

Evaluation of program effectiveness and outcomes

A 12-month follow-up study was conducted by Jerry Ciffone in February 2005 to compare the incidence of suicidal ideation and attempts during the past 12 months between students who participated (during the 10th grade) in the two-day presentation of the SEHS Suicide Prevention Program and those who did not. The evaluation design measured outcome factors using a two-group post-test only design. A total of 418 students (229 males/189 females) who participated in the program presentation during October 2003 or February 2004 were assigned to a test group and 315 students (158 males/157 females) who did not participate in the program presentation were assigned to a control group. All of the students in the test group were from Larkin High School. The control group consisted of students of the same age, from Streamwood High School, another high school within the same school district with a very similar racial and socio-economic student profile. Students in both groups completed the same survey in their 11th grade English class on February 8, 2005. A copy of the survey (adapted from the YRBSS 2005 survey) follows on pages 2-4. The test of significance used to compare the response of the two groups was the Fisher Exact Test.

The overall results are shown in the first three tables on pages 5-7. The results suggest that program participants were 54% less likely to report suicidal ideation and 73% less likely to report a suicide attempt than were students in a control group. An unexpected result was that the program appeared to have an effect upon students who intentionally cut themselves. The results suggest that participants were 69% less likely to intentionally cut themselves than were non-participants.

A truly effective suicide prevention program should be able to influence those who experience depression away from seriously considering suicide. A separate analysis was conducted to assess the effect of the program upon students who reported one or more periods of depression lasting 2 or more weeks in a row during the past 12 months. The surveys of the subgroup of students in the test and control groups reporting depression were analyzed. While the rate of reported depression was identical in both groups, SEHS Suicide Prevention Program presentation participants were 39% less likely to report suicidal ideation and 70% less likely to report a suicide attempt within the past 12 months than the students in the corresponding control group. Participants in this sub group were also 68% less likely to intentionally cut themselves than were the non-participants. The results of the analysis of this subgroup are shown in three additional tables on pages 8-10.

There were no reported incidents of a serious suicide attempt requiring medical intervention in the entire test group while 1% of the control group reported a serious suicide attempt in the past 12 months.

Although these results may suggest a relationship between participation in the two-day presentation and a significant decrease in the rate of suicidal ideation and self-injurious behavior the program developer does not claim that attendance in the two-day presentation was the only impact factor. It is more likely that these outcomes were influenced by a combination of participation in the presentation and the program's influence upon the school environment than just participation in the presentation. In addition to a two-day presentation in the 10th grade, the program includes early exposure to the mental health resources in the school at the beginning of the 9th grade, and the use of a follow-up quiz to screen for, and possibly intervene with, a student who may be at-risk for suicide. Beyond those annual activities the SEHS Suicide Prevention Program strives to foster a pervasive support network of peers in grades 9 through 12 who will look out for, and refer, a friend who seems to be at-risk, to one of the school-based mental health professionals. These other program-related activities and interventions may have a mitigating effect upon suicidal behavior that may be equal to or greater than the change in attitudes about suicide that is promoted by direct participation in the two-day presentation.

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2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

This survey is about health behavior. It has been developed so you can tell us what you do that may affect your health. The information you give will be used to develop better health education here at Larkin High School.

Do not write your name on this survey. The answers you give will be viewed only by researchers and will be kept private. Answer the questions based on what you really do.

Completing the survey is voluntary. If you are not comfortable answering a question, just leave it blank.

Make sure to read every question. Please note that some questions refer to the **past 30 days** and other questions refer to the **past 12 months**. Please be careful to answer the question according to the correct timeline.

Begin here:

1. Please indicate your gender _____ Male _____ Female
2. Please indicate your birth date _____ / _____ / _____
3. How do you describe yourself? **(Select one or more responses.)**
 - _____ American Indian or Alaska Native
 - _____ Asian
 - _____ Black or African American
 - _____ Hispanic or Latino
 - _____ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - _____ White
4. How do you describe your health in general?
 - _____ Excellent
 - _____ Very good
 - _____ Good
 - _____ Fair
 - _____ Poor
5. How often do you wear a seat belt when **riding** in a car driven by someone else?
 - _____ Never
 - _____ Rarely
 - _____ Sometimes
 - _____ Most of the time
 - _____ Always

During the past 30 days:

6. During the past 30 days, how many times did you **ride** in a car or other vehicle **driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol**?

