

19: Taking Care of the Whole Person

Words of Wisdom

Stress Cartoons

Who's Got Your Back?

How Can You Tell If Someone's Depressed?

Myths About Depression

What is Grief?

Native Youth Suicide: The Statistics behind the sadness

Resources

**All individuals
have the power to
transform and change
themselves.**

Anonymous

Stress Reduction Kit



Directions:

1. Place kit on FIRM surface.
2. Follow directions in circle of kit.
3. Repeat step 2 as necessary, or until unconscious.
4. If unconscious, cease stress reduction activity.



"STRESS"

THE CONFUSION CREATED WHEN
ONE'S MIND OVERRIDES THE
BODY'S BASIC DESIRE TO CHOKE
THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS OUT OF
SOMEBODY WHO DESPERATELY
NEEDS IT!



And you thought
there was stress
in your life!



Who's Got Your Back?

If you were feeling super stressed out, what are three healthy things you could do to make yourself feel better?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

If you needed to talk to someone about your feelings, who are three supportive people you could go to?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

How Can You Tell if Someone is Depressed?

Do they express feelings of

- Sadness or "emptiness"?
- Hopelessness, pessimism, or guilt?
- Helplessness or worthlessness?

Do they seem

- Unable to make decisions?
- Unable to concentrate and remember?
- To have lost interest or pleasure in ordinary activities—like sports or band or talking on the phone?
- To have more problems with school and family?

Do they complain of

- Loss of energy and drive -- so they seem "slowed down"?
- Trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or getting up?
- Appetite problems; are they losing or gaining weight?
- Headaches, stomach aches, or backaches?
- Chronic aches and pains in joints and muscles?

Has their behavior changed suddenly so that

- They are restless or more irritable?
- They want to be alone most of the time?
- They've started cutting classes or dropped hobbies and activities?
- You think they may be drinking heavily or taking drugs?

Have they talked about

- Death?
- Suicide - or have they attempted suicide?¹



REMEMBER – Native STAND peer educators are not counselors. It's important you recognize the symptoms of depression, but you are not expected to make a clinical judgment about someone's mental health. It's important to know your limits as a peer educator and to make appropriate referrals to a school counselor as you think necessary.

¹ NIMH - http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/health/friend-depressed/friend-depress.htm

Myths About Depression

Myths or misconceptions about depression can cause stigma and prevent people who need help from getting it. As a peer educator, you need to know the **facts**. Some of the most common myths are:

Myth: It's normal for teenagers to be moody; Teens don't suffer from "real" depression.

Fact: Depression can affect people at any age or of any race, ethnic, or economic group.

Myth: Teens who claim to be depressed are weak and just need to pull themselves together. There's nothing anyone else can do to help.

Fact: Depression is not a weakness, but a serious health disorder. Both young people and adults who are depressed need professional treatment. A trained therapist or counselor can help them learn more positive ways to think about themselves, change behavior, cope with problems, or handle relationships. A physician can prescribe medications to help relieve the symptoms of depression. For many people, a combination of psychotherapy and medication is beneficial.

Myth: Talking about depression only makes it worse.

Fact: Talking through feelings may help a friend recognize the need for professional help. By showing friendship and concern and giving uncritical support, you can encourage your friend to talk to his or her parents or another trusted adult, like a teacher or coach, about getting treatment. If your friend is reluctant to ask for help, you can talk to an adult -- that's what a real friend will do.

Myth: Telling an adult that a friend might be depressed is betraying a trust. If someone wants help, he or she will get it.

Fact: Depression, which saps energy and self-esteem, interferes with a person's ability or wish to get help. And many parents may not understand the seriousness of depression or of thoughts of death or suicide. It is an act of true friendship to share your concerns with a school guidance counselor, a favorite teacher, your own parents, or another trusted adult.¹

Remind students that this discussion may raise some intense emotions or reactions from the students. Make sure they know that you are in a safe place; you are there to support them. Be prepared to stay afterwards and address individual reactions. Make a special point of checking in on those students who seemed upset by the discussion. Also, if in a boarding school setting, give the dorm managers a heads up to check in on those students and make sure they're doing OK.

¹ NIMH - http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/health/friend-depressed/friend-depress.htm

What is Grief?^{1,2,3}

- All people who suffer loss experience grief in one way or another.
- What is grief? The emotional, physical, intellectual, behavioral and spiritual process of adjusting to loss. Grief can result from:
 - family breakdown
 - divorce
 - incarceration
 - moving to a new home or community
 - adoption
 - abuse
 - loss of health
 - serious illness of a family member or close friend
 - death of a family member or close friend
 - suicide of a family member or close friend
- The normal response of sorrow, emotion, and confusion that comes from losing someone or something important to you.
- It's a natural and normal response to losing someone you love.
- A typical reaction to death, divorce, job loss, a move away from friends and family, or loss of good health due to illness.
- There is no timeline for grieving—It occurs throughout our lives and is a process, not an event
- It is a necessity, not a weakness.

