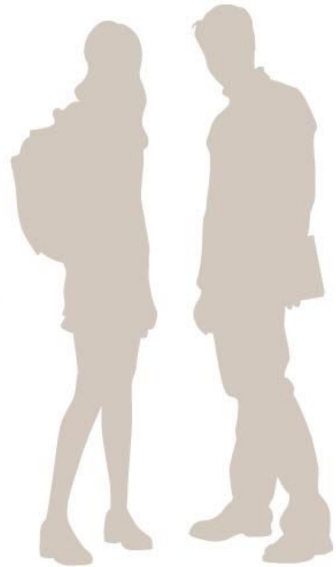




# Kansas Prevention Collaborative

October 2023

**Suicide is the  
second  
leading cause of  
death among  
15-29  
year-olds**



As teens usage of social media has grown over the past decade, so too has the suicide rate among younger people

CDC 2019



# Youth Mental Health

Research has indicated that schools emphasizing the following:

- Inclusion of all students
- Support for students' social and emotional learning
- Embracing diversity

increased students' mental health

<https://posproject.org/>

# Importance of School Connectedness

Students who feel connected to school:

- Developed positive relationships with adults
- Increased positive behaviors
- Avoided behaviors that harm their health

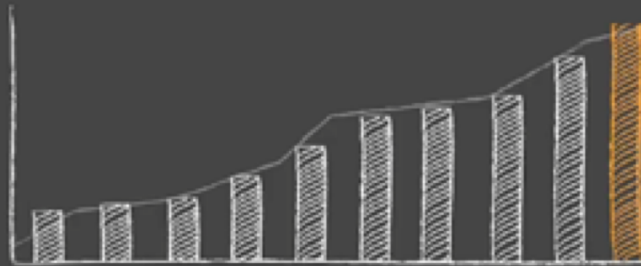
<https://www.casciac.org/pdfs/SchoolConnectedness.pdf>

*While it takes an entire village to raise a child, we believe it takes an entire community to save one!*



## Suicide

- One of the leading causes of "injury" death in America



[Click here to play video](#)



# Kids talk to Kids





What is a  
Hope Squad?





[Click here to play video](#)

## Kansas Statistics

<https://www.khi.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Suicide-Among-Adolescents-and-Youths-in-Kansas.pdf>



## The Hope Squad Program promotes:

- Partnership with local mental health agencies and/or other local organizations
- Connectedness
- Anti-bullying
- School safety
- Reduce the stigma of mental illness
- Increase help-seeking behavior

## To have a successful Hope Squad:

1. **Involved** principal and faculty
2. **Dedicated** advisor
3. **Partnership** with mental health and community agencies
4. **Supportive** staff
5. **Committed *Hope Squad*** members
6. **Supportive** parents
7. Continuous program improvement through **data collection**







## Role of Advisors

### Select Advisors

- ❖ School counselor
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ School Support Personnel
- ❖ Volunteer
- ❖ Mental Health Partner
- ❖ School Social Workers
- ❖ Any adult on campus who can read and cares about kids
- ❖ Others?



## Role of Advisors

### Advisor's Key Responsibilities (continued)



- ❖ Ensure pre- and post-surveys are taken by Hope Squad members
- ❖ Organize and run the **Hope Squad** with fidelity
- ❖ Provide curriculum training to **Hope Squad** members
- ❖ Supervise **Hope Squad** activities
- ❖ Meet annually with principal and discuss **Hope Squad** data, goals, and objectives



## Role of Advisors

### Advisor's Key Responsibilities



- ❖ All advisors must complete the Licensed Advisor Training
- ❖ Train faculty and staff on the purpose of Hope Squad
- ❖ Train faculty and staff on the Hope Squad referral process
- ❖ Manage the squad member nomination process
- ❖ Obtain parent permissions



## Role of Advisors

Advisor's Responsibilities (continued)



One advisor should become a **QPR** Instructor

Provide **QPR** training for:

- Secondary **Hope Squad** members
- School faculty and staff
- Parents and community
- [www.QPRInstitute.com](http://www.QPRInstitute.com)



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## Role of Advisors

### Discussion Topics:



**HOPE**  
S Q U A D

- ⚓ Do you think other faculty members at your school will want to help you with Hope Squad?
- ⚓ How can you connect with your community?





## Hope Squad Members

- Participation on the Hope Squad is not for everyone.
- Some students may not feel comfortable talking to a friend who may be struggling with a mental health concern.
- Nominated students may choose to serve on squad.
- If you have any concerns, please share them with the Hope Squad advisor.