- 0 times
- 1 time
- 2 or 3 times
- 4 or 5 times
- 6 or more times

7. During the past 30 days, on how many days did you have at least one drink of alcohol?

- 0 days
- 1 or 2 days
- 3 to 5 days
- 6 to 9 days
- 10 to 19 days
- 20 to 29 Days
- All 30 Days

8. During the past 30 days, on how many days did you smoke cigarettes?

- 0 days
- 1 or 2 days
- 3 to 5 days
- 6 to 9 days
- 10 to 19 days
- 20 to 29days
- All 30 days

9. During the past 30 days, on how many days did you use marijuana?

- 0 times
- 1 or 2 times
- 3 to 9 times
- 10 to 19 times
- 20 to 39 times
- 40 or more times

During the past 12 months:

10. During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for **two weeks or more in a row** that you stopped doing some usual activities?

- Yes
- No

11. During the past 12 months, did you ever cut yourself on purpose?
 Yes
 No
12. During the past 12 months, how many times did you cut yourself on purpose?
 0 times
 1 time
 2 or 3 times
 4 or 5 times
 6 or more times
13. During the past 12 months, did you ever **seriously** consider attempting suicide?
 Yes
 No
14. During the past 12 months, how many times did you **actually** attempt suicide?
 0 times
 1 time
 2 or 3 times
 4 or 5 times
 6 or more times
15. **If you attempted suicide** during the past 12 months, did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?
 I did not attempt suicide during the past 12 months
 Yes
 No
16. How do you describe your weight?
 Very underweight
 Slightly underweight
 About the right weight
 Slightly overweight
 Very overweight
17. Which of the following are you trying to do about your weight?
 Lose weight
 Gain weight
 Stay the same weight
 I am **not trying to do anything** about my weight

Carefully review your answers. When you have completed this survey please turn it over on your desk and look up at the teacher to show that you have completed the survey. Please do not talk or discuss your answers with anyone while others are still taking the survey. Thank you for completing this survey, your responses will help to improve the health class program here at Larkin High School. ©

12 month follow-up survey results on the effectiveness of the program

Completed in February 2005 (N=733)

	Control n=315		Test n=418		p-value
D	83	26%	110	26%	p<1.00
IC	29	9%	12	3%	p<.0003
SC	28	9%	17	4%	P<.0082
AS	11	3%	4	1%	P<.032
AM	3	1%	0	0%	

D: depressed for two or more weeks

IC: intentionally cut self

SC: seriously considered suicide

AS: attempted suicide

AM: attempted and medical attention

The test group consisted of students who participated in the SEHS Suicide Prevention Program in either October 2003 or February 2004. The P-values were obtained from a two-sample analysis at .95 using the Fisher Exact Test.

12 month follow-up survey results on the effectiveness of the program

Completed in February 2005 (N=733)

	Control n= 315		Test n= 418		Percent reduction
D	83	26%	110	26%	N/A
IC	29	9%	12	3%	69%
SC	28	9%	17	4%	54%
AS	11	3%	4	1%	73%*
AM	3	1%	0	0%	