About Grief

- The sense of loss will never go away completely, but over time the intensity of the pain will diminish.
- The grieving process takes time, and healing usually happens gradually. The intensity of grief may be related to how sudden or predictable the loss was and how you felt about the person who died.
- If ignored, grief may show up as changes in concentration, troubled relationships, emotional problems or physical illness.

People who are grieving may:⁴

- feel empty and numb, in shock
- feel strong emotions, such as sadness, anger, guilt
- have physical reactions, such as trembling, nausea, trouble breathing, muscle weakness, dry mouth, or trouble sleeping and eating
- have strange dreams or nightmares, be absent-minded, withdraw socially, or lack the desire to return to work

¹ <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/ken-01-0104/default.asp>

² <http://www.teenloss.com>

³ <http://www.youthradio.org/news/helping-teens-deal-with-grief>

⁴ <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/ken-01-0104/default.asp>

- have spiritual reactions to a death — for example, some people find themselves questioning their beliefs and feeling disappointed in their religion while others find that they feel more strongly than ever about their faith

What do you say to a teen who has just experienced a loss?⁵

- The best thing you can do for a teen that is grieving is to offer to listen.
- Let the teen know that you are there for them, and when they are ready, you are there to listen.
- Don't be afraid to acknowledge the death, to say you are sorry and, if appropriate, to ask for the teen to tell you what happened.
- Let them know you care.

What should you NOT to say to a teen who has just experienced a loss?⁶

- I know how you feel
- It was God's plan to take him
- She's in a better place
- At least he's not suffering anymore
- You'll get over it
- It's time to move on
- You did the best you could

What are some positive ways to handle grief?

- Remember that grief is a normal emotion.
- Believe that you will heal over time.
- Participate in ceremonies.
- Be with others.
- Talk about it when you can.
- Exercise.
- Eat right.
- Join a support group.
- Don't keep your emotions trapped inside you.
- Create a memorial or tribute.

Going forward and healing from grief doesn't mean forgetting about the person you lost. Getting back to enjoying your life doesn't mean you no longer miss the person. And how long it takes until you start to feel better isn't a measure of how much you loved the person. With time, the loving support of family and friends, and your own positive actions, you can find ways to cope with even the deepest loss.

⁵ <http://www.youthradio.org/news/helping-teens-deal-with-grief>

⁶ <http://www.youthradio.org/news/helping-teens-deal-with-grief>

How long does grief last?⁷

- The length of time spent grieving is different for each person.
- It lasts as long as it takes you to accept and learn to live with your loss—for some people, that can be months, for others it might be years
- There are many reasons for the differences, including personality, health, coping style, culture, family background, and life experiences.
- The time spent grieving also depends on your relationship with the person lost and how prepared you were for the loss.

How will I know when I'm done grieving?⁸

Every person who experiences a death or other loss must complete a four-step grieving process. The process isn't over until a person goes through the four steps.

1. Accept the loss.
2. Work through and feel the physical and emotional pain of grief.
3. Adjust to living in a world without the person or item lost.
4. Move on with life.

If your grief isn't letting up for a while after the death of your loved one, you may want to reach out for help. If grief has turned into depression, it's very important to tell someone.

How do you know if grief has been going on too long? Here are some signs:

- **Grieving for 4 months or more and not feeling any better.**
- **Feeling depressed.**
- **Intensity of grief prevents participation in normal activities.**
- **Lack of concentration, difficulties sleeping, eating, or socializing**
- **Thoughts about suicide, dying, or hurting oneself.**