## Hope Squad Members

- If your child was in or is currently in counseling, visit with the Hope Squad advisor if you have any concerns.
- You may also want to visit with the therapist about your child's involvement at this time.
- It is ultimately up to you, the parent, to decide if your child may serve on the Hope Squad.

## Hope Squad Nomination Process

- Each student was asked to privately nominate peers they felt comfortable talking to if they were struggling – also peers that are kind and do not bully.
- Your son/daughter was nominated to be on the Hope Squad.





## Hope Squad Members

- Organize school-wide activities that promote inclusion and connectedness
- Watch and refer concerns
- Are **not** trained to be counselors or therapists



## Hope Squad Members' Responsibilities

- Attend Hope Squad meetings
- Participate in activities
- Be aware of self-care needs
- Refer struggling peers to an adult





# Hope Squad Member Contract sample

## Hope Squad Contract

HOPE SQUAD

Hope Squads are the eyes and ears of the school. They are comprised of students who are trained to watch for at-risk students, provide friendship, and seek help from adults. Hope Squad members are NOT trained to act as counselors.

Being a Hope Squad member is a big responsibility and in order to maintain the integrity of the program all Hope Squad members are expected to do the following.

### I agree to the responsibilities of Hope Squad members:

(Student initial each statement)

\_\_\_\_\_ 80% attendance including group meetings and activities

\_\_\_\_\_ I will report concerns about my peers to a trusted adult

\_\_\_\_\_ No bullying (including but not limited to verbal, physical, cyber, or sexual bullying)

\_\_\_\_\_ I will keep confidentiality by not discussing people/situations outside of Hope Squad meetings and meetings with counselors

\_\_\_\_\_ I will wear the Hope Squad shirt every Thursday

\_\_\_\_\_ I will prioritize my mental health and tell an adult if I need support

### I understand:

(Student initial each statement)

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that, depending on the severity of the incident, I could be immediately dismissed from Hope Squad.

\_\_\_\_\_ If I am dismissed from Hope Squad, I agree to not talk bad about Hope Squad and I understand that it was my own behavior that caused my dismissal.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Other items:

- Try not to take things personally
- Be genuine and kind - open doors, be friendly, learn people's names
- No phones in the halls or during Hope Squad meetings
- Follow up and be prepared to report on assignments

# Set Up Of A Hope Squad

## Hope Squad Meeting Times



As a class (preferred)



Study hall or Advisory



During lunch  
(Kids LOVE free pizza!)



