

# SUICIDE: SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION

## **Large Group Activity (5 minutes)**

**Ask the class the following questions, and write the results on the board: Who knows of someone who has committed suicide? Ask the people who raised their hands: What was the reason for suicide, if any? Write down the reasons. Finally, ask what the impact was on family and friends. The purpose of this exercise is to make students aware of the prevalence of suicide, the reasons, and the tragic results.**

## **SHOW THE VIDEO (16 Minutes)**

### **Small Group Questions (10 Minutes - 5 per group, assign 3 or 4 questions)**

1. Why do people decide life isn't worth living anymore?
2. What do you do when you feel you want to give up?
3. Who do you talk to when you are really depressed and feeling like there is no hope? Write down the name of those persons in your notebook. If you have nobody to talk to, ask your teacher, counselor or youth leader for a referral. They can help!
4. Make a list of the pros and cons of suicide.
5. How can you help a friend who is talking about suicide?
6. If a friend is talking about suicide, at what point should you tell their parents?
7. What changes in your life do you need to make so you don't get so depressed that you think about suicide?
8. How can your long-term outlook on life help you to deal with depression?

## **Group Activity (5 Minutes)**

**Write down the pros and cons of suicide. Cons include: emotional devastation of family, feelings of guilt left on survivors, and a complete loss of your hope and life. Share answers to #5. Stress the importance that people who talk about suicide need professional help. Telling their parents or a school counselor might save their lives. Many people who talk about committing suicide will attempt it!**

# WRAP-UP: SUICIDE

## **A LOT OF YOUNG PEOPLE THINK ABOUT SUICIDE.**

- They want to escape pain, and they are usually crying out for help.
- Life can be very stressful, especially for teenagers. Your voice may be changing, your body is maturing, your hormones are buzzing, and your parents still treat you like a kid, even though you feel like an adult in many ways.
- You are under a lot of pressure. Parents want you to have good grades, friends want you to drink, do drugs, have sex, or do other things you may not want to do. Caving in to these things often gives us feelings of guilt and low self-worth.

## **SUICIDE IS SELFISH AND HURTS EVERYBODY.**

- Remember what Kevin said in the video: if you do succeed in killing yourself, you leave behind agony and pain for your friends and family who will carry that with them for their entire lives! You will hurt them greater than anything in their lives.
- Think about the people you love who will be hurt and scarred. Many will blame themselves for what you will have done.

## **THINGS DO GET BETTER! SEEK THE GOOD THINGS IN LIFE.**

- Look at your life over the past five or eight years. Look how much you've come through! You've grown physically and mentally. You can accomplish more now than ever. Your whole life is in front of you.
- You might need to find some friends who encourage you and are interested in you and what you enjoy doing.
- Find an older friend who you look up to, who can listen and give helpful advice when you need it. Don't be afraid to tell them your problems. Get it all out in the open so you can talk about how things can get better.
- Look for the good in others and in your life. Get involved in volunteer work in helping other people. You will feel really good about yourself as you help others!

## **IF YOU OR YOUR FRIENDS THINK ABOUT SUICIDE A LOT, YOU AND THEY NEED PROFESSIONAL HELP NOW!**

- Most people who threaten to commit suicide will make an attempt. They need the help of a professional counselor who is an expert at helping people like this.
- Even if you think you can help, ask your friend to get help--and tell a teacher, counselor, youth leader, or church leader. Don't underestimate the threats.

# HOMework: SUICIDE

## **HOMework Project: What makes you depressed?**

**Make a list of the things that get you depressed. Then answer these questions for each depressing situation you've listed:**

1. Why does this make me depressed?
2. What can I do to change this situation, in the short-term and the long-term?
3. How are people influencing you in a negative way? (Do you have friends or family that are always complaining or saying negative things about other people and situations? Does this make you negative, as well?)
4. With whom do you talk when you need to vent your frustration or feelings when you are "bummed out" and depressed? Do you find a "good listener" often, or never? (A good listener can be a friend, teacher, youth leader, counselor, or church leader.)
5. Find an adult and ask them: "How have you dealt with times in your life when you have been really depressed?" Write down anything you learn from their answers.
6. How do you deal with being depressed? What makes you come out of that? Is it your actions, or just waiting for the hurt to go away?
7. What issues in your life do you need to deal with? Family, friends, school?
8. Make a plan for dealing with your issues and your times of depression. Who will you talk to the next time you need a good listener or need good advice? What changes will you make in your life to improve your situation, and when will you begin? Make your goals specific and you will change for the better!

You may need to find new friends, new hobbies, new people to talk to, or even seek the help of a good counselor. Do what it takes to get the most out of life!

## **HOMework Project: Evaluating your good side.**

**Make a list of everything you like and do well. List all of your good attributes. Include things like your sense of humor, your compassion for the needy, your great smile! What do you like about your personality, your abilities, and your goals? Then make a list of your dreams and ambitions. Write out every detail of where you want to go, what you want to do, what your life will be like. Be specific! Even if these goals seem impossible, you can dream of any future you want. Write down the changes you need to make in your life to get you on the road to your dreams.**