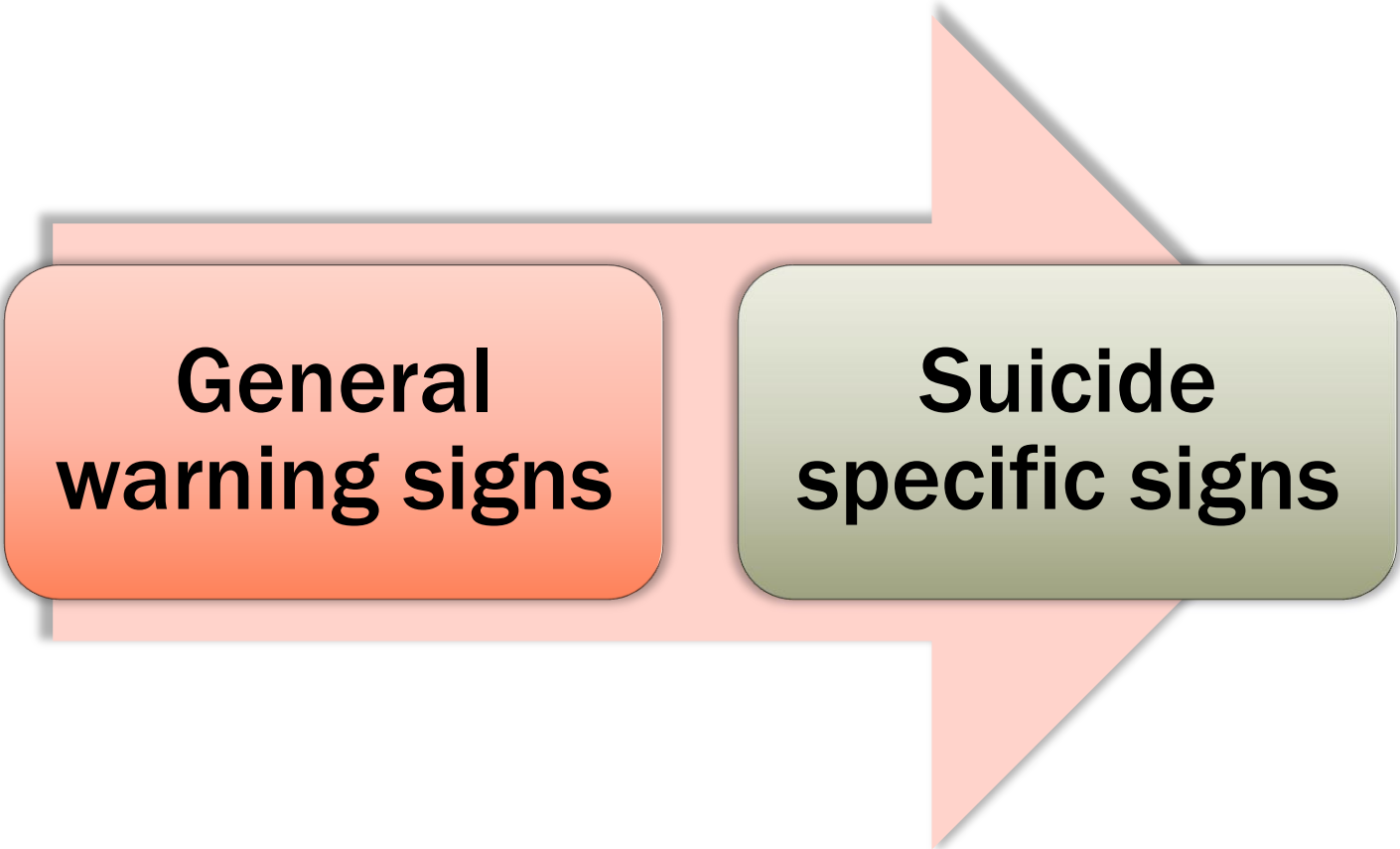
communication &

a coping strategy.

