

**SUICIDE PREVENTION AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT AWARENESS  
CAMPAIGN**

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**Abstract**

**Background:** Suicide among adolescents is a significant public health concern, with increasing rates linked to mental health challenges such as depression, anxiety, and emotional distress. Despite the growing prevalence of these issues, stigma, lack of awareness, and limited knowledge of available resources often prevent young individuals from seeking help. School-based interventions have been identified as effective strategies for promoting mental health awareness and early prevention.

**Methods and Materials:** This project implemented a school-based Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Support Awareness Campaign in a high school setting. The campaign utilized a multi-component approach, including educational posters, student handouts, a school-wide presentation delivered by a mental health professional, and collaboration with school counsellors and staff. Pre- and post-intervention surveys were administered anonymously to assess students' knowledge, attitudes, and awareness of mental health and suicide prevention.

**Results:** Findings from the survey analysis indicated a measurable improvement in students' understanding of mental health issues and their ability to recognize warning signs of suicide. Awareness of available support resources increased significantly following the campaign. Additionally, students reported greater comfort in discussing mental health concerns and seeking help. Qualitative feedback highlighted the effectiveness of the professional presentation and visual materials in reinforcing key messages.

**Conclusion:** The campaign demonstrated that school-based awareness initiatives can effectively enhance mental health literacy, reduce stigma, and promote help-seeking behaviour among adolescents. Although limited by its short duration and single-site implementation, the project provides evidence supporting the value of preventive, education-focused interventions in school settings. Future initiatives should consider longer implementation periods and expanded stakeholder involvement to sustain impact.

**Keywords:** *Suicide prevention; adolescent mental health; awareness campaign; school-based intervention; help-seeking behavior*

### **Project Definition**

This capstone project focused on the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Support Awareness Campaign, conducted in a high school setting. This project was developed in response to the growing concern of adolescent mental health and the increasing rates of suicide in young people. Mental health challenges like depression, anxiety, and emotional distress are becoming more and more common among teenagers, yet many students still hesitate to seek help due to stigma, lack of awareness, or fear of being judged by others.

The primary purpose of this project was to create an awareness campaign that aimed at raising awareness about mental health, helping students recognize warning signs of suicide, and encouraging help-seeking behaviour. Rather than focusing on clinical treatment or diagnosis, this campaign was designed to be preventive and educational. The emphasis was placed on providing students with reliable information, normalizing conversations around mental health, and making support resources more visible and accessible within the school environment.

This project was built directly on the approved proposal and concept drafts developed earlier in the capstone process. The campaign included creating educational materials, collaborating with school counsellors and administrators, organizing a school presentation featuring a mental health professional, and evaluating through pre- and post-campaign surveys. This phase of the capstone represented the practical application of research and planning by translating ideas into real-world action within a school community.

### **Final Project Overview**

The final project consisted of a coordinated mental health awareness campaign conducted at a local high school. The campaign was designed as a multi-component initiative to ensure that students were exposed to key messages in different ways. These components included posters and handouts displayed throughout the school, a school-wide presentation, collaboration with school counsellors, and surveys used to measure the campaign's effectiveness.

Educational posters and charts were placed in visible areas such as hallways, classrooms, and common spaces. These materials focused on explaining common mental health challenges, identifying warning signs of suicide, and correcting common misconceptions related to mental health. Special attention was given to keeping the language simple and student-friendly so that

the information could be easily understood and remembered. Contact information for school counsellors, crisis hotlines, and other support resources was also included to ensure students knew where to seek help if needed.

Another key element of the campaign was a presentation delivered during a school assembly. A guest speaker with professional experience in mental health and suicide prevention was invited to speak with students. The presentation covered topics such as emotional well-being, recognizing distress in oneself and others, and the importance of reaching out for help. Students were encouraged to ask questions and participate in the discussion, which helped create a more open and engaging atmosphere.

