WEBINAR FOR TEACHERS AND EDUCATORS

SUICIDE SHOULDN'T BE A SECRET

Tackling Teen Depression, Suicide Prevention and How to talk about Suicide with Teens

Thursday, 17th September, 4pm-5:30pm
Dr Sindi was born and bred in Harare, Zimbabwe. She moved to South Africa to study medicine at the University of Pretoria. Dr Sindi is “multi-passioned” with medicine as her first love, radio broadcasting her second love and a combination of social media and writing a close third. On Monday to Thursday from 7 – 8pm, Dr Sindi hosts “Sidebar with Sindi” on Johannesburg’s KayaFM. Dr Sindi practices as a medical GP and is also a renowned public speaker, with a passion to inspire and educate through the power of her diverse experiences. From dealing with tragedy, medical advancements in primary care to mental wellness, she has extensive experience in driving both public and corporate messages through clearly and effectively.

Zamo attended the University of the Witwatersrand, where he completed his Bachelor of Arts degree and later an Honours Degree in the Bachelor of Arts in the faculty of the humanities. Zamo has also expressed his longstanding interest in human sciences, particularly abnormal psychology. He later completed his training as a Clinical Psychologist at the University of the Witwatersrand. Zamo currently works at Tara Hospital and in private practice. Zamo’s professional interests include working with severe psychopathology (including: schizophrenia, bipolar mood disorder, major depressive disorder, borderline personality disorder), dual diagnosis substance abuse patients, trauma therapy, and adolescents.
THE AGENDA

4pm - Welcome & Intro

4:10pm - Dr Sindi Van Zyl: Teen Depression
- Signs & Symptoms
- Causes
- How teen depression looks different than adult depression
- Treatment Options
- How to talk about Depression in the classroom, at home & with parents

4:40pm - Zamo Mbele: Suicide Prevention
- Warning signs of teen suicide
- What to do if someone is suicidal
- Debunking myths
- Action Plan/Safety Plan

5:10pm - Cassey Chambers (SADAG): Tips for Teachers

5:20pm - Q&A

5:30pm - Closing
SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS

TALKING ABOUT SUICIDE
The person may threaten to take his/her life. He/she may say things like “I wish I was dead” or something more subtle, such as “Nothing matters anymore”.

FEELING DEEPLY DEPRESSED
He/she may feel hopeless, lose interest in work, have crying spells and not enjoy any of the things he/she used to like doing.

ISOLATION
A person may begin to withdraw from friends and family.

SHOWING A SUDDEN LIFT IN SPIRITS
A sudden change in mood can mean that the person is thinking about suicide and is relieved that his/her problems will soon end.

PREPARING FOR DEATH
For example, he/she may make unexpected changes in his/her will or give away personal possessions.

SHOW CHANGES IN PERSONALITY
The person may experience changes in eating, sleeping or sexual habits.
WHEN SOMEONE IS THINKING ABOUT SUICIDE

1. ACT ON YOUR OBSERVATIONS
   If someone seems “not quite right” or they talk about death or suicide, take it seriously.

2. MANAGE YOUR HESITATION
   You can help. It is better to ask and be mistaken than not to say anything.

3. PREPARE IN ADVANCE
   If you can, plan to talk in private and in person. Write down your concerns so it’s easier to talk about.

4. START THE CONVERSATION
   You can start by saying that you’re worried, and what’s got you concerned. “I’m really worried about you, I’ve noticed…”

5. LISTEN, DON’T JUDGE
   Let them express their feelings without interrupting. Give support and understanding.

6. GET THEM TALKING
   Ask them about their situation and feelings, without trying to fix anything.

7. ASK THEM ABOUT SUICIDE DIRECTLY
   To find out if they’re suicidal, build the connection then ask them directly. “Do you think about suicide or ending your life?”

8. ASK ABOUT THEIR PLANS
   Find out if they’re in immediate danger. Ask if they’ve thought about how or when.

9. FIND OUT THE RISK
   Ask about past suicide attempts or any recent loss or life crisis.

10. KEEP THEM SAFE
    If they are at risk now, call SADAG or a mental health professional. Stay with them. Get them to hand over anything deadly.

