# Understanding Depression and Suicide Prevention


MENTAL

# Opening Circle: Emotional Landscapes

- Close your eyes and imagine standing at the ocean
- Notice the emotions you feel in this peaceful scene
- Imagine the scene changing with strong winds
- Think about how your **feelings can change** when things around you change

# Our Inner Emotional World


- People can react differently to the same situation
- Inner thoughts and feelings are important
- We can’t always see what others are going through

# Is It Sadness or Depression?


**Sadness** is a normal human emotion. It is **temporary** (goes away after a little bit of time)

**Depression** lasts two or more weeks

It can change **brain chemistry** and cause physical problems

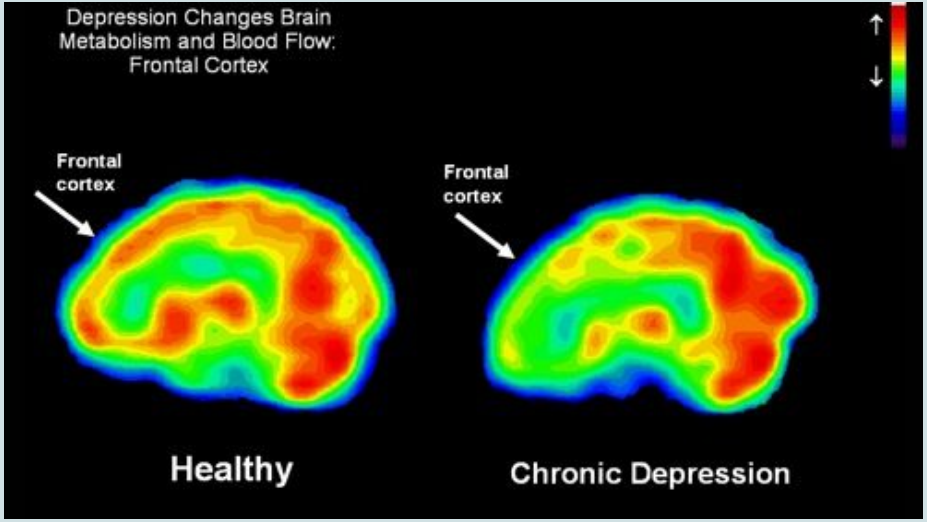
Depression can be **treated** with help

# Paying Attention to Friends


What are some of the **warning signs** that Carla has noticed that have led her to worry about Sam having depression?

# Depression Information

- Untreated depression can cause serious problems
- It can make things seem worse than they are
- **Suicidal** thoughts don't always lead to action
- With help (counseling and medication), many people learn how to handle their mental health and feel better

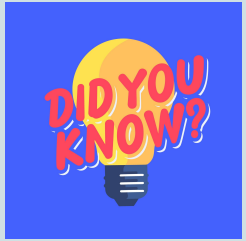


# What Increases a Person's Risk of Suicide?

No single cause determines suicide risk

- Drug use
- Mental illness
- Lack of support
- Bullying
- Relationship troubles
- Trauma


**The risk of suicide goes up if depression is not treated**




# Recognizing Warning Signs


Sometimes, we think that if we ask someone whether they're having suicidal thoughts that we will put thoughts in their heads

**This is not true.** Don't be afraid to say the word. Getting it out in the open may help the person realize that someone has responded to their call for help

**Suicide Prevention: Let's Talk**

Review warning signs on the handout

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

# Why am I Scared to Do or Say Something?

- Common fears about addressing suicide:
  - What if I'm wrong?
  - What if I cause more harm?
  - I don't know what to say
- **Research shows: Talking helps, not hurts**

# How to Help Someone With Warning Signs

- Notice warning signs and take them seriously
- Listen with care, don't judge
- Know what to say (See Handout- practice these sentences)


- **Tell a trusted adult right away**
  - Parent/Guardian
  - School Counselor, Principal, Nurse, or Teacher
  - Religious Leader
  - Sports Coach

Share resources: 988 (call or text), sptsusa.org, afsp.org