Throughout the campaign, school counsellors played an essential role. They reviewed all materials, advised on sensitive topics, and ensured that appropriate support systems were in place during and after the presentation. Teachers also supported the initiative by helping with scheduling, encouraging participation, and reinforcing key messages in informal conversations with students. Parents were considered important stakeholders, and optional informational materials were prepared to help them recognize warning signs and support their children at home.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign, anonymous pre- and post-campaign surveys were administered to students. These surveys assessed changes in knowledge, attitudes, and awareness related to mental health and suicide prevention. The results of these surveys provided valuable insights into the campaign's impact and informed recommendations for future improvement.

### **Research Summary**

The development and implementation of this project were informed by current research on adolescent mental health and suicide prevention. Studies consistently show that suicide is one of the leading causes of death among adolescents and young adults, making prevention efforts a public health priority. Research also indicates that many young people who experience mental health struggles do not seek help, often due to stigma, lack of understanding, or uncertainty about where to turn for support.

Organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institute of Mental Health emphasize the importance of early education and awareness-based interventions. School-based programs that focus on increasing mental health literacy have been

shown to improve students' ability to recognize warning signs and increase their willingness to seek help. These programs are especially effective when they involve trusted adults, such as teachers and counsellors, and when information is delivered in an age-appropriate and supportive manner.

Research also supports the use of multiple communication methods within awareness campaigns. Visual materials, presentations, and interactive discussions help reinforce key messages and improve information retention. In addition, pre- and post-intervention surveys are commonly used in public health initiatives to measure changes in knowledge and attitudes over time. This project followed these evidence-based practices to ensure that the campaign was grounded in reliable research and best practices.

Global public health organizations, including the World Health Organization, stress that suicide prevention requires community-level involvement and stigma reduction. Schools are considered ideal settings for these efforts because they provide regular access to adolescents during a critical stage of development. By aligning the campaign with these research findings, this project aimed to create a meaningful and responsible awareness initiative that could positively influence students' understanding of mental health and available support systems.

### **Project Implementation Summary (Action Steps Taken)**

The implementation phase of the Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Support Awareness Campaign focused on carrying out the activities that were planned during the proposal stage. This phase required organization, communication, and collaboration with multiple stakeholders within the school setting. The goal was to ensure that the campaign was not only informative but also respectful, engaging, and appropriate for a high school audience.

The first step in implementation involved obtaining approval from the school administration. Administrative approval was necessary to ensure that the campaign aligned with school policies and student safety guidelines. Meetings were held with school administrators to explain the project's purpose, the activities involved, and the campaign's educational nature. It was clearly communicated that the project would not include clinical counselling or diagnosis, but rather focus on awareness, education, and prevention. Once approval was granted, a timeline was finalized to coordinate materials, surveys, and the school presentation.

Following administrative approval, collaboration with school counsellors became a central part of the implementation process. Counsellors were consulted regularly to review all educational materials and provide guidance on sensitive topics. Their involvement helped ensure that the language used was appropriate for students and that the information presented was accurate and responsible. Counsellors also helped identify available mental health resources within the school, such as counselling services and referral options, which were included in campaign materials. The next step involved creating educational materials, including posters, charts, and handouts. These materials were designed to be visually appealing while keeping the information clear and easy to understand. Topics included common warning signs of suicide, symptoms of emotional distress, myths and facts about mental health, and steps students can take to seek help for themselves or others. Contact information for crisis hotlines and school counselling services was included to ensure students had immediate access to support resources.

Once finalized, the posters and charts were placed in visible areas throughout the school, including hallways, classrooms, and common areas. This placement was intentional, as repeated exposure to the information was expected to help reinforce key messages over time. Handouts were distributed to students to allow them to review the information privately and keep it for future reference if needed.

Another major action step was organizing the school-wide presentation. A mental health professional with experience in suicide prevention and adolescent mental health was invited to speak to students. The speaker worked with school counsellors and the project lead to tailor the presentation to the students' age group and needs. The presentation addressed the importance of mental health, how to recognize warning signs, and why reaching out for help is a sign of strength rather than weakness.

Students were encouraged to participate by asking questions and engaging in discussion. This interactive approach helped create a more comfortable environment and allowed students to feel heard. The presence of a professional speaker also helped add credibility to the campaign and reinforced the seriousness of the topic without creating fear or discomfort.

