

The Emotionally Naked Truth About Student Suicide

Audience: Educators (topic can be adapted to parent audiences)

Virtual or in person



It is a teacher who stars in one of Anne Moss Rogers' most treasured photos of her son, Charles. It was a teacher who first told her that Charles might be suffering from depression. And it was a teacher who wrote the kindest, most heartfelt note after her son died by suicide. It was also the environment that exacerbated her son's feelings of worthlessness and homogenized his natural innovation and creativity.

How does the funniest, most popular kid in school end up depressed, addicted to heroin and dead by suicide at age 20? And how can we make small culture shifts in schools to prevent the number two cause of death for 10-24 years olds in the Americas?

Schools have something few others environments have and that's opportunity for genuine human connection which has gotten lost in the digital age. This is the most valuable currency in the education system. How can we leverage those opportunities for the emotional benefit of students?

Takeaways:

- Signs of suicide and depression in teenagers including social media posts
- Small shifts that create an environment of student wellness
- How to seamlessly build connection and coping skills into a school culture
- Recognizing transitions that put youth at risk
- How school personnel champion change and leverage the advantage of human connection



Audience feedback from a school nurse's conference, Feb. 19, 2020 from event planner, Karol Wilson:

- "best presentation & most useful"
- "It was incredibly powerful."
- "WOW! Talk about taking your grief and making it work for betterment of others."
- "Thank you for including this in the seminar!"
- "Very difficult, but necessary topic."
- "Tough subject done well."
- "I am thrilled that SOMEONE is finally standing up to bring the 'elephant in our society' to light."

Outline:

Overall the goal of the presentation is how schools can make small shifts to create a culture of connection and emotional wellness that prevents suicide and the unhealthy coping strategies that lead to this cause of death.

1/3 story of what happened to Charles including his school experience

1/3 about how to spot students at risk and the telling nature of what students seek online

1/3 stories of how teachers are making small shifts to build coping skills, create a sense of acceptance and belonging

Video:

- 6-minute TEDx: <https://youtu.be/H6Xm7-MAwZ4>
- Demo Reel: <https://youtu.be/yLEzOCexNk4>

Books:

- **Diary of a Broken Mind: A mother's story, a son's suicide, and the haunting lyrics he left behind** (memoir published Oct 1, 2019)
Awards: A 2020 Virginia Library Literary Award Nominee
Publisher: Beach Glass books
- **The Emotionally Naked® Truth About Student Suicide** - Under contract. Book to launch in September 2012
Publisher Jossey-Bass, a division of Wiley Publishers, a leading educational publisher
Market: Educators
Co-writer: Kim O'Brien PhD

Testimonials:

59-second Video Testimonial from Lisa Horowitz PhD, Suicide Prevention Researcher from the National Institute of Mental Health about a presentation at a pediatric conference-

<https://youtu.be/OoYtbcKfw-c>

"Anne Moss Rogers tells her tragedy and healing with passion and love. She relates to young people in a very unique and powerful way that few adults can. Her message is critical to all, particularly the teenage population. We are extremely grateful for her."

—Cassie Rogers, Health Science Specialty Center Coordinator, Cosby High School

"We received such amazing feedback from your presentation and the students gained such important knowledge and information that may help them when they are in the field and on the front lines working with individuals suffering from depression and addiction. Your story and experience provides a perspective that cannot be taught in a textbook."

—Julia Rice Stokes, MSW, LMSW, CLCP, Teacher, VCU School of Social Work

Reviews from high school students:

It was so awesome to hear someone come and just be real about everything. You are totally my favorite and most relatable speaker so far! I did really really appreciate you coming here and just being real with us. You are so amazing!

but every single word that you said in that classroom that day touched my life. You helped me to wanna keep pushing and strive to even be half as strong as you are. So thank you Mrs. Rogers, thank you so much for sharing your story, and helping me in ways I can't even begin to truly explain.