

## Youth Summit 2019

### Topic: Mental Health: Self Harm, Depression and Suicide

#### Main issues?

(Adult scribes)

- Social media hinders actual human interaction:
  - Self-harm is glamorized in social media, self-harmers are seen as attention-seeking.
- Normalize anxiety and other mental health issues.

(Student scribes)

- Wish that mental health was more talked about in public:
  - People feel like they can't speak up. The words associated with mental health are stigmatized like swear words- not ok to mention or talk about outside of family.

#### Resources the students mention for getting help, both informal and formal around this topic.

- Group during middle school that met during lunches.
- Family peer support for NAMI NH.
- Signs of suicide taught in class.
- Program where students spoke to each other peer-to-peer, really powerful, but it's just a one shot deal. Should be talked about more often.
- Cheshire Medical Center toolkit, classroom activities. Schools need to find time to do classroom activities. Want to hear what students want in toolkit.
- Peer has yellow band, a safe person to talk to.
- Partner with outside counselors. No-one would use it, and now it's hard to get them back. Maybe because they don't think they need it.
- Students have to pay for counselors. Parents can't afford.
- Student had to wait a long time to see counselor.
- Stickers for suicide hotline.
- School resource officers
- Teachers need to make more of a connection with students

(Youth scribes)

- Our school communities are accepting overall but they don't have the time required to handle students' specific issues:
  - Students are made to feel that counselors have no time, their issue is not a top priority and there are too many students.
  - 250 students to one counselor in many schools. Many families do not have the resources to access mental health counseling outside of school
  - "Mental health support shouldn't be a luxury that is only available to those who can afford it."
  - Have sit down discussions.
  - Weekly meetings
  - Work with other schools to connect
  - Follow up

- General list of community resources for youth: therapists, support groups, psychologists.
- Tools kit with supplies: posters, classroom activities, videos, editorials.
- School Offices: brochures that allow contact information to be found for students.
- Office hours in school: students schedule time for 30 minutes a day to talk to teachers/counselors.
- Self-harm organizations: meet with others to share stories and feel they have someone to be with.
- Wearing a yellow bracelet: identifying that you are a safe person to talk to

### **What they wish it was like.**

(Adult scribes)

- Students lack communication skills and need to learn how to talk to each other.

(Student scribes)

- Educating parents & guidance counselors.
- Training students to be peer support.

### **Other feedback**