To measure the campaign's effectiveness, pre-campaign surveys were administered before any educational activities began. These surveys assessed students' baseline knowledge of mental health issues, awareness of suicide warning signs, and familiarity with available support

resources. Questions also explored students' comfort levels when discussing mental health or seeking help.

After the campaign activities were completed, post-campaign surveys were distributed using similar questions. This allowed for comparison between pre- and post-campaign responses to identify changes in knowledge and attitudes. Participation in the surveys was voluntary and anonymous to encourage honest responses and protect student privacy.

Teachers supported the campaign by helping with announcements, scheduling, and encouraging students to take the surveys seriously. Their involvement helped integrate the campaign into the school environment rather than treating it as a separate, isolated event. While direct parent involvement was limited, optional informational materials were prepared to provide basic information on warning signs and available resources, so parents could support their children at home.

### **Project Analysis and Evaluation**

Evaluation was an essential part of this capstone project, as it provided insight into whether the campaign achieved its intended objectives. Analysis focused on survey results, feedback from students and staff, and observations made during the implementation process.

Comparison of the pre- and post-campaign survey results showed an overall improvement in students' understanding of mental health and suicide prevention. After the campaign, more students were able to correctly identify warning signs of suicide and emotional distress.

Awareness of school counselling services and crisis resources also increased, indicating that the campaign successfully communicated where students could seek help.

In addition to knowledge gains, survey responses suggested a positive shift in attitudes toward mental health. Many students reported feeling more comfortable discussing mental health concerns with trusted adults or peers after participating in the campaign. This change is significant, as stigma and fear are major barriers that prevent adolescents from seeking help.

Qualitative feedback from students indicated that the mental health professional's presentation was one of the most impactful components of the campaign. Students expressed that hearing real-life perspectives and professional guidance made the topic feel more relatable and less intimidating. The posters and handouts were also seen as helpful reminders that reinforced the information presented.

Feedback from school staff, particularly counsellors and teachers, was largely positive. Counsellors noted increased student engagement and a rise in mental health-related questions following the campaign. Teachers observed that students appeared more open to discussing emotional well-being in informal settings. These observations suggest that the campaign had effects beyond its formal activities.

Despite its strengths, the project also had limitations. The campaign was conducted within a single school and over a relatively short period, limiting the ability to measure long-term impact. Additionally, while surveys provided valuable insight, follow-up assessments over several months would be necessary to determine whether changes in knowledge and attitudes were sustained.

### **Project Recommendations and Future Improvements**

Based on the evaluation and overall outcomes of the Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Support Awareness Campaign, several recommendations can be made for future implementation and improvement. While the campaign achieved its primary goals of increasing awareness and improving attitudes toward mental health, there are opportunities to expand and strengthen its impact.

One important recommendation is to extend the campaign duration. The current project was conducted over a limited time frame, which restricted the ability to reinforce messages over the long term. Future campaigns could span an entire semester or academic year, enabling repeated exposure to information and deeper engagement with students. Ongoing activities, such as monthly discussions, classroom-based lessons, or follow-up workshops, could help sustain the positive effects observed during this project.

Another recommendation is to increase student involvement in campaign planning and delivery. While this project focused primarily on adult-led education, peer involvement could enhance relatability and engagement. Training student leaders or peer ambassadors to promote mental health awareness may further reduce stigma, as students may feel more comfortable discussing sensitive topics with their peers. Peer-led initiatives have been shown to be effective in school-based mental health programs and could complement professional-led presentations.

Future campaigns could also benefit from stronger parental involvement. Although informational materials were prepared for parents, direct engagement was limited. Hosting parent workshops,

distributing newsletters, or providing online resources could help ensure that parents are equipped to recognize warning signs and support their children outside of school. Strengthening communication between schools and families may increase the overall effectiveness of suicide prevention efforts.

In terms of evaluation, future projects should consider incorporating long-term follow-up assessments. While pre- and post-campaign surveys demonstrated positive changes in knowledge and attitudes, it is unclear whether these changes were sustained over time. Conducting follow-up surveys several months after the campaign would provide valuable insight into long-term impact and behaviour change.