Before or after school



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# Set Up Of A Hope Squad

## Hope Squad Classes (or Meetings)



**HOPE**  
S Q U A D

### Weekly Meetings (if no class)

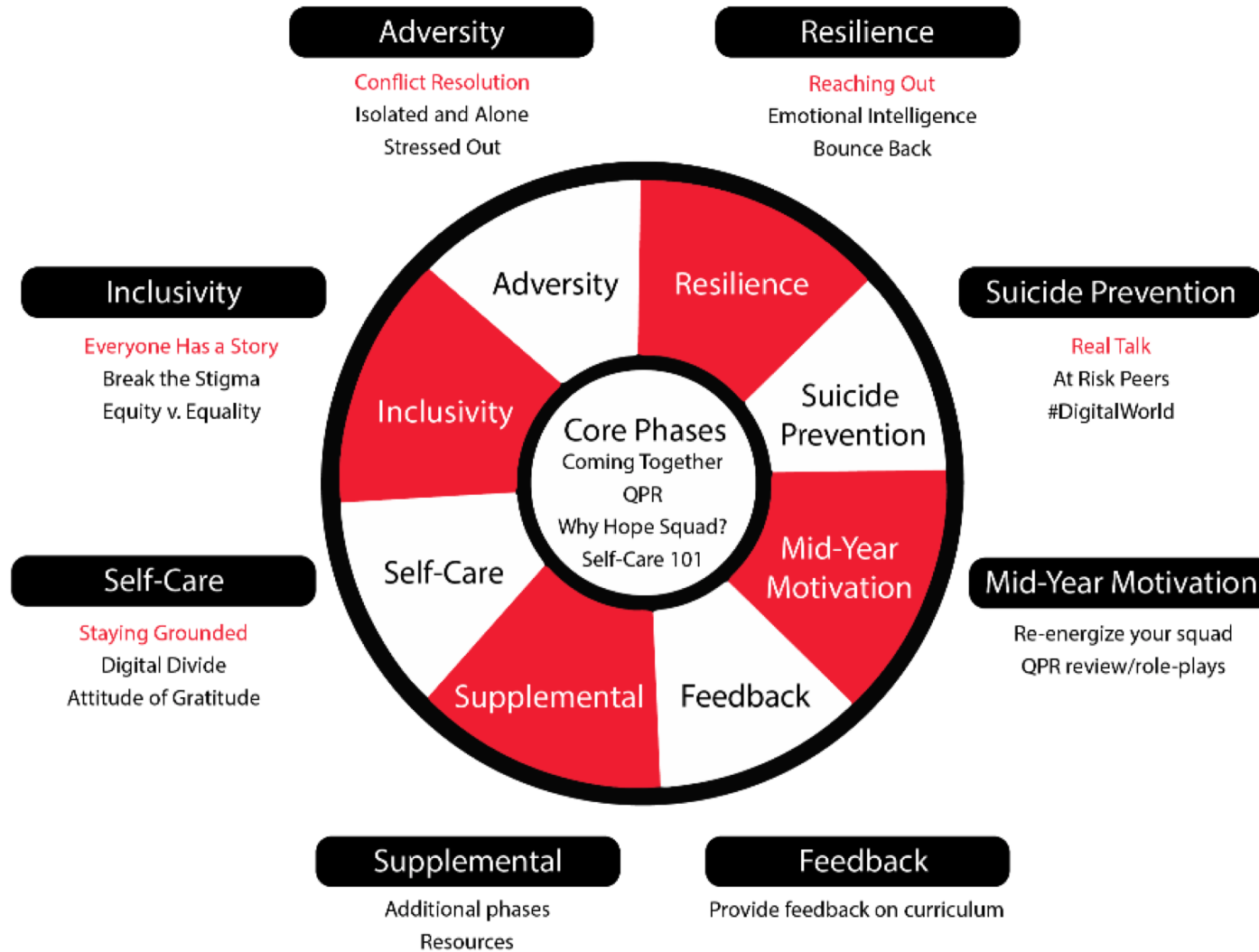
Here is a sample 4-week agenda if your Squad meets weekly:

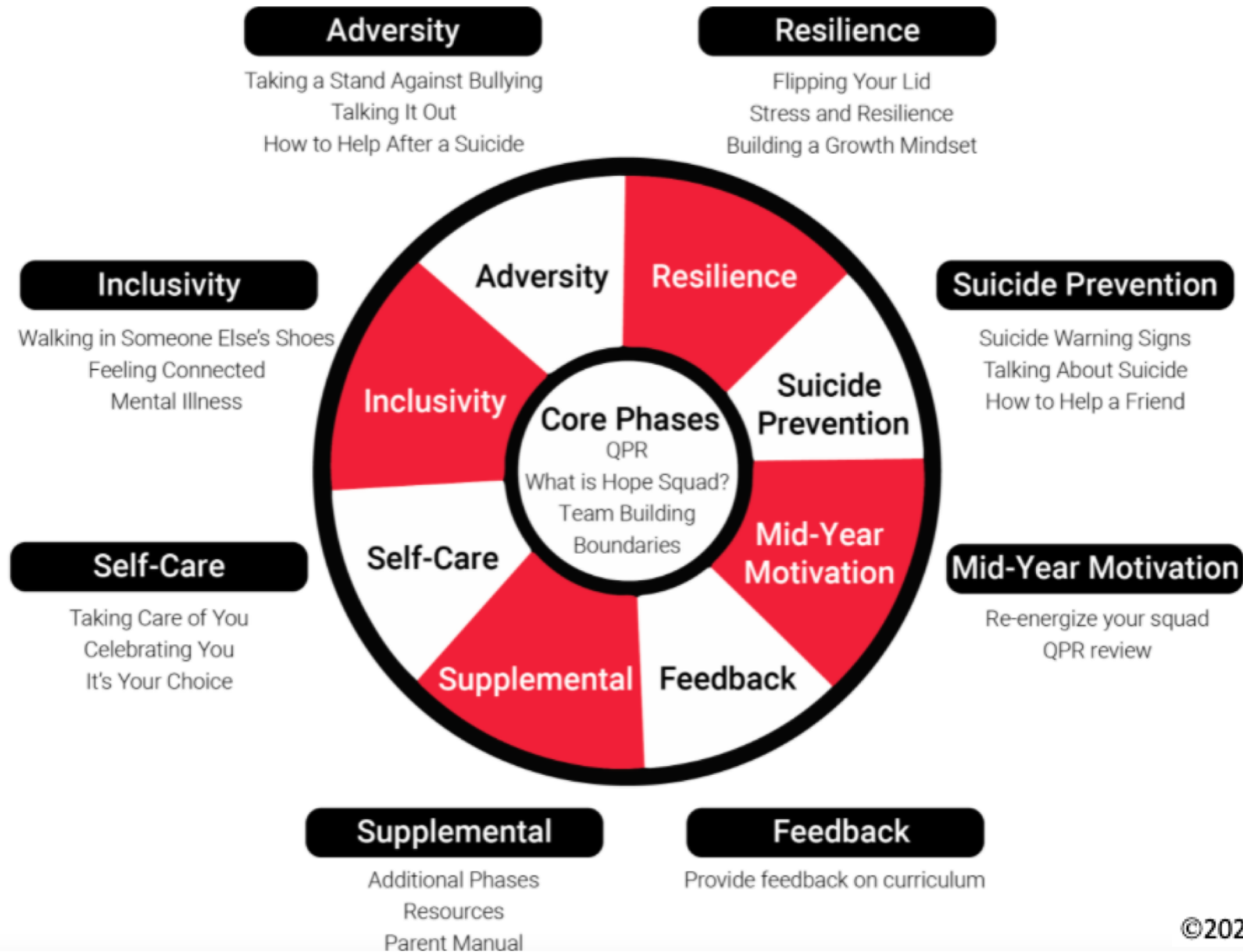
- 1<sup>st</sup> Week: Lesson (from curriculum)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Week: Hope Squad Activities
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Week: Curriculum Planning Activity
- 4<sup>th</sup> Week: Check-in / Self-care





