Mental Health Awareness & Suicide Prevention
April 12, 2023
Agenda

6:00-6:05pm  Introductions & Welcome
6:05-6:35pm  Presentations
6:35-6:55pm  Q & A
6:55-7:00pm  Closing
Aby Wischmeier, MSW, LCSW
Assistant Director of School Based Services for Adult and Child Health

ADULT & CHILD
HEALTH
School Based Services

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Defining Mental Illness or Mental Health Disorders in Youth

● A delay or disruption in developing age-appropriate thinking, behaviors, social skills, or regulation of emotions.
● These are distressing to the child and impact their ability to function at home, in school, and social environments.
● There does not need to be a specific event that triggers a mental health issue.
Signs That Your Child May Have a Mental Health Disorder

- Drastic changes in mood, behavior or personality
- Persistent sadness that lasts two weeks or more
- Withdrawing from or avoiding social interactions
- Hurting oneself or talking about hurting oneself
- Talking about death or suicide
- Outbursts or extreme irritability
- Out-of-control behavior that can be harmful
- Changes in eating habits
- Sudden weight loss or gain
- Difficulty sleeping
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches
- Difficulty concentrating
- Changes in academic performance
- Avoiding or missing school
Common Mental Health Disorders in Youth

- Anxiety Disorders
- Depression
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Eating Disorders
- Bipolar Disorder
What Should I Do?

If you are concerned about your child’s mental health or are noticing any warning signs:

- Schedule a visit with PCP
  - Rule out underlying medical issues
  - Obtain referrals and resources
  - May suggest medication
- Review Insurance Coverage for Mental Health Services
- Be open to engaging in family sessions to learn how to best support your child’s mental health needs
- Create a safe space for your child to talk with you about their daily life and stressors.
Suicide: Risk and Warning Signs

Risk Factors:
- Existing mental health disorders
- Family history of depression, suicide attempts, or death by suicide
- Youth identifying as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender
- Loss of a parent to death or divorce
- Physical and/or sexual abuse
- Lack of support system
- Feelings of isolation
- Bullying
- A sense of failure at school or in relationships
- A relationship break-up
- Recent suicide of a friend or relative, or an anniversary of a suicide or the death of someone close to them

Warning Signs:
- Talking or writing about death
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Isolating from family and friends
- No longer participating in previously enjoyed activities
- Using or increasing use of drugs and alcohol
- Giving away personal items
- Participating in dangerous or risky activities
- Presence of delusions or hallucinations
- Frequently self-harming
- Notable changes in mood

24/7 CALL, TEXT, CHAT

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2021 Trevor Project National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health

- 42% of LGBTQ youth seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year
- 72% of LGBTQ youth reported symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder in the past two weeks
- 62% of LGBTQ youth reported symptoms of major depressive disorder in the past two weeks
- In the past year, nearly half of LGBTQ youth have wanted counseling from a mental health professional but did not receive it

LGBTQ youth who are highly rejected by their families because of their sexual orientation or gender identity are:

- 6 times as likely to experience high levels of depression
- More than 4 times as likely to attempt suicide

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Suicide Prevention

Common Myths about Suicide:

- Young people who talk about suicide are just attention-seeking. They never attempt to or actually take their own lives.
- All suicidal young people are depressed.
- Improvement in mental health after a crisis means that the risk of suicide is over.
- Talking about suicide or asking someone if they feel suicidal will encourage suicide attempts.
- Suicides always happen in an impulsive moment.
- Young children, ages 5 through 12, cannot be suicidal.
- We cannot really prevent suicides.
Suicide Prevention

- Become familiar with the risk factors and warning signs
- Check in with your child often about their feelings, stress levels, and how they are coping
- Model healthy habits for mental health
- Ask them if they ever think about hurting themselves or ending their life. Adjust for age/developmental level
- If they need mental health treatment, make it a priority, much like medical appointments
- Restrict access to weapons and medications
References

- https://projectchildsafe.org/parents-resources/
- https://afsp.org/teens-and-suicide-what-parents-should-know#additional-resources
- How To Talk About Suicide With Youth Handout
  https://socialworklicenseemap.com/blog/talking-to-kids-about-suicide/#five-ten
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Becky Rose
MCCSC Director of Student Services
FIG. 1

Continuum of school mental health services

Who delivers the services?

- Some school-employed mental health professionals
- Most school-employed mental health professionals
- All school-employed mental health professionals

Who's targeted?

- Students with chronic/severe problems
- At-risk students
- All students

Intensive community interventions with school support

Intensive school interventions with community support

Targeted school interventions with community support

Early identification of students with mental health and behavioral concerns

School-based prevention & universal intervention

MCCSC Counseling Services

• School Social Workers and Counselors
• Classroom lessons
• Group counseling
• Individual supportive counseling
• Crisis intervention
• Referrals to community resources

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Laura Okulski
MCCSC Special Education Teacher
BC2M
BRING CHANGE TO MIND
A national nonprofit organization working to end the stigma and discrimination surrounding mental illness.

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Glenn Close co-founded BC2M in 2010 with a mission to combat stigma through messaging and normalizing conversations around mental health and mental illness.

Glenn’s sister, Jessie, lives with Bipolar Disorder and her nephew, Calen, lives with Schizoaffective Disorder.
WE ARE NATIONAL!

440 clubs across 30 states & over 10,000 students.

BC2M's goal is to create more educated and empathetic high school environments.

BC2M Regional Hubs:
- Northern CA
- Southern CA
- Phoenix, AZ
- Indiana
- New York City and Northeast
WHAT IS THE BC2M HS CLUB?

- Education and Advocacy based
- Event and activity driven
- Open to any student
- Peer-Led: Learn and discuss together
- NOT a form of counseling or therapy
To: Greenfield-Central Highschool

BC2MIND
Bringing Change to our Minds
Out of the Darkness Walk - Oct 2, 2022
BC2M Mental Health Day at the Indianapolis Zoo - March 6, 2023
BC2M brings a safe space for everybody and we all understand what the others are going through there. It has helped me overcome my fears of big groups of people and it helped me make a lot of friends. ~Mya C.

When I first came to bhsn I had just recently been diagnosed with anxiety so seeing that there was a mental health club at the school was really encouraging. I found the club to be a really nice space to hangout and know that other people were having similar struggles and to see that they had found a way through them. I think it’s given me the purpose and niche that I’ve been trying to find for a long time. I’m certainly not “fixed” but I’m learning and growing with the club and I’m definitely a lot better than I was at the beginning of high school. The club is run by people who have had their own struggles with mental health, and maybe still are struggling, which gives us insight into what’s going on in the school beyond a surface layer of observable behavior. That gives us the ability to create more meaningful and lasting change within our school. ~Lainey W.

I learned that I could become a safe space for someone if they need it. BC2M is important to this school because it gives students an opportunity to learn more about mental health and also understand what it means. It helps us know that we aren’t alone and that there are people out there who are similar even if we don’t think it. ~Alexis C.
PROUD TO BE EVIDENCE-BASED!

Our UC Berkeley research team found:

“BC2M club participation is associated, for high-school students, with improvements in mental health knowledge, mental health attitudes, and improved desire for contact with individuals with mental disorders.”
Closing

Our next Parent University Event is:
Free and Inexpensive Enrichment Ideas for Children
Thursday, April 27, 6-7pm at the MCCSC CoLab

Please complete the feedback form.