11. ENCOURAGE THEM TO GET HELP
    Help them to think of professionals, friends or family who might be able to help.

12. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF
    Supporting someone can be emotional for you. Get help for yourself if you need it.

www.sadag.org
Suicide Helpline: 0800 567 567
SMS 31393

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Ask
"How are you?" "Are you okay?"

"NO I AM NOT OKAY"
Dig a little deeper:

“What’s been happening?”

“How long have you been feeling like this for?”

“I’m ready to listen when you want to talk”

"YES, I AM FINE"
But your gut says they’re not:

“It’s just that you don’t seem your old self today”

“I’m always here if you want to chat”

“Is there someone else you would rather talk to?”

Listen; don’t judge

Encourage action and offer support:
"How can I help?"
“What would help take the pressure off right now?”
“Have you ever thought about speaking to someone for help?”
“Have you thought about seeing a professional?”

Reassure them:
“You are not alone”
“I really care about you, and want you to get help”

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www.sadag.org
0800 21 22 23
SMS 31393
Tips for Teachers

- Know the warning signs
- Easy access to list of resources or contact details (eg. Staffroom, office, classroom, etc.)
- Take every threat or mention seriously
- You are not the counsellor/therapist
- Your role is to facilitate the help → transfer of responsibility
  - Notify fellow teacher, HOD or school counsellor
  - Refer to resources
  - Notify parents
  - Access resources available (district DBE coordinator, counsellor or social workers)
  - Call SADAG for help, resources & action plan
- Check-in with learner & school counsellor for progress
- Follow up on action plan/treatment plan

Tips for Teachers

- **Develop School Support Team**
  - Identify key group of teachers who can assist in an emergency
  - Make sure teachers & learners know who is part of that Team

- **Teacher Buddy System**
  - Someone to chat to learner
  - Someone to notify School Support Team, school counsellor, HOD, parents or DBE District Coordinator
  - Someone to action an emergency if urgent help is needed (ambulance, clinic, hospital, etc.)
Helping at-risk or suicidal learner

- Remain calm
- Ask the learner directly if he or she is thinking about suicide e.g. "Are you thinking of suicide?"
  "Have you had thoughts of hurting yourself?"
- Focus on your concern for their well-being e.g. "I am really worried about you..."
  "I can see that you have been really down and I am worried about you"
- Listen
- Reassure them that there is help and they will not feel like this forever
- Do not judge
- Provide constant supervision - Do not leave the learner alone
- Remove means for self harm
What to say to a depressed or suicidal learner

- I’m worried about you...
- Is everything okay? I have noticed that you have been very down lately, what’s been happening?
- I have noticed that you haven’t been yourself lately, how are you really doing?
- I’ve seen that you have been really sad lately, what’s been happening to make you so sad?

- I really want to help you and get you the help you need, can we do it together?
- How you feeling is pretty serious and you need urgent help, who can we talk to first? Your parents or can we speak to xxxx (HOD/School counsellors)?
- I am not leaving you, I am just getting some help but I’m going to be right back
### SADAG CONTACT DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suicide Helpline (24 hours)</td>
<td>0800 567 567</td>
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<tr>
<td>SADAG Mental Health Helpline</td>
<td>0800 456 789 (24 hours a day)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse Helpline</td>
<td>0800 12 13 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>31393</td>
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<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sadag.org">www.sadag.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:office@anxiety.org.za">office@anxiety.org.za</a></td>
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**WE ARE NOT ALL IN THE SAME BOAT**

**BUT WE ARE ALL IN THE SAME STORM**

**SUPPORT EACH OTHER**

**#DONTJUDGE #BEKIND**
Helpful links and tools:

- Mental health has never been more important:  

- Student well-being:  

- Podcast Special: Identifying and managing student anxiety:  

- Infographic: Principal wellbeing – Sources of stress and support:  

- Teacher wellbeing during COVID-19:  

- SADAG website – Tips and Tools for parents and Teachers:  