

WHAT PARENTS AND
GUARDIANS NEED TO
KNOW ABOUT SUICIDE
PREVENTION IN OUR
SCHOOLS

Lifelines
A Suicide Prevention Program

5 Important Things Parents and Guardians Need to Know

**Why Youth Suicide
Prevention is
Important**

**How to Recognize
Warning Signs**

**What your School is
Doing For
Prevention**

**What are Protective
Factors & How to
Foster Them**

**What to do if You
are Worried about
Your Child**

Why Youth Suicide Prevention is Important

- 1. 2nd leading cause of death 10-24 year olds**
- 2. Rate increasing for 5-11 year olds**
- 3. Dramatic increase in attempts in 10-14 year old girls**
- 4. Prevention DOES work!**

BUT...

Can't talking
about suicide
plant the idea in
the minds of
vulnerable youth?

AND I'VE
HEARD...

That talking about
suicide is just a
way to get
attention

IS IT SAFE...

To talk about
suicide in the
school?



AT LEAST 30%
OF YOUTH WILL
TELL SOMEONE
ELSE

Understanding Suicide Better

A behavioral definition puts suicide into words that are easy to understand:

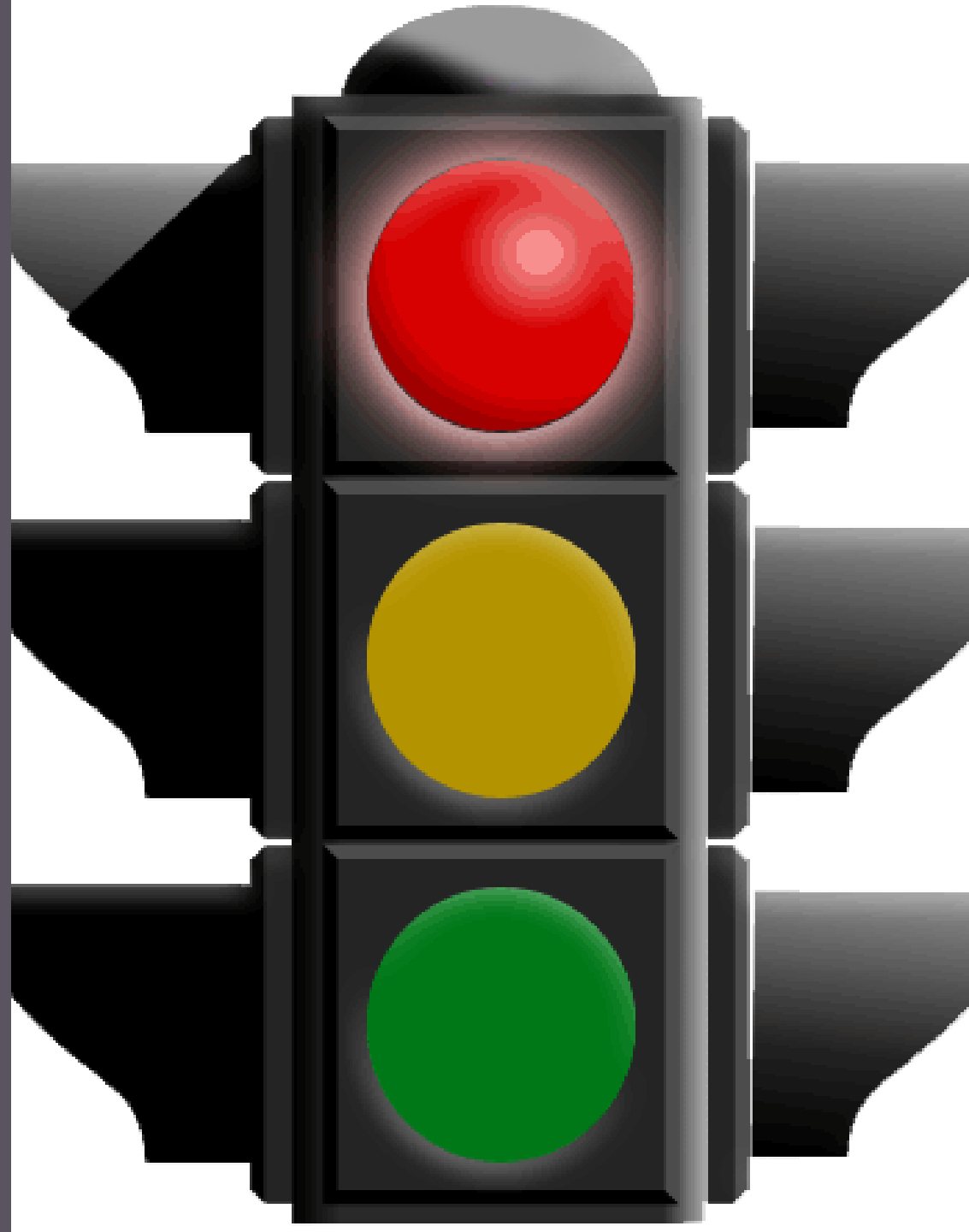
Suicide is an attempt to solve a problem of intense emotional pain with impaired problem-solving skills

