Suicide Prevention for Latino College Students

Latino college students, like all college student populations, are at risk of suicide.

Recent studies have shown that

- Latino students are at higher risk for attempting suicide than individuals from many other ethnic groups.
- Latina college-aged females report some of the highest rates of depression.
- Latino males under 25 are at an increased risk for completing suicide.
- Among Latino groups, research shows that Puerto Ricans have disproportionately high rates of suicide.

Suicide Hotline:
614-221-5445 (Columbus Area)
1-800-273-TALK (National/Veteran)
Emergency Services: 911

The Ohio State University Resources
Provides:
- Urgent appointments M-F for students in crisis.
- Referrals for counseling at all OSU Regional Campuses.
- Confidential services for OSU students and spouses/partners.

The Emergency Department at the OSU Medical Center (OSUMC ED)
614-293-8333

The Ohio State University Facts:
OSU students reported:
- 91% feeling overwhelmed
- 74% feeling very sad
- 59% feeling hopeless
- 17% experiencing depression
- 12% experiencing an anxiety disorder
- 7% seriously considered suicide

Nearly 1% of OSU students attempt suicide.
Tragically, only 26 percent of students surveyed reported that they were currently receiving the help that they need.

The mission of the OSU CSPP and Reach Campaign is to decrease the number of completed suicides on campus and increase mental health seeking behavior.

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KNOW THE SUICIDE RISKS FOR LATINO STUDENTS:

Suicide Risk Increases when Latino students experience:
- Isolation from family or spiritual community
- Prejudice, racial tension, or discrimination
- Poverty and under- or unemployment
- A recent loss (e.g., death or break-up)

Suicide Risk Increases when Latino students have:
- Fears about seeking help for depression or suicidal thoughts.
- Feelings of hopelessness and helplessness
- Behaviors that are impulsive or aggressive

Suicide Risk Increases when the Latino student has a:
- Family history of depression and/or suicide
- History of abuse
- Personal history of previous suicide attempts
- Mental health problem that is untreated e.g., depression, bipolar disorder, or anxiety

Suicide Risk Increases when the Latino student has access to:
- Firearms or other lethal methods

KNOW THE SUICIDE RISK WARNING SIGNS

An individual may be suicidal if he or she:
- Reports feeling very depressed
- Experiences anxiety and/or stress
- Has increased conflicts with friends, roommates, peers, faculty
- Talks about wanting to commit suicide
- Is focused on death and dying
- Writes about death and/or suicide
- Starts giving away possessions
- Withdraws from family, friends, and activities once enjoyed
- Says things like, “I don’t deserve to be here,” “I wish I were dead,” “I am going to kill myself,” or “I want to die.”
- Increases their use of alcohol and/or other drugs
- Engages in reckless behaviors
- Secures a firearm or other lethal methods

TAKE SUICIDE RISK SERIOUSLY, CONVEY HOPE

Hopefulness is the best defense against suicide. It is always better to overreact than under react.
- Stay calm, listen and accept their feelings.
- Try not to judge or argue.
- Don’t act shocked by their plans.
- Be direct. Do not be afraid.
- Be persistent but gentle as you get them to answer your question.

DON’T IGNORE THE WARNING SIGNS.

Reach Out: Always Ask.
- Ask them if they are thinking about suicide.
- If you can’t ask, get someone who will ask.

GET HELP, TOGETHER:

Know the resources at OSU and in your community:
- Offer to go with the person for help at:
  OSU CCS (student counseling center): 614-292-5766
  Hospital Emergency Room: 614-293-8333
  Help them call the Suicide Hotline:
    Columbus Area: 1-614-221-5445
    National/Veteran: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
  Emergency Services: 911

NEVER LEAVE THE PERSON ALONE, IF POSSIBLE.

Find someone else who can help;
- Family or friends
- Religious leader
- The Counseling Center
- Resident Advisors
- Campus Security

Help them find a reason to live one more day.
There is hope.
There is treatment that helps.

KNOWING ABOUT DEPRESSION HELPS

What is Depression?
- It is a medical problem.
- It can affect anyone at any time.
- You don’t “get over it” or “snap out of it”.
- Like any illness, a person with depression needs professional help.
- It can be successfully treated with appropriate treatment.
- Stress, life events or a combination are triggers.

How does Depression feel? People with depression report that they feel:
- Sadness that lasts longer than a few days or weeks.
- Little or no enjoyment in life;
- Tired much of the time;
- Difficulty concentrating;
- Worthlessness or guilty;
- Hopelessness and despair.

What does Depression look like? Learn to recognize the signs.
- Depressed mood
- Irritability
- Diminished interest in activities
- Difficult falling asleep or sleeping all the time

Common concerns among Latino college students who experience depression

Understanding what to look for is helpful:
- Academic problems: Missing classes, not completing assignments, inattentiveness, and/or failing exams and courses.
- Relationship problems: Conflicts with roommates, family, friends, and/or partners, feelings of social isolation, feeling misunderstood
- Engaging in risky behaviors: Violence, unprotected sexual practices, alcohol and other drug abuse, and/or driving under the influence.
- Spiritual disconnection: Loss of faith, alienation from religion due to suicidal thoughts.