
What Is *Lifelines*?

Lifelines: A Suicide Prevention Program is a comprehensive suicide prevention program that targets the entire school community, providing suicide awareness material for administrators, faculty and staff, parents, and students. It is an outgrowth of programs initially developed by the authors in the 1980s in response to requests from schools for help in dealing with an increase in suicidal behavior among students. While *Lifelines* provides basic information about youth suicide, it is primarily directed at helping everyone in the school community recognize when a student is at potential risk of suicide and understand how and where to access help.

The objectives of *Lifelines* are to increase the likelihood that

- members of the school community can more readily identify potentially suicidal adolescents, know how to initially respond to them, and know how to rapidly obtain help for them
- troubled adolescents are aware of and have immediate access to helping resources and seek such help as an alternative to suicidal actions

Is *Lifelines* a Research-based Program?

Lifelines is a research-based program. It has been identified as a promising program by the Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) and is included in the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP). One of the first school based suicide prevention programs in the country, it has been adapted and changed to reflect both program evaluation and increases in knowledge about youth attitudes toward seeking help.

Lifelines content is grounded in several areas of research related to adolescent suicide prevention. It reflects research that has determined that most suicidal youths confide their concerns more often to peers than to adults, and that some adolescents, particularly males, do not respond to troubled peers in empathic or helpful ways. It also addresses the fact that as few as 25 percent of peer confidants tell an adult about a troubled or suicidal peer, and that school-based adults are often adolescents' last choice as confidants for personal concerns.

What Are the *Lifelines* Program Components?

Lifelines consists of four components that are considered essential to a comprehensive school-based approach to adolescent suicide prevention. These components are (1) administrative readiness consultation, (2) training for school faculty and staff, (3) parent workshop, and (4) student curriculum. Handouts and additional resources on the CD-ROM supplement these components.