High School  
year 1







[Click here to play video](#)

## Expectations of Parents' Involvement

- Sign permission form (every year)
- Attend parent meeting (every year)
- Understand the role & support participation of Hope Squad member
- Respect confidentiality
- Monitor well-being and self-care of Hope Squad member

## Parents' Role in Helping the Hope Squad Member

- Be sure to communicate often with your child. Check to see how their day went and if they had any positive or negative experiences.
- You know your child better than anyone. Watch for signs that are concerning.
- Parent support information may be found on [hopesquad.com](https://hopesquad.com)

While youth suicides are rare,  
the possibility of your child being confronted by  
the loss of a peer at school could occur.

As a Hope Squad member,  
students may struggle with guilt at not  
being able to prevent a suicide.

Please let the Hope Squad advisor know of any  
concerns you have as soon as possible.

## Crisis Referral Process

- What is your school/district crisis referral process during the day?
- After hours?
- On weekend/holidays/summer?

## After Hours

- What is the role of parents after-hours?
- Where to find resources after hours or on holidays?







### Avoiding Burnout as a Parent of a Child with Mental Illness

Being a parent is hard work, especially for parents of children with mental illness. If you are one of those parents, it may be difficult to avoid experiencing parent burnout: feeling so tired and overwhelmed that you feel like you can't give any more.

However, with some work, you can avoid burnout by taking care of yourself, building your own support network, and understanding those who help your children.

There are many other ways to love and show love to your children with mental illness that can help you avoid parent burnout.

#### Tips for Avoiding Parent Burnout

- **Make a list of your children's strengths** and share it with family, friends, and especially your children. The list can serve as a reminder of how amazing and valuable your children are.
- **Reminisce fun memories with your children.** Tell funny family stories, watch family home movies, or look at family pictures. This can help your whole family feel more connected and happier.
- **Keep a daily journal** and write what you're grateful for about your children or about one positive thing that happened that day with your children. This can help you keep a positive perspective even on difficult days.
- **Show your love and support through appropriate touch.** Giving them hugs, touching their shoulders when you talk with them or giving them a quick back scratch can help your children feel accepted and loved.
- **Show little acts of kindness.** For example, surprise your children with their favorite treat, ask if you can do whatever their favorite activity is with them, or smile when they walk into the room.

\*Information in this article came from <https://childmind.org/article/preventing-parent-burnout/>.



