



Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

Suicide is a growing health concern that does not discriminate. In fact, 54% of Americans have been affected by suicide. It is the 12th leading cause of death in the US, with 45,979 lives lost in 2020 alone and is the 3rd leading cause of death for ages 10-19. ([AFSP, 2020](#)).

Suicide prevention is a collective effort amongst all adults who work with students. It is imperative that we work together to raise awareness and encourage dialogue to reduce the stigma of mental health.

Language Matters

Words matter. Use words that promote understanding to break down negative stereotypes & encourage hope. This can help people to feel more comfortable and talk openly about their mental health.

Ex: Saying "committed suicide" implies that suicide is a crime. Instead, try saying "died by suicide" or "suicide death."



Warning Signs

Observable behaviors that may indicate the presence of suicidal ideation. May be "cries for help" & signals for further inquiry.

- Feelings of sadness, hopelessness
- Social withdrawal/isolation
- Suicide threats, notes, plans
- Preoccupation with death
- Making final arrangements (social media posts, giving away prized possessions)

Risk Factors

A student's life may consist of a single or multiple factors that increases their risk. Examples include:

- Mental health disorders
- Substance use disorder
- Previous suicide attempt(s)
- Child abuse, neglect, or trauma
- Stressful life circumstances

Signs of immediate risk:

- *Talking about/making plans for suicide
- *Hopelessness about future
- *Severe emotional distress
- *Worrisome changes in behavior (withdrawal from social connections, irritability, etc.)

How to Respond



1. Don't leave student alone until they're able to be seen
2. Escort student to appropriate contact (School Counselor, CST, SAC, Admin.)
3. Provide info. from student that may be helpful with the assessment of the student
4. If comfortable, check-in with the student after. They sought you out for a reason & may want to know you still care.

**If a student discloses abuse contact to DCPD must be made.*

Non-suicidal Self-injury.

Non-suicidal self-injury, "self-harm," is common amongst teens. Used to cope with overwhelming feelings, feel a sense of control, show people they're hurting, or other reasons unique to the individual.

"What should I do if I see a student, or they disclose self-harm?"

- *Listen w/ out judgement*
- *Supervise student & do not leave them alone*
- *Report to counselor/CST for medical assistance and assessment*

Resources

Suicide Prevention Resource Center

NJ Youth Suicide Prevention

NJ Hopeline

2NDFLOOR Youth Helpline

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

TLC & AFSP NJ Suicide Prevention Resources Padlet



Hispanic Heritage Month

Sept. 15 - Oct. 15



Hispanic Heritage Month is observed in the United States to celebrate the culture and history of Central & South America, the Caribbean, Mexico, & Spain. Sept. 15th commemorates the anniversary of independence of the Latin American countries El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Guatemala. Mexico, Belize, and Chile also celebrate their independence days in the following weeks. Hispanic Heritage Month was enacted into law on Aug. 17, 1988, & observation began in 1968.

4 Ways to Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month

- 1. Music exploration: Create a playlist, re-create dance performances
- 2. Arts: Explore lives of artists, translate & perform a skit or scene from a play written in another language
- 3. History & Literature: Interview someone from the Hispanic community, use search engine to pull news headlines from a Latin American country
- 4. Celebrate through celebrations: Research traditions, make dishes that represent diverse Hispanic cultures to share

Hispanic, Latino, Latinx: What's the Difference?

HISPANIC:
REFERS TO PEOPLE FROM
SPANISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

LATINO/A/O:
REFERS TO PEOPLE FROM
COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA
WHO MAY SPEAK SPANISH,
PORTUGUESE, INDIGENOUS
LANGUAGES AND MORE

LATINX:
A GENDER NEUTRAL TERM
REFERRING TO PEOPLE
FROM LATIN AMERICAN
COUNTRIES



Resources


- [Common Sense Education: Free Resources for Hispanic Heritage Month](#)
- [Teach for America: Latinx Heritage Month Resources](#)
- [ADL: Ideas for Educators](#)
- [National Museum of the American Latino: Educator Resources](#)
- [National Education Association: K-12 Resources](#)
- [The Library of Congress: Hispanic Heritage Month Teacher Resources](#)

Recovery Month

National Recovery Month is a national observance that's held every September to educate Americans on substance use treatment & mental health services. It's purpose is to promote healthy living & recovery practices for those living with a mental/substance use disorder, as well as acknowledge the dedicated service of providers and communities.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the history of Recovery Month.

HOW STIGMA IMPACTS RECOVERY



STIGMA CAN...

- REDUCE** WILLINGNESS TO SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP
- CAUSE** RELUCTANCE TO ATTEND TREATMENT
- LIMIT** ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE, HOUSING, AND EMPLOYMENT
- DIMINISH** SELF-ESTEEM
- EXACERBATE** DEPRESSION
- AFFECT** PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AT A TIME THEY'RE NEEDED MOST

Overdose Prevention Act (N.J.S.A. 2C:35-30)

(NJ, 2013) Gov. Christie signed into law the Overdose Prevention Act. This law protects those who seek medical assistance for a person who may be experiencing a drug overdose, seeking assistance for themselves/another, & the person experiencing the overdose from prosecution.

Save a Life! Don't think twice! Call 911

NJ's Good Samaritan Law protects people who seek help for victims of overdose.

"No life is disposable. A life saved from overdose can be a life restored"
Governor Chris Christie - May 2, 2013



Emergency

CHANGING HOW WE TALK ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE*

The language we use has a direct and profound impact on those around us. The negative impacts of stigma can be reduced by changing the language we use about substance use.

TWO KEY PRINCIPLES INCLUDE:

- Using neutral, medically accurate terminology when describing substance use
- Using "people-first" language, that focuses first on the individual or individuals, not the action (e.g. "people who use drugs")

It is also important to make sure that the language we use to talk about substance use is respectful and compassionate.

TOPIC	INSTEAD OF	USE
People who use drugs	Addicts Junkies Users Drug abusers Recreational drug user	People who use drugs People with a substance use disorder People with lived/living experience People who occasionally use drugs
People who have used drugs	Former drug addict Referring to a person as being "clean"	People who have used drugs People with lived/living experience People in recovery
Drug use	Substance/drug abuse Substance/drug misuse	Substance/drug use Substance use disorder/opioid use disorder Problematic [drug] use [Drug] dependence

* This document was created in discussion with people with lived and living experience, through existing research and documentation from other organizations trying to address stigma. This is not an exhaustive list. Furthermore, as a result of the evolving discussion around the best language

Resources

In an emergency, always call 911. For 24/7 help finding treatment, please contact 1-844-REACHNJ (1-844-732-2465).

[NJ Connect for Recovery](#)

[Al-Anon/Al-Ateen](#)

[SAMHSA](#)

[Children Impacted by Addiction: A Toolkit for Educators](#)

[ReachNJ](#)

[NJ Addiction Services Treatment Directory \(Mental Health & Addiction Services\)](#)