D: depressed for two or more weeks

IC: intentionally cut self

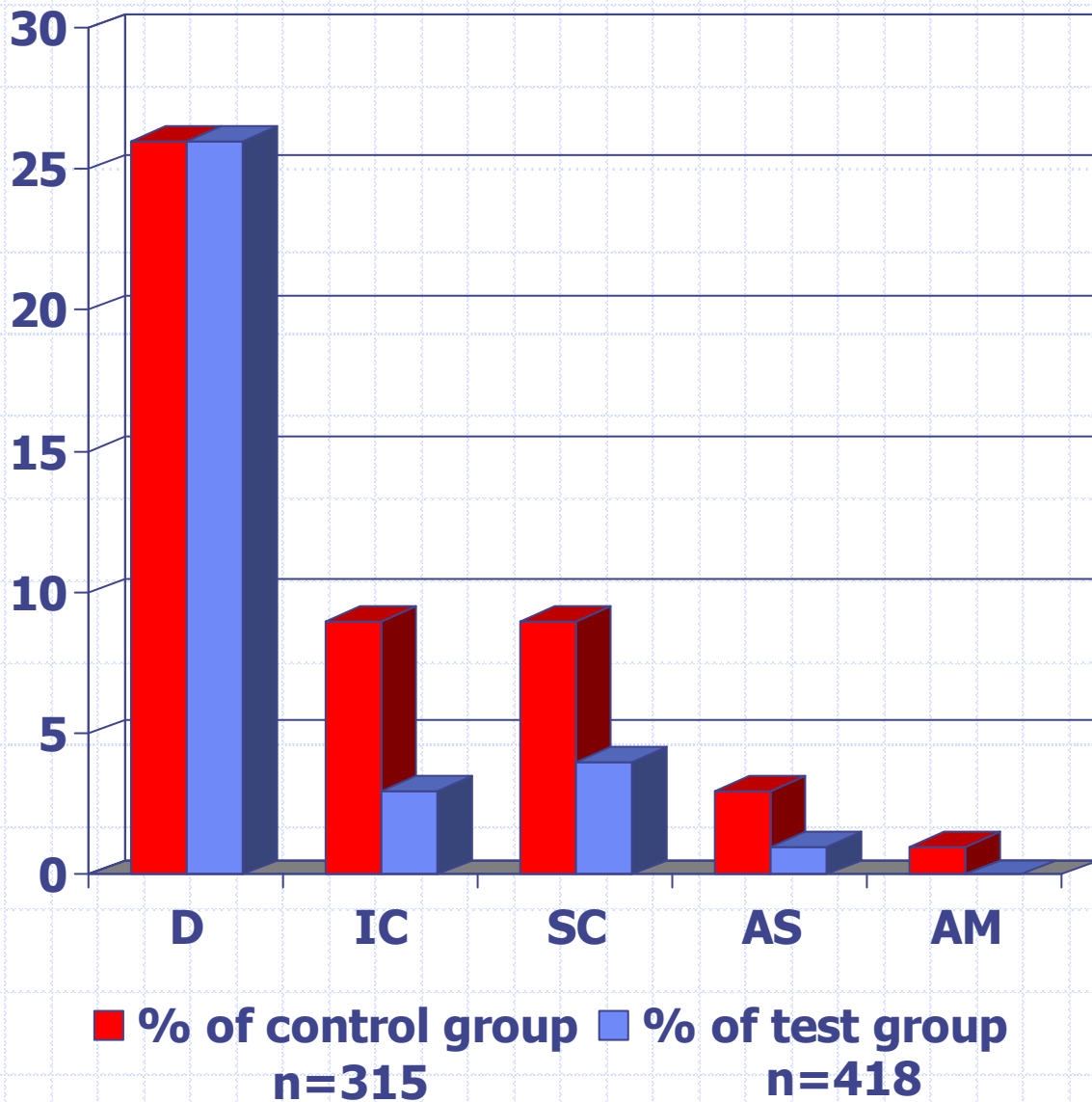
SC: seriously considered suicide

AS: attempted suicide

AM: attempted and medical attention

***These results suggest that SEHS SPP participants were 73% less likely to attempt suicide than were non-participants.**

12 month follow-up survey results on the effectiveness of the program



12 month follow-up survey results on the effectiveness of the program

Analysis of students reporting depression

	Control n=83		Test n=110		p-value
D	88		110		
IC	21	25%	9	8%	p<.0022
SC	21	25%	17	15%	p<.10
AS	10	12%	4	4%	p<.047
AM	2	2%	0	0%	

D: depressed for two or more weeks

IC: intentionally cut self

SC: seriously considered suicide

AS: attempted suicide

AM: attempted and medical attention

These results suggest that SEHS SPP participants who reported one or more periods of depression in the past 12 months were less likely to injure themselves, consider suicide, or attempt suicide compared to the corresponding control group.