Finally, future implementations could expand the campaign's scope to include additional mental health topics, such as stress management, coping strategies, and emotional regulation.

Addressing these topics alongside suicide prevention may help students build resilience and better manage challenges before they escalate into crises.

### **Materials Delivered**

Several materials were developed and delivered as part of this capstone project. These materials were designed to support the campaign's educational goals and ensure that information remained accessible to students and staff.

The primary materials included educational posters and charts placed throughout the school. These materials highlighted warning signs of suicide, common mental health concerns, and myths versus facts related to mental health. Each poster was designed to be visually engaging while maintaining clear and simple messaging suitable for a high school audience.

Informational handouts were also created and distributed to students. These handouts summarized key points from the campaign and included contact information for school counsellors, crisis hotlines, and external mental health resources. The handouts were intended as private reference materials for students to keep and review as needed.

Pre- and post-campaign surveys were another important set of materials delivered during the project. These surveys were carefully designed to assess students' baseline knowledge and attitudes, as well as changes following the campaign. Survey results were compiled and analyzed to assess the initiative's effectiveness.

In addition to student-focused materials, optional informational content was prepared for parents. These materials provided basic education on recognizing warning signs of emotional distress and encouraged open communication with children about mental health. While distribution was limited, the materials added value to the overall campaign design.

Finally, a summary report of the campaign findings was prepared for school staff. This report included survey results, key observations, and recommendations for future initiatives. Sharing these findings helped ensure transparency and provided a foundation for continued mental health awareness efforts within the school.

### **Sustainability and Long-Term Impact**

Sustainability is an important consideration for any public health initiative, particularly those addressing mental health and suicide prevention. While this capstone project was conducted over a limited period, its design allowed for continued impact beyond the initial implementation. The materials developed and the relationships established during the campaign created a foundation that the school can build upon in the future.

One aspect of sustainability lies in the continued use of educational materials. Posters and handouts developed for the campaign can be displayed or reused at future awareness events. Because the materials were designed using clear, non-time-specific messaging, they can remain relevant without frequent modification. School counsellors can also incorporate these materials into future classroom discussions, assemblies, or counselling sessions.

Another key factor contributing to sustainability is the involvement of school counsellors and staff. By actively engaging counsellors in the planning and implementation process, the project helped strengthen existing mental health support structures within the school. Counsellors gained additional tools and resources that can support their ongoing work with students. Teachers who participated in the campaign may also feel more confident addressing mental health topics in informal classroom settings.

Long-term impact may also be seen through increased student awareness and help-seeking behaviour. Even if not all students immediately seek support, exposure to mental health education can influence future decisions. Students who recognize warning signs or remember available resources may be more likely to reach out for help later, whether for themselves or for

peers. In this way, the campaign contributes to prevention efforts that extend beyond the project's duration.

### **Dissemination of Project Findings**

Dissemination of findings is an essential component of public health practice, as it allows lessons learned to inform future efforts. For this capstone project, dissemination occurred primarily within the school community. Survey results, observations, and recommendations were shared with school counsellors and administrators to provide insight into the campaign's effectiveness. Sharing findings with school staff helped promote transparency and accountability. It also provided administrators with evidence to support continued or expanded mental health awareness initiatives. By presenting both strengths and limitations, the project encouraged realistic expectations and informed decision-making.

In a broader academic context, this capstone project contributes to the growing body of work supporting school-based mental health awareness initiatives. The project demonstrates how evidence-based strategies can be adapted to real-world settings using limited resources. Findings from this project could be shared in academic settings, such as class presentations or student research forums, to support learning and peer discussion.

Future dissemination opportunities could include presenting the project at public health conferences, submitting summaries to educational newsletters, or collaborating with community mental health organizations. Expanding dissemination efforts would allow the insights gained from this project to benefit a wider audience.

### **Public Health Significance**

From a public health perspective, this capstone project addresses a critical and timely issue. Suicide remains one of the leading