### CONSEJOS PARA EVITAR SALIDAS DAÑINAS PARA EL ESTRÉS

¿Qué hacer cuando se está estresado? Hay salidas saludables (como hacer ejercicio), que le brindan recursos para lidiar con el estrés. También existen salidas dañinas (como beber alcohol), que intentan eliminar o enmascarar los sentimientos de estrés.

Dado que es poco probable evitar el estrés por completo, aquí hay algunos consejos para evitar las salidas dañinas para el estrés.

- **Lleve un diario sobre sus salidas de estrés.** ¿Observe salidas que podrían ser reemplazadas por otras salidas más saludables?
- **Haga un plan para aliviar el estrés.** Decida que hará cuando se sienta estresado. Escriba su plan, incluyendo todos los detalles que pueda.
- **Aprenda a manejar mejor su estrés.** Cuanto mejor pueda manejar su estrés, menos probabilidades tendrá de recurrir y depender de medios dañinos para obtener ayuda en tiempos difíciles.

### Evitar el Agotamiento como Padre de un Hijo con una Enfermedad Mental

Ser padre es un trabajo duro, especialmente para los padres de hijos con enfermedades mentales. Si usted es uno de esos padres, puede ser difícil evitar experimentar el agotamiento como padre: sentirse tan cansado y abrumado que siente que no puede dar más.

Sin embargo, si lo trabaja, puede evitar el agotamiento si se cuida, construya su propia red de apoyo y comprenda a los que ayudan a sus hijos.

Existen muchas otras formas de amar y mostrar amor a sus hijos con enfermedades mentales que pueden ayudarlo a evitar el agotamiento como padre.

#### Consejos para Evitar el Agotamiento como Padre

- **Haga una lista de las fortalezas de sus hijos** y compártala con familiares, amigos y especialmente con sus hijos. La lista puede servir como recordatorio de lo maravillosos y valiosos que son sus hijos.
- **Recuerde historias viejas con sus hijos.** Cuente historias familiares divertidas, vea películas en casa en familia o vea fotografías familiares. Esto puede ayudar a que toda su familia se sienta más conectada y feliz.
- **Lleve un diario** y escriba de lo que está agradecido sobre sus hijos o sobre algo positivo que sucedió ese día con sus hijos. Esto puede ayudarlo a mantener una perspectiva positiva incluso en días difíciles.
- **Muestre su amor y apoyo a través del contacto apropiado.** Darles abrazos, tocar sus hombros cuando habla con ellos o rascarles la espalda rápidamente puede ayudar a que sus hijos se sientan aceptados y queridos.
- **Muestre pequeños actos de bondad.** Por ejemplo, sorprenda a sus hijos con su golosina favorita, pregúnteles si puede hacer con ellos su actividad favorita o sonría cuando entren a la habitación.

\*La información de este artículo la puede encontrar en <https://childmind.org/article/preventing-parent-burnout/>.

Parent  
Mental Health  
Newsletters

English &  
Spanish

Found on  
[hopesquad.com](https://www.hopesquad.com)  
under Parents

# FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH

## *Lessons & Activities*

### Coping and Problem-Solving Skills

“Feeling suicidal is not a character defect, and it doesn’t mean that you are crazy, or weak, or flawed. It only means that you have more pain than you can cope with right now. This pain seems overwhelming and permanent at the moment. But with time and support, you can overcome your problems and the pain and suicidal feelings will pass.” —HelpGuide.org

#### Parent Pre-reading

Coping is what we think and what we do during difficult situations, and while some coping actions are healthy (such as taking a break to read a book), others are not (such as practicing self-harm, like cutting). Problem-solving skills go hand-in-hand with coping skills; how you solve a problem is part of coping. Teaching your children these skills helps them combat suicidal thoughts or actions.

In most cases, those who are struggling with suicidal thoughts don’t actually want to die; they want the pain to go away. These individuals often lack the skills necessary to solve and cope with problems in healthy ways. They don’t know how to handle the situation, so they see suicide as an option. Individuals that do have these skills are less likely to see suicide as an option because they know healthy ways to cope and solve the problem at hand.

One of the best ways to teach your children how to cope and solve problems is to show them. Let them see that you take deep breaths to calm down instead of doing something erratic. Let them see that you ask for help if you can’t solve a problem instead of just feeling sad or giving up. However you decide to show them, be sure to give them a positive model to follow, and help them develop those skills so they can make good decisions when problems arise.

While it’s important that parents are supportive in the development of these skills, being supportive also means letting children struggle a little as they figure out a problem. Sometimes this means allowing them to fail and learn how to cope with that problem. This way, children can gain those problem-solving skills as well as the self-esteem that usually comes with it.

