

Everything We Know About Suicide

Mental health and healthcare professionals face many challenges in their everyday work, some of which are clinically more significant than others. These professionals undergo extensive training and education to learn to act in the moment, make sound decisions, and create the best plan of care for their patients and clients. Sometimes, crisis situations arise, however, and even the best-prepared professionals can feel confused or in over their head. The likelihood of a mental health or healthcare professional interacting with a potentially suicidal client in the course of their career is significant, even if that professional does not typically work with a specific suicidal population. The prevalence and significance of suicidality in all age groups additionally increases this potential. For this reason, it is imperative that all professionals understand the warning signs, myths and facts, and urgent first steps when faced with someone who is feeling suicidal.

This presentation reviews overall suicide statistics, various demographic differences, and lifelong risk factors associated with suicidal thoughts. We will examine, in-depth, key terms, do's and don'ts on talking about suicide, and how to approach and complete a suicide risk assessment. Attendees will gain important factual information as well as new ways to approach clinical work with clients at risk for suicide.

Target Audience

Psychologists
Therapists
Social Workers
Psychiatrists
Counselors
Nurses
Course level: Intermediate

Learning Objectives

At the end of this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. Identify important terms & language related to suicide
2. Identify the scope of suicide risk in various populations
3. Pinpoint key elements of an effective suicide risk assessment
4. Articulate how you can be involved in suicide prevention
5. Identify crisis resources

Seminar Schedule

The webinar outline is attached. See the Live Webinar page for the start and end times.

Outline

12 PM ET Introduction - speaker, objectives, agenda review

Section 1 - Key terms, how to talk about suicide

12:30 PM ET Section 2 - Prevalence, how many are affected? Who?

1:00 PM ET Section 3 - Risk factors, what increases or mitigates risk?

1:35 - 1:50 = 15 minute break

1:50 PM ET Section 4 - Assessment, how we determine appropriate risk

2:10 SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY (10 min + 10 min to discuss)

2:30 Section 5 - Prevention, how can we lower the statistics?

2:40 Section 6 - Resources, numbers that we should all have on hand

2:50 QUESTIONS

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The Presenter

Jessica Williams is a licensed clinical social worker in the state of Delaware and is currently a clinician and MSW supervisor at the Center for Grief and Trauma Therapy (CGTT). Jessica holds a Trauma Certificate from Bryn Mawr College, and is a trained adult mental health screener through the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH). In her present role Jessica utilizes a trauma-informed approach in working with clients ages 17+, particularly those experiencing anxiety, grief, and self-harm and self-doubting thoughts. At the start of her career, Jessica received her Masters in Social Service (MSW equivalent) from Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania, and worked in various healthcare settings. In her most recent previous role, Jessica was hired by a local children's hospital under a federal SAMHSA suicide prevention grant and developed, piloted and launched a Behavioral Health Screening Protocol for all patients 12yo and older in the ER. Jessica will present the results of this project at the National Alliance on Mental Illness' (NAMI) annual conference this summer. Jessica has been featured on NBC10 Philadelphia and as a guest writer on Dr. Robert Neimeyer's AfterTalk Weekly blog.

Contact Jessica directly at jwilliams@centerforgrieftherapy.com if you would like to consult with her.

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This seminar has been reviewed and approved by Keith Hannan, Ph.D., Laura Davie, LICSW, Tina Jenkins, Psy.D., and Loreen Yearick, MSN, RN. This approval expires on March 1, 2028.

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