A Quick Overview

- 478 BC suicides (2008 statistic)
 - 83 < age 30
 - 158 by hanging
 - 74% males
- BC First Nations youth have the highest rate of suicide worldwide!*
- 90% youth suicides occurred in 10% of First Nation communities*
- Cultural Continuity: Land claims, self-government, education, police, fire, health services, cultural facilities* Chandler & Lalonde, 2004

Warning Signs



**General
warning signs**

**Suicide
specific signs**

General & Specific Warning Signs

- Dropping out of activities; withdrawing
- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Less talking, laughing, joking
- Talking or joking about suicide
- Saying goodbye; writing a will
- Giving things away
- Drawing/reading re: death, dying, suicide
- Saying, “I want to die”, “I wish I was dead”, “Nobody would miss me”, “What’s the purpose in living? I would be better off dead”, “I’m just going to kill myself”

Triggers

Stressful events

Related to loss

Increase feelings of

- Helplessness
- Hopelessness
- Being alone

Asking about Suicide

“I have noticed (warning signs) and I know (trigger).

Sometimes when people (brief repeat of warning signs) and they have (brief repeat of trigger) they think about suicide.

I am wondering if you are thinking about killing yourself?”

Listening

***Increases
hope &
help; no
longer
alone***



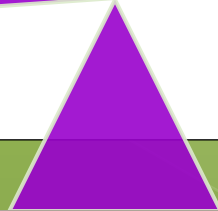
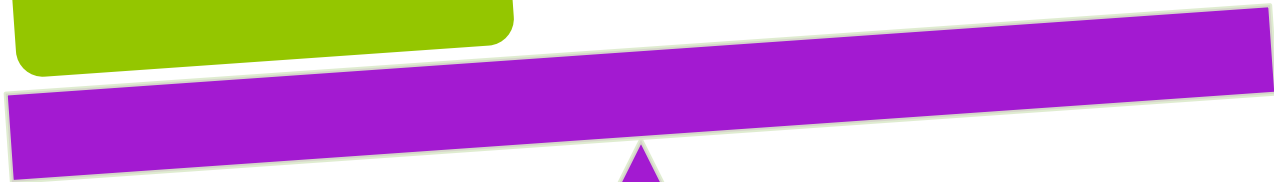
Listening

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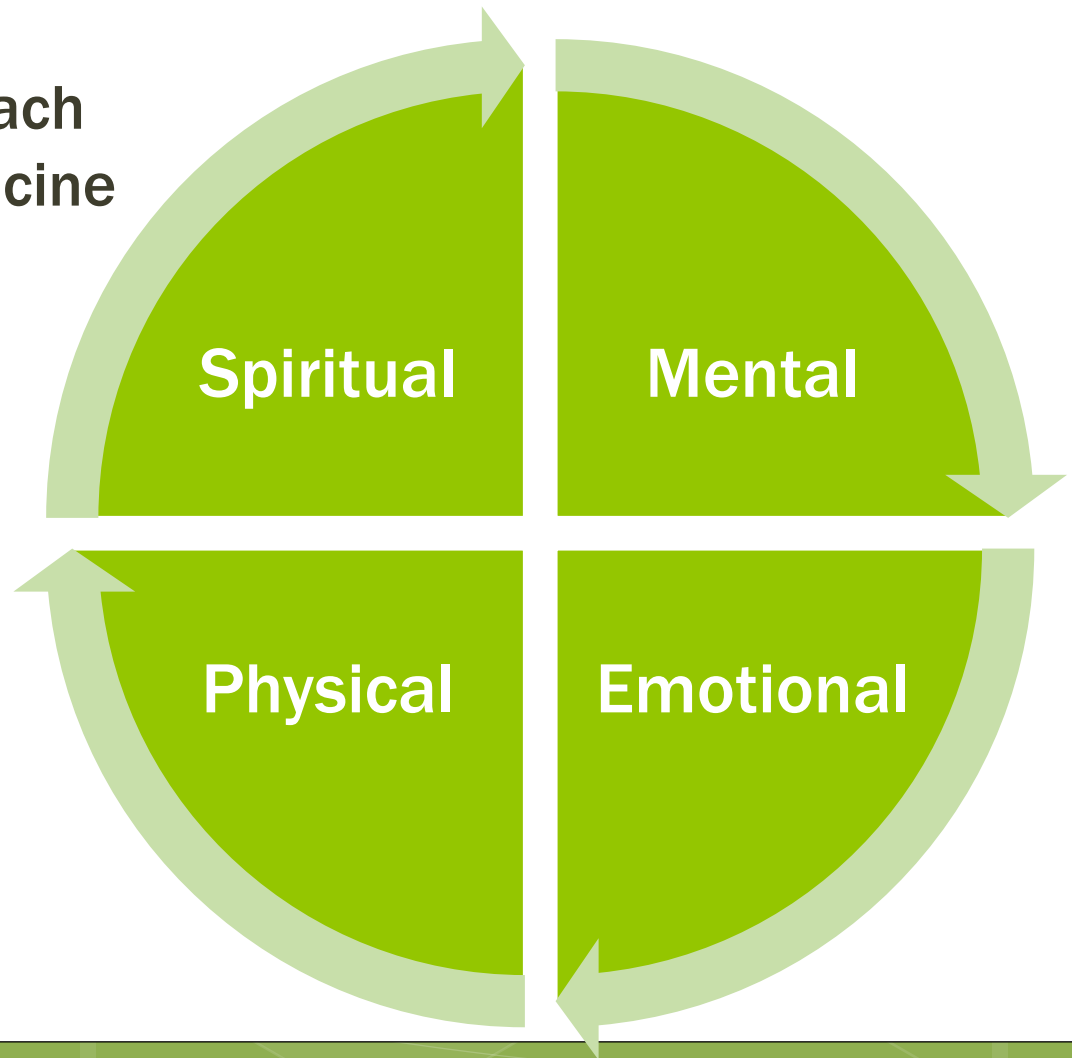
**Risk
Factors:
why the
person
wants to
die**