Ⓢ Purpose: This lesson will show the importance of coping and problem-solving skills in suicide prevention and give examples of how family members can improve on those skills.

# SALUD MENTAL FAMILIAR

## *Lecciones & Actividades*

### Factores de Protección y Resiliencia

“Los factores de protección amortiguan a las personas de pensamientos y comportamientos suicidas. Hasta la fecha, los factores de protección no se han estudiado de forma tan extensa o rigurosa como los factores de riesgo. Sin embargo, la identificación y la comprensión de los factores de protección son tan importantes como investigar los factores de riesgo.”

— Centros de Control y Prevención de Enfermedades

Ⓢ Propósito: Esta lección enseñará los factores de protección del suicidio y cómo ayudar a los miembros de la familia a tener más resiliencia.

#### Pre-lectura de los Padres

En la lección sobre los signos de advertencia y los factores de riesgo, una de las cosas que se discuten es que los factores de riesgo son conductas o aspectos de la vida que tienden a hacer que una persona corra un mayor riesgo de suicidio (y puede o no ser causa directa de suicidio), como intentos de suicidio previos, enfermedad mental o antecedentes familiares de suicidio. Comprender los factores de riesgo nos da una idea de lo que hay que vigilar para prevenir mejor el suicidio.

Por otro lado, hay factores de protección. En lugar de indicar las conductas que hacen que una persona corra más riesgo, los factores de protección son características personales o ambientales que indican qué tan bien protegidas están las personas contra el suicidio. Ahora, es importante comprender que el simple hecho de tener estas características personales o ambientales no significa que una persona nunca piense en el suicidio. Sin embargo, desarrollar y nutrir estas características ayuda a prevenir pensamientos y conductas suicidas.

Las características asociadas con los factores de protección del suicidio (y que se analizarán en detalle en la lección) incluyen lo siguiente:

- Cuidado efectivo de la salud del comportamiento.
- Conexión con otros.
- Autoestima / significado en la vida.
- Creencias que desalientan el suicidio.
- Habilidades para la vida.

