



## Women's Multicultural Resource & Counselling Centre

### What can we do to best manage the rates of depression in Black boys and men?

- Remember that depression may also present itself differently in Black males as irritability, anger, and discouragement rather than hopelessness and helplessness
- Teachers should take continuing education courses on cultural bias and depression in Black boys to help address the problems they face in a school setting.
- Clinicians need to stay up to date on best practices in working with racial/ethnic minority boys and men to make sure that they are not missing signs of mental illness.
- Researchers should continue to study health disparities in boys and men of diverse backgrounds as well as how resilience can be formed at a young age and strengthened through the life-course.
- Community members should consider how to create protective factors for vulnerable boys in their communities (e.g. mentoring opportunities, after-school programs)
- Policymakers should consider legislation, regulator, and administrative actions for vulnerable boys, and seek to remove systemic structures that marginalize boys and men of color (e.g. disparities in school discipline, school-to-prison pipeline).

Within many paces, Black individuals can never fully be themselves. Indigenous elder, Dr. Duke Redbird, calls this “death by a thousand cuts.” As it is the build up of these small but painful moments which lead to various mental health problems.



## Let's Talk About the Sensitive Topic Called Suicide

From 2001 to 2015, the suicide risk for Black boys between the ages of 5 and 11 was two to three times higher than that of White boys, according to a new research letter in JAMA Pediatrics (Bridge, 2018). This concerning trend continues through adolescence as reported by the Nationwide Youth Risk Behavior Survey (Kann et al., 2017).

What are the signs of suicide:

- **Excessive sadness or moodiness:** Long-lasting sadness, mood swings, and unexpected rage.
- **Hopelessness:** Feeling a deep sense of hopelessness about the future, with little expectation that circumstances can improve.

- **Various challenges with their sleep.**
- **Sudden calmness:** Suddenly becoming calm after a period of depression or moodiness can be a sign that the person has made a decision to end his or her life.
- **Withdrawal:** Choosing to be alone and avoiding friends or social activities also are possible signs to be mindful of. a leading cause of suicide. This includes the loss of interest or pleasure in activities the person previously enjoyed.
- **Increase reliance of their cell phone-** Notice if the frequency of cell phone usage has increased.
- **Changes in personality and/or appearance:** A person who is considering suicide might exhibit a change in attitude or behavior, such as speaking or moving with unusual speed or slowness. In addition, the person might suddenly become less concerned about his or her personal appearance.
- **Dangerous or self-harmful behavior:** Potentially dangerous behavior, such as reckless driving, engaging in unsafe sex, and increased use of drugs and/or alcohol might indicate that the person no longer values his or her life. This is usually out of character for the person.
- **Recent trauma or life crisis:** A major life crises might trigger a suicide attempt. Crises include the death of a loved one or pet, divorce or break-up of a relationship, diagnosis of a major illness, loss of a job, or serious financial problems. Trauma can also be sub-conscious.
- **Making preparations:** Often, a person considering suicide will begin to put his or her personal business in order. This might include visiting friends and family members, giving away personal possessions, making a will, and cleaning up his or her room or home. Some people will write a note before committing suicide. Some will buy a firearm or other means like poison.
- **Threatening or talking about suicide:** From 50% to 75% of those considering suicide will give someone -- a friend or relative -- a warning sign. However, not everyone who is considering suicide will say so, and not everyone who threatens suicide will follow through with it. But please take

EVERY threat of suicide seriously and as an opportunity to learn something new about the person who is struggling with their emotions.

**\*\*\*Remember taking care of your own mental health will help you to manage the concern and stress which comes with supporting a loved one with their own mental health challenges. Reach out if you need any additional support, we are here to serve you \*\*\***

WMRCC team