Risk Factors



Risk Factors

List risk factors for each quadrant of the Medicine Wheel.



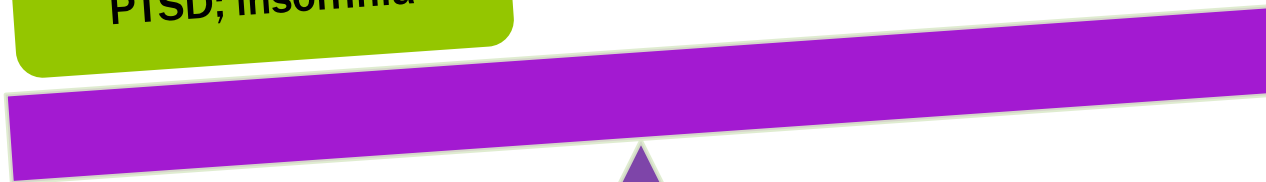
Risk Factors (examples)

Prior suicidal behavior

**Suicide of close family
member/friend**

**Substance use; severe
conflict**

**Depression; anxiety;
PTSD; insomnia**



Listening

*Increases
hope &
help; no
longer
alone*

**Protective
Factors:**
what
keeps the
person
alive



**Risk
Factors:**
why the
person
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Risk Factors (examples)

Protective Factors (examples)