HOPE SQUAD

Found on  
hopesquad.com,  
under Parents

Lessons  
provided in  
English &  
Spanish



# Connect with Hope Squad

HOPE SQUAD



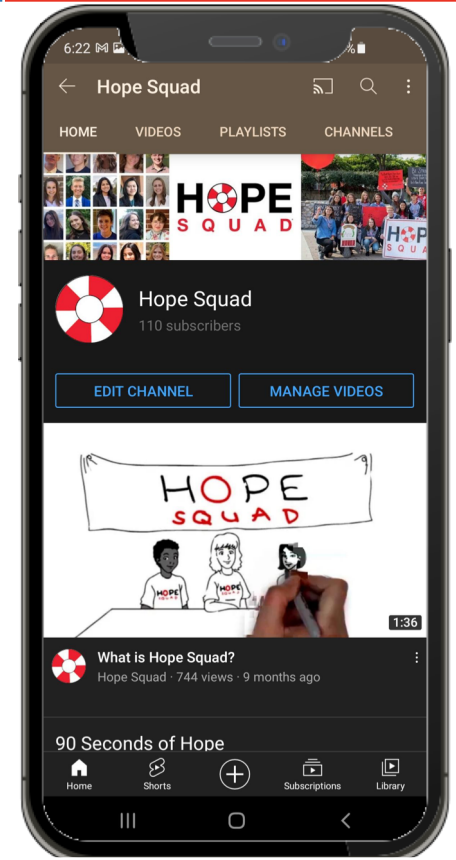
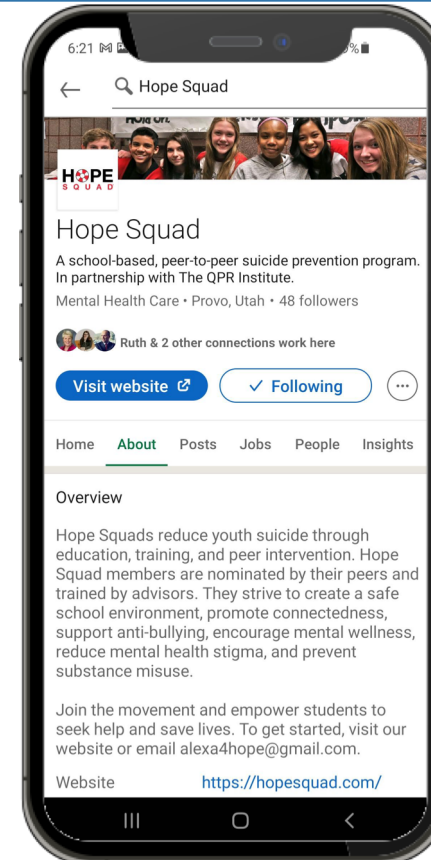
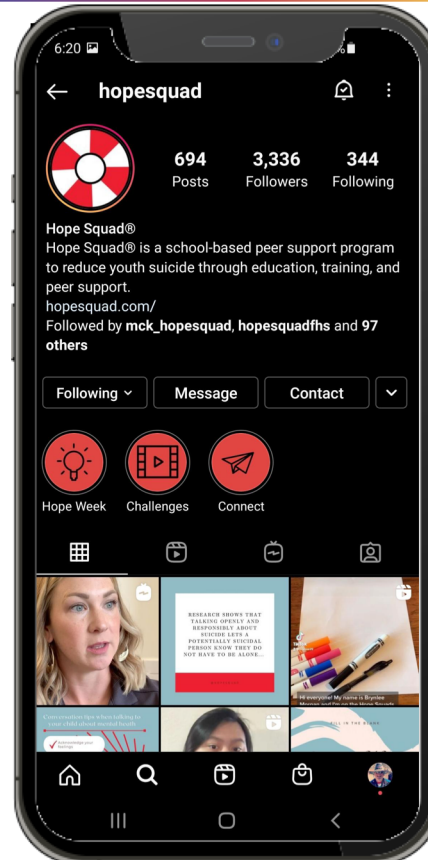
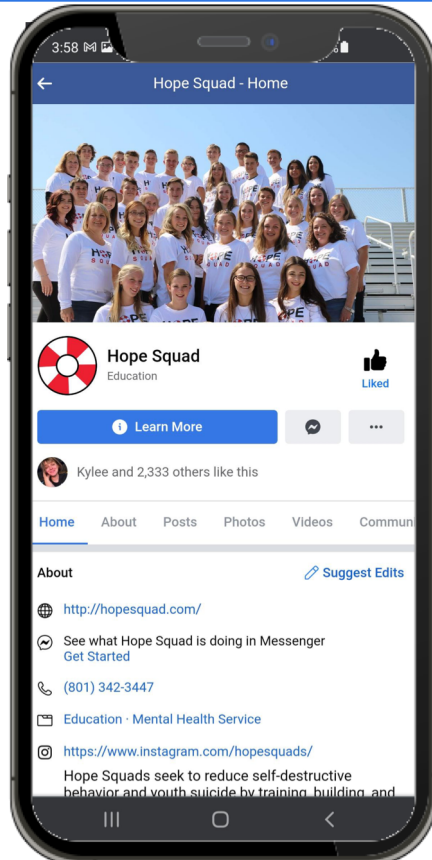
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Spencer Cox

Utah Lt. Governor

[Click here to play video](#)





COOK CENTER FOR  
HUMAN CONNECTION

[parentguidance.org](https://parentguidance.org)

HOPE SQUAD  
**HOPE**  
S Q U A D



Courses ▾

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# Find answers to help your child.

We're backed by therapists to provide trusted and specialized courses, professional support and a safe community of parents helping each other.

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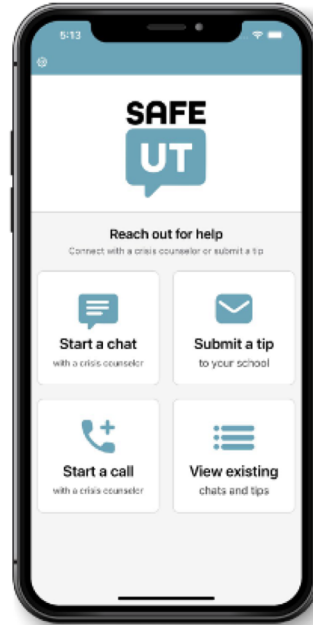
# Crisis Resources

## SafeUT Features:

- Start a **Chat**
- Start a **Call**
- Submit a **Tip**
- View Existing

No device? The chat and tip functions are available on the SafeUT website:

[safeut.med.utah.edu](https://safeut.med.utah.edu)





## Advisor contact information

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## Resources

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