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Suicide Prevention Education

a collaboration of the
Mississippi Department of Education/Office of Healthy Schools
Mississippi Department of Mental Health



Why are we here?

- Suicide is the third leading cause of death in young people between the ages of 15 and 24.
- Every 16 minutes a suicide occurs in the U.S.
- An average of one young person (ages 15-24) dies every 2.08 hours.
- No less than six other people are intimately affected by those losses.
- Children who have lost a loved one to suicide are more likely to die by suicide themselves.



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Mississippi Data

from the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

- 29% of high school students surveyed reported feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities.
- 18.7% of middle school students surveyed, and 15.4% of high school students surveyed reported seriously considering suicide in the past 12 months.



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Mississippi Data

from the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

- 10.8% of middle school students surveyed, and 11.4% of high school students surveyed reported making a plan about how they would commit suicide in the past 12 months.
- 8.8% of middle school students surveyed, and 9.3% of high school students surveyed reported an actual attempt to kill themselves in the past 12 months.



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Issues are Everywhere

Students

- Anxiety about school performance
- Problems dealing with parents & teachers
- Peer pressure
- Dealing with death or divorce
- Depression
- Drug or alcohol use
- Sexuality
- Decisions

Staff

- Financial loss
- Burdens of being caregivers to aging parents
- Job stress
- Medical issues
- Dealing with death or divorce
- Depression
- Drug or alcohol use
- Lack of social support
- Decisions



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“School systems are not responsible for meeting every need of their students. But when the need directly affects learning, the school must meet the challenge.”

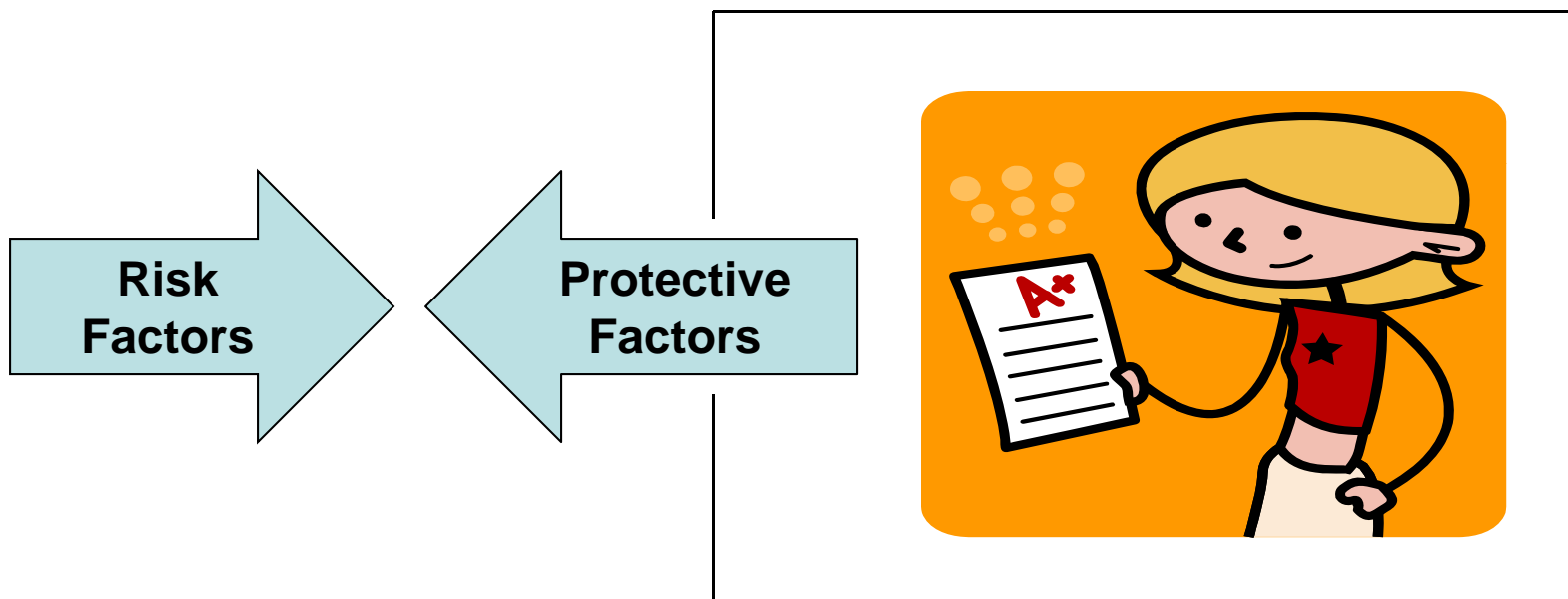
Carnegie Task Force on Education



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Facilitating Healthy Development