Prior suicidal behavior

**Suicide of close family
member/friend**

**Substance use; severe
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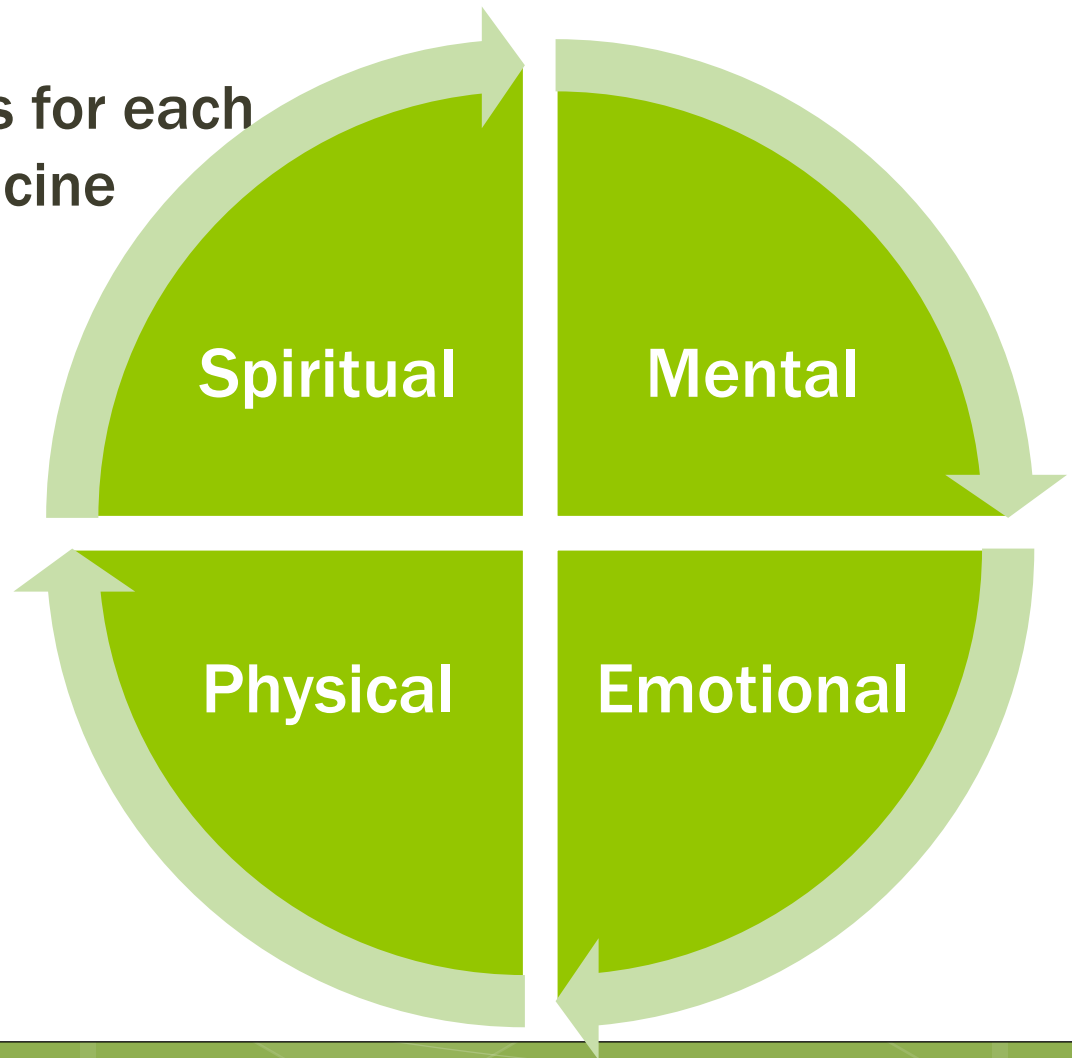
**Depression; anxiety;
PTSD; insomnia**

???



Protective Factors

List protective factors for each quadrant of the Medicine Wheel.



Risk Factors (examples)

Alone

Helpless

Hopeless

Loss

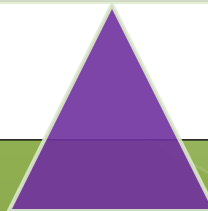
Protective Factors (examples)

**Positive belief about
self**

**Success; skills; talents;
opportunities**

**Cultural & spiritual
awareness/connection**

**Family and/or
community connection**



Listening

*Increases
hope &
help; no
longer
alone*

**Protective
Factors:**
what
keeps the
person
alive



**Risk
Factors:**
why the
person
wants to
die

Ambivalence:
wanting to die
& to live

Risk Factors (examples)

Protective Factors (examples)

Helplessness

Hopelessness

Loss

**Positive Belief about
self**

**Success; skills &
talents; opportunities**

**Cultural & spiritual
awareness/
connection**

**Family and/or
community connection**



Risk Assessment

Suicide Thought(s)

Vague

- Wish

Established

- Began
- Frequency
- Length

Suicide Plan(s)

Method(s)

- Multiple plans
- Lethality



Preparedness

- Availability
- Gathering means
- Location determined

Suicide Date(s)

Exact date



General date(s)



Date(s) based on event(s)

Prior Attempt(s)

Familiarity with suicide & method



Degree of lethality



Probability of being found

Additional Information

- Alone
- Resources
- Mental health concerns – self, family
- Prior counselling/treatment
- Substance use
- Suicide attempts or death by family/friends