12 month follow-up survey results on the effectiveness of the program

Analysis of students reporting depression

	Control n=83		Test n=110		Percent reduction
D	83		110		
IC	21	25%	9	8%	68%
SC	21	25%	17	15%	39%
AS	10	12%	4	4%	70%*
AM	2	2%	0	0%	

D: depressed for two or more weeks

IC: intentionally cut self

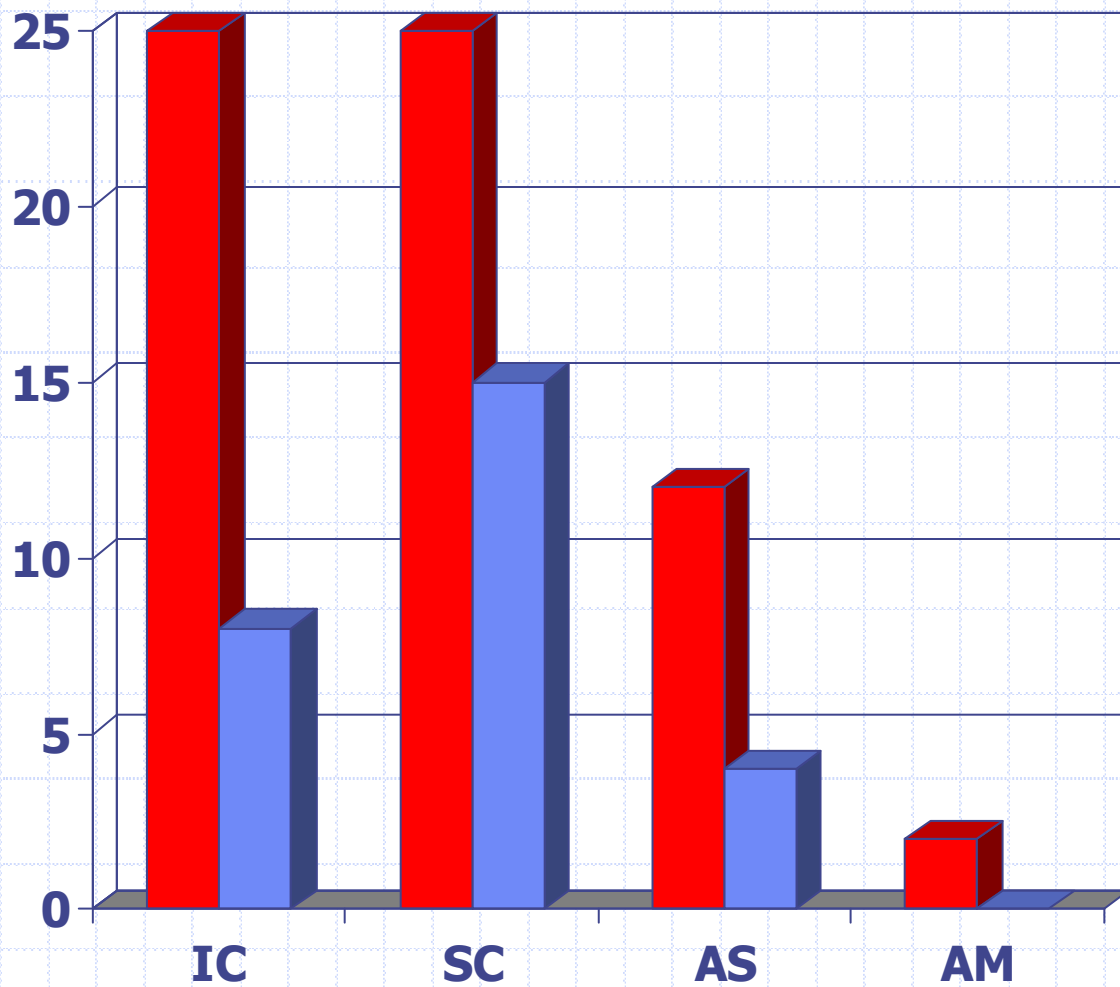
SC: seriously considered suicide

AS: attempted suicide

AM: attempted and medical attention

***These results suggest that SEHS SPP participants who reported one or more periods of depression in the past 12 months were 70% less likely to attempt suicide compared to the corresponding control group.**

12 month follow-up survey results on the effectiveness of the program



■ % of control group reporting depression + IC, SC, AS and/or AM
n=83

■ % of test group reporting depression + IC, SC, AS and/or AM
n=110