



Arlington High School

Suicide Prevention, Supporting our students' emotional health

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★ Mental health issues are everywhere

- Youth Risk Behavior Survey

- MYRBS administered every 2 years in middle school and high school

- In 2011, 13.8 % of AHS students reported seriously considering a suicide attempt in the 12 months prior to the survey

★ 2006 year of change

- suicide of a student
- creation of Arlington Youth Health and Safety Coalition (AYHSC)
- hiring of first 3 social workers in district (2.5 special education, .5 mainstream high school)

★ AYHSC

- mission to reduce substance abuse among Arlington teens
- monthly meetings
- collaborative town coalition including schools, therapists, DCF, police, etc.
- yearly event in March and year long task groups

★ Social Work in Arlington Schools

- great support from administration
- 3 social workers hired 2006
- 15 social workers currently in district
- uncommon full time regular education social worker (Intervention Coordinator at AHS)
- weekly student support team meetings
- bountiful referrals

★ 2009 Transitional Program opens

-5th year currently of offering emotional and academic support to students who have been out of school for hospitalizations (psychiatric or medical in nature)

★ Mental Health Awareness at AHS

- I created Health and Safety Awareness Day in 2008
- WHY? to increase awareness and decrease stigma around mental illness
- Encourage students to ask for help and identify point person to turn to in time of need

★ Yearly programs

2008 - Mental Health Conference for students:

forum of presentations students signed up for around various topics such as --depression, anxiety, tactics for focussing in class with ADHD, and substance abuse (therapists in our community volunteered!)

2009 - Jordan Burnham, national speaker who attempted suicide

2010 - Janelle Montero, national speaker around depression

2011 - Dr. Michael Fowlin, speaker around tolerance, inclusion

2012 - Chris Herren, former Celtic, told his story of recovery from addiction to heroin and other drugs

★ 2013 Program, larger in scope

- staff training
- 10th grade health classes Signs of Suicide curriculum and screening
- all school performance and follow up discussion of Gospel According to Josh (off Broadway performance and psychoeducational piece about one man's father's suicide and his own depression)
- same performance offered for parents
- training for parents at 10th grade parent night in January 2014
- monthly advisories to support all students

★ Funding sources, thanks

- 2013 grant from Arlington Education Foundation that supports innovative education projects in Arlington
- yearly support from local counseling program, Arlington Youth Consultation Center
- past programs supported by Arlington Police + Arlington Youth Health and Safety

★ Thanks to MCSP!

Thanks to your coalition for this recognition and more importantly the great work you do!

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