Thoughts only

- Low Risk
- Client driven

Level of Staff Action

Plan OR Date OR Prior Attempts

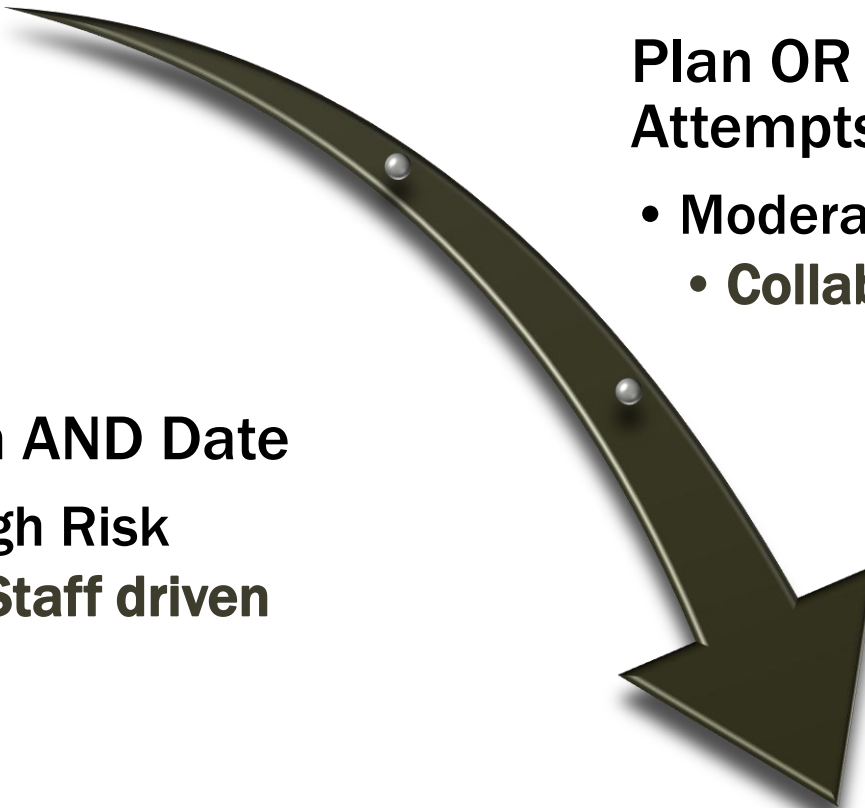
- Moderate Risk
- Collaborate

Plan AND Date

- High Risk
- Staff driven

Immediate Plan AND Date

- Imminent Risk
- Staff &/or Client – emergency services



Safety Plan - Written

1. Distraction techniques (i.e. physical activity, carving, music, drawing)

2. Friends/supportive adults

3. Safe place to go


4. Community Resources/ Professional numbers

5. 24 hour and emergency numbers



Community Resources

Additional Activities



Level of risk = level of involvement

Disrupt suicide plan

Address self-harming, substance use

Safe proof environment

Know program's expectation & confidentiality

Revisit Safe Plan (on a regular basis)

24 Hour Information

- Crisis Line (Vancouver) 604-872-3311
1-866-661-3311
- Suicide Hotline (24 hrs) 1-800-784-2433
- Native Youth Crisis Hotline 1-877-209-1266
- Kids Help Phone (24 hrs) 1-800-668-6868

- Websites for Youth:
 - www.youthinbc.ca
 - www.kidshelpphone.ca
- Websites for Caregivers:
 - ww3.suicideinfo.ca/youthatrisk/
 - www.teenmentalhealth.org

Advising Others

- Assess for increase risk
- Advise supportive adults
- Ensure speaking with legal guardians
- Be prepared for shock, denial, anger...
- Restrict means; possible 24 hour watch
- Refer to doctor & provide information
- Coach on appropriate response
- When caregivers do not protect...

Key Counseling Components

- Intervene with immediate crisis
- Relaxation skills
- Emotional
 - Awareness
 - Vocalization
 - Regulation
- Problem-solving
- Conflict management

