

Elderly Suicide: Secondary Prevention

People over the age of 65 have the highest rate of suicide of any group in the United States. This evidence-based protocol provides information that will assist the nurse or other health-care provider in recognizing at-risk suicidal behavior in the elderly and providing appropriate and effective crisis intervention. The goal is to decrease the occurrence of suicide among elderly individuals who have contact with nurses or other health-care providers. A protocol of the program is available for a nominal cost through the University of Iowa College of Nursing at their website located at: www.nursing.uiowa.edu/centers/gnirc/protocols.htm.

United States Air Force Suicide Prevention Program

The USAF has instituted a successful program to eliminate suicide as a cause of death among active-duty Air Force personnel. The program incorporated Gatekeeper Training principles, policy changes and cultural change. A document describing the program initiatives and outcomes is available at the following website: www.e-publishing.af.mil/pubfiles/af/44/afpam44-160/afpam44-160.pdf.

SOS Suicide Prevention Program

SOS is an evidence-based, cost-effective program of suicide prevention and mental-health screening for secondary schools. It can be implemented during one classroom period by existing school personnel. SOS empowers students by helping teens understand the important connection between undiagnosed and/or untreated mental illness and suicide; teaching teens the Signs of Suicide; and outlining action steps for dealing with these signs as a *mental health emergency*. An evaluation report of the SOS Prevention Program and SOS kits can be found at www.mentalhealthscreening.org.

TeenScreen

The Columbia University TeenScreen Program offers mental-health screening to high school youth. Parental consent is required. Participants complete a brief questionnaire, and if a significant mental health problem is identified, a mental health professional proceeds with a brief interview. If the mental health professional recommends a more complete evaluation as a result of the interview, the teen's parents are notified and offered assistance in obtaining services. TeenScreen is currently provided free of charge. More information can be found at www.teenscreen.org.