How to Recognize Warning Signs

Red - Warning

Amber - Risk

Green – Protective Factors



Risk Factors:
traits, attributes,
characteristics or
other variables associated
with increased risk for suicide
or suicidal behavior

- **Family history of suicide**
- **Mental health diagnosis**
- **Previous attempt**
- **Being exposed to a peer's death**
- **Access to lethal means**

Warning Signs: FACTS

- **Feelings**
- **Actions**
- **Changes**
- **Threats / talk**
- **Situations**

WARNING SIGNS YOU MAY NOTICE AT HOME

- **Changes in appearance**
- **Changes in mood, for example, no longer cheerful or suddenly cheerful**
- **Increased irritability**
- **Changes in eating habits**
- **Loss of interest in activities**
- **Bullying behavior- even as a bystander**
- **Somatic complaints**
- **Actual threats or suicide notes**
- **Concerns expressed by peers**

What Your School is Doing for Prevention: The Lifelines Trilogy

- **Comprehensive**
- **Evidence-based**
- **Uses public health prevention model**
- **Sustainable**

Lifelines
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Prevention Goals



Everyone in the school community will:

- Know warning signs**
- Be able to identify students with warning signs**
- Make effective referrals**

The Scope of Training in Your School

The faculty who will teach the prevention curriculum and school counselors were trained on the curriculum and its implementation.

All school staff receive a training on suicide awareness and prevention.

All parents/guardians receive a training on suicide awareness and prevention.

Students participate in a Suicide Prevention Curriculum.

Instructional Objectives

Students Will:

- Recognize the threat of suicidal thoughts and behavior and take troubled peers seriously
- Know relevant facts about suicide, including warning signs
- Demonstrate positive attitudes about intervention and help-seeking behavior
- Know how to respond to troubled peers
- Know resources: be able to name two trusted adult and know how resources will respond

**Lifelines Prevention
Curriculum
Principle Takeaways**

Social Connection

Help-Seeking

**Knowing how to
access in school
resources**

What the Curriculum Looks Like

Four, 45 minute lessons students learn once in 5th or 6th grade

Four, 45 minute lessons students learn once or twice between 7th – 10th grade

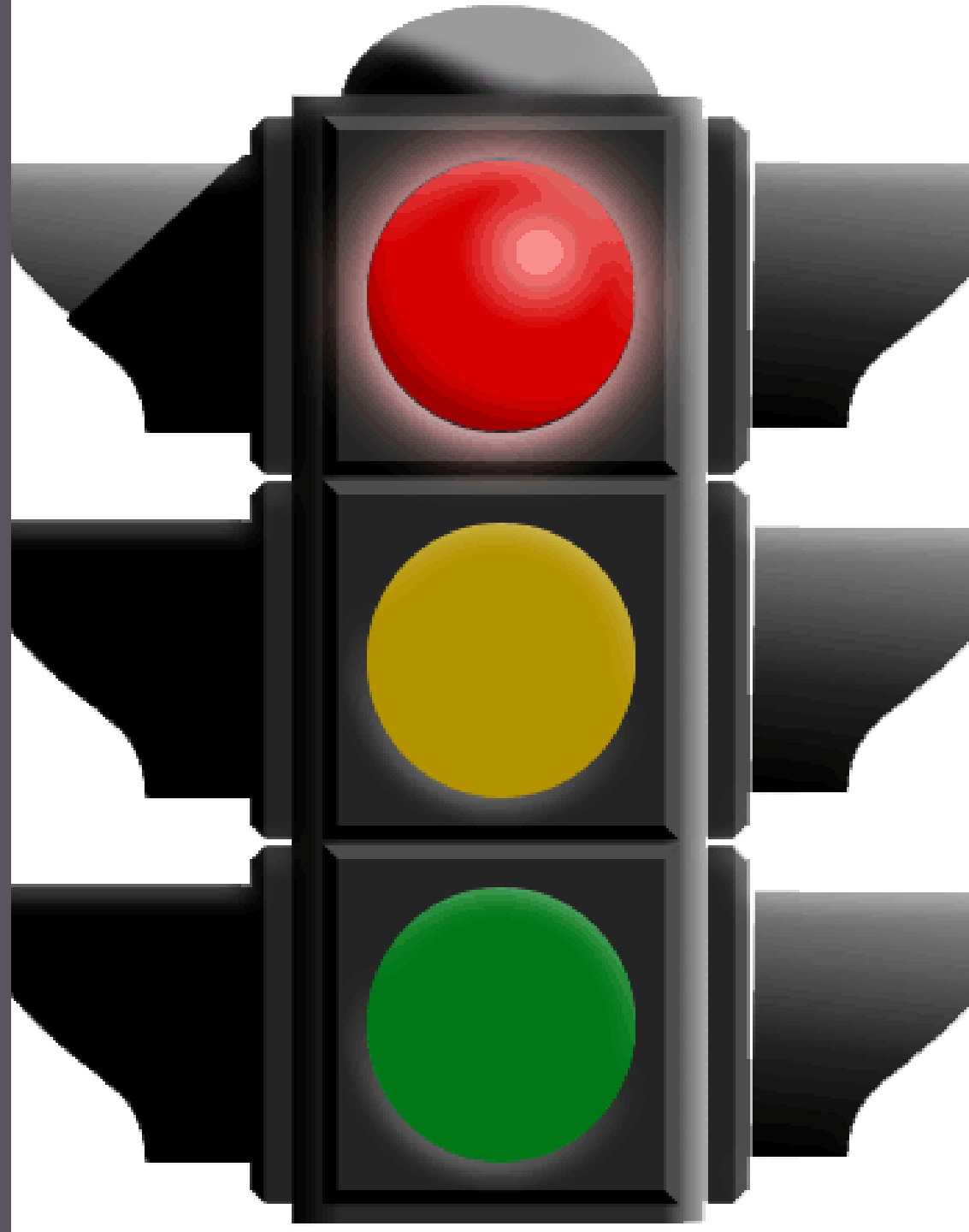
Two, 45 minutes lessons students learn once in 11th or 12th grade

The Importance of Trusted Adults

- Curriculum designed to help students identify Trusted Adults in their lives whom they can turn to for support
- Students name the qualities they look for in helpful/trusted adults
- Students encouraged to name at least two trusted adults

What are “Protective Factors” and How do We Foster them?

Personal, behavioral, or situational characteristics that contribute to resiliency and serve as a buffer against risk



Protective Factors for Youth

- **Contact with a caring adult!***
- Sense of connection
- Positive self-esteem and good coping skills
- Access to care for emotional/physical problems, substance abuse
- Cultural/religious beliefs that discourage suicide and promote self-preservation

Fostering Protective Factors: For Parents



How To Be a Partner in Prevention

- **Be an advocate!**
- **Become educated about youth suicide, especially in your area**
- **Be alert to what's going on with teens in your community**
- **Be nosy- ask about rumors or gossip- monitor the internet**
- **Monitor behavior, especially alcohol use**
- **Know your resources!**
- **If your child needs mental health services, be an educated consumer**
- **Stay concerned and FOLLOW UP!**

WHAT TO DO IF
YOU'RE WORRIED
ABOUT YOUR CHILD?

How To Talk With Your Kids & Listen to Their Answers

Ask	Ask your kids what they think/feel about suicide
LISTEN	LISTEN to the answer
Don't disagree	Don't disagree with them or minimize what they tell you
Use	If you hear anything that concerns you, use the 3 magic words: TELL ME MORE
Be	Be prepared to take action IMMEDIATELY

*Local
Resources
and
Beyond*



QUESTIONS?