Self Care

Create your own Safety Plan

Distractions



Friends/Supportive Adults



Safe Place

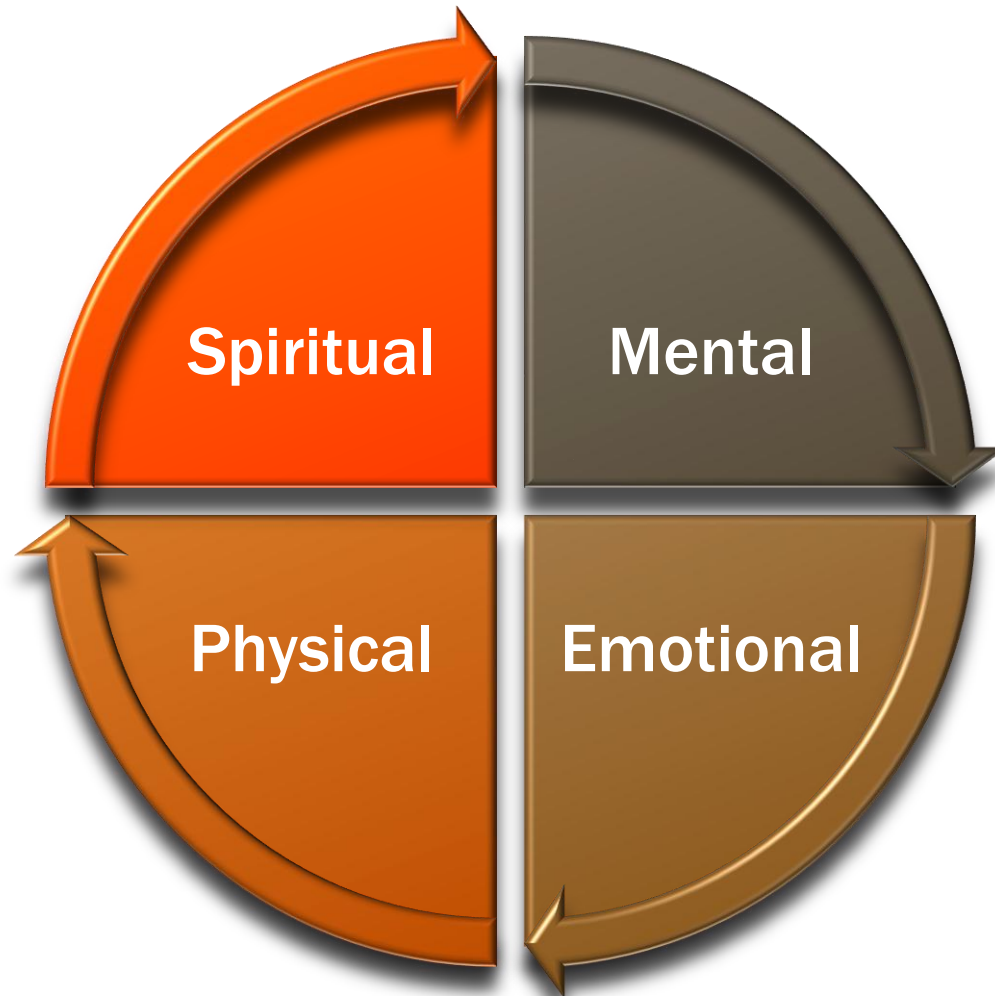


Professionals



Emergency Contacts

Caring for yourself



References & Helpful Information

- AAS – American Association of Suicidology
- ASIST – Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (Center for Suicide Prevention)
- “Coping with Suicidal Thoughts” www.carmha.ca
- “Cultural Continuity as a Hedge Against Suicide in Canada’s First Nations” (Chandler & Lalonde) web.unvic.ca
- “Darkness Calls” Healthy Aboriginal Network. www.ccamhr.ca/resources/Darkness_Calls.pdf

References & Helpful Information Cont'd

- Improving the mental health of youth by the effective translation & transfer of scientific knowledge www.teenmentalhealth.org
- “Looking for Something to Look Forward to.” BC Coroners Service. Child Death Review. www.gov.bc.ca
- “Standards for the Assessment of Suicide” – National Suicide Prevention Lifeline’s Certification and Training Subcommittee (Some terms accredited to Rudd & Joiner) *Added by presenter to model.

Recommended Reading

- **Blauner, Susan Rose. How I Stayed Alive when My Brain was Trying to Kill Me: One Person's Guide to Suicide Prevention. Harper Collins Publishers, 2002.**
- **Lukas, Christopher & Henry Seiden. Silent Grief: Living in the Wake of Suicide. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. Rev. Ed. 2007**
- **Tattered Teddies: An Interactive Handbook about the Awareness and Prevention of Suicide in Children. Centre for Suicide Prevention, 2008.**

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to End Suicide”

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