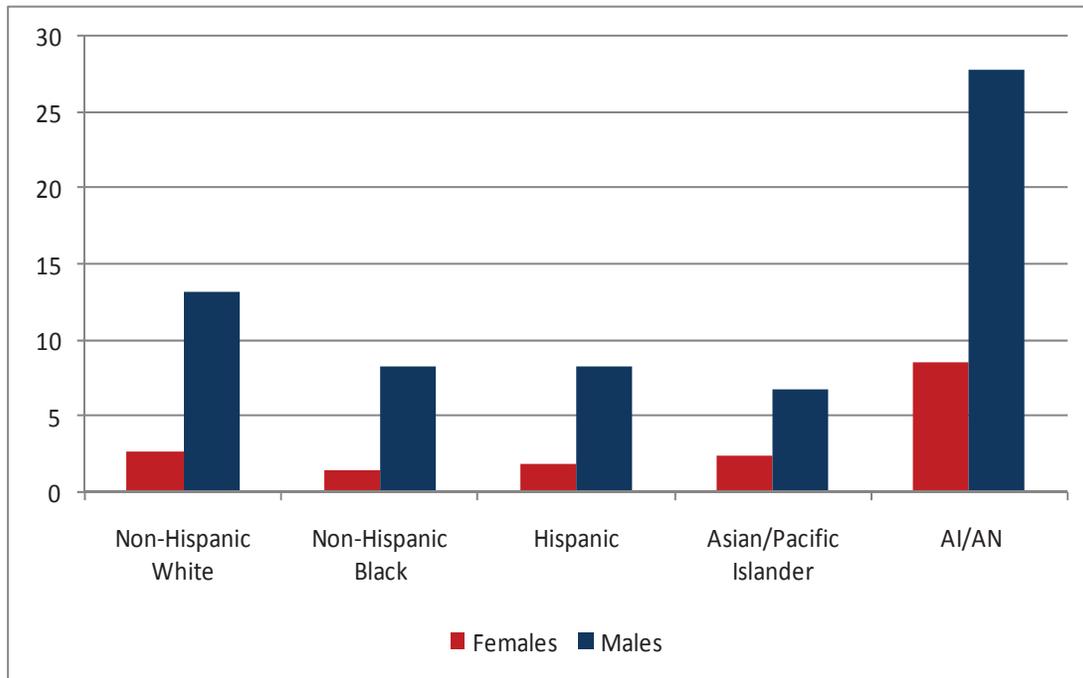
It's natural for loss to cause people to think about death to some degree. But if a loss has caused you to think about suicide or hurting yourself in some way, or if you feel that you can't go on living, it's important that you tell someone right away.

⁷ <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/ken-01-0104/default.asp>

⁸ <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/ken-01-0104/default.asp>

Native Youth Suicide: The statistics behind the sadness

Suicide Rates for 10-24 Year-Olds by Race/Ethnicity and Sex, U.S., 2002-2006



- The suicide rate for male Native youth is more than twice that of male white youth.
- The suicide rate for female Native youth is almost three times that of female white youth.
- The suicide rate for male Native youth is almost three times that of female Native youth.

Source: CDC: National Suicide Statistics at a Glance,
<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/statistics/rates03.html>

RESOURCES

BAM! Body & Mind: Managing Conflict

http://www.bam.gov/sub_yourlife/yourlife_conflict.html

Gives kids the information they need to make healthy lifestyle choices. A project of the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention.

Center for Young Women's Health: Depression: A Guide for Teens

<http://www.youngwomenshealth.org/depression.html>

A youth-friendly site from the Children's Hospital of Boston.

Half of Us

<http://www.halfofus.com>

An initiative to raise awareness about the prevalence of mental health issues and connect young adults to appropriate resources to get help. A project of mtvU and The Jed Foundation.

National Mental Health Information Center: Mental Health Services Locator

<http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/databases>

Locate mental health service providers by location. A project of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

National Runaway Switchboard

1-800-RUNAWAY or 1-800-786-2929—available 24/7

<http://www.1800runaway.org>

A hotline and website for runaway and homeless youth. Youth and family members can call to work through problems and to find local help.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255)—available 24/7

<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Confidential suicide prevention hotline available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. A project of the Mental Health Association of New York City with funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Reach Out

<http://us.reachout.com>

Reach Out is a confidential information and support service that uses evidence-based principles and technology to help teens and young adults facing tough times and struggling with mental health issues. All content is written by teens and young adults, for teens and young adults, to meet them where they are, and help them recognize their own strengths and use those strengths to overcome their difficulties and/or seek help if necessary. A project of Inspire USA Foundation.

Suicide Warning Signs

<http://family.samhsa.gov/get/suicidewarn>

Recognizing the warning signs for suicide in young people. A project of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Teen Central

<http://www.teencentral.net>

Developed by KidsPeace, a private charity dedicated to serving the behavioral and mental health needs of children, preadolescents and teens.

TeensHealth: Mental Health

http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind

Website created for teens looking for honest, accurate information and advice about health, relationships, and growing up. A project of Nemours, a leading pediatric health system.

Teen Help-Lines *(search by state)*

<http://www.teencentral.net/Help/teenhelp.php>

Search mental health programs by state. Developed by KidsPeace, a private charity dedicated to serving the behavioral and mental health needs of children, preadolescents and teens.

Trevor Lifeline

1-800-850-8078—available 24/7

<http://www.thetrevorproject.org>

The only nationwide, around-the-clock crisis and suicide prevention helpline for GLBTQ youth.

What a Difference a Friend Makes—Native American site

<http://www.whatadifference.samhsa.gov/native>

This website was developed to encourage, educate, and inspire young adults to support their friends who are experiencing mental health problems. A project of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Who You Want 2 Be

<http://whoyouwant2be.org>

A youth-friendly website that helps answer questions important to teens, like mental health, substance use, communication, Developed by Centerstone, the nation's largest, non-profit community-based behavioral healthcare provider.