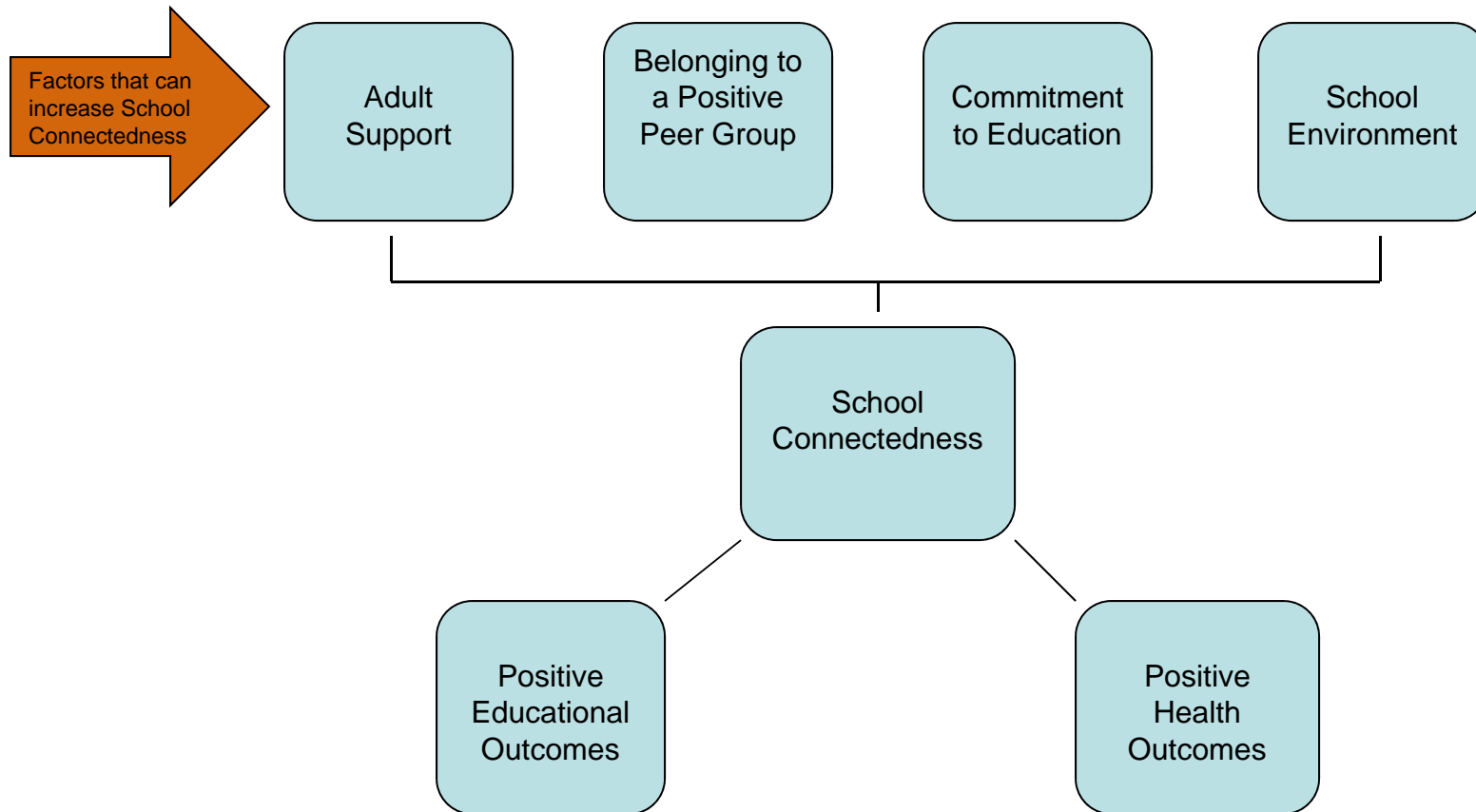


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School Connectedness



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Why is School Connectedness Important?

- Students are more likely to engage in healthy behaviors and succeed academically when they feel connected to school.
- School connectedness was found to be the strongest protective factor for boys and girls to decrease substance use, school absenteeism, early sexual initiation, violence, and risk of unintentional injury.
- **School connectedness was second in importance, after family connectedness, as a protective factor against emotional distress, disordered eating, and suicidal ideation and attempts.**





Mississippi Code 37-3-101

Senate Bill 2770

- In the 2009-2010 school year, the State Department of Education shall require that local school districts conduct in-service training on suicide prevention education for all licensed teachers and principals.
- The MS Department of Mental Health will be responsible for development of the content of the training and determining the appropriate amount of time that should be allotted for the training.



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Mississippi Code 37-3-103

Senate Bill 2770

- Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, the State Department of Education shall require that local school districts conduct in-service training on suicide prevention education for all newly employed licensed teachers and principals.
- This education may be accomplished through self-review of suitable suicide prevention materials.



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Your In-Service Training

- Team approach
 - Counselor
 - School Nurse
 - Administrator
 - Professional Development Coordinator
 - Social Worker
 - Other team members?
- A minimum of two (2) hours should be allotted for training.



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Roles – It's **EVERYONE'S** Job

- **ALL** school personnel who interact with students on a regular basis should know the warning signs of suicide and the importance of sharing their concerns about a student with an appropriate adult.
- Know your school or district procedure for dealing with students who disclose suicidal intent.



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Roles – It's **EVERYONE'S** Job

- Support students who are at risk of suicide with counseling, monitoring, and follow-up services.
- As a team, you can provide needed expertise, support, and information to students, and parents who may notice that something is wrong with one of their peers or children, but may not know what to do about it.



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Documentation & Monitoring

- Following your local in-service training, submit documentation to OHS of the training date, staff in attendance, evaluation summary, and any need for additional sessions.
- Complete training between now and April to allow the month of May for follow-up.





Documentation & Monitoring

- Monitoring for the 2010-2011 school year and beyond will be done through the Office of Healthy School's Monitoring Tool and site visits.

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Recommended Curricula

- For use in elementary school settings
 - *Yellow Ribbon, Be a Link!* Suicide Prevention Program/Children's Wellness Curriculum
- For use in middle school settings
 - *Signs of Suicide (SOS) Middle School Program*
- For use in high school settings
 - *Signs of Suicide (SOS) Suicide Prevention Program for High Schools*



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“Knowing is not enough;
we must apply.

Willing is not enough;
we must do.”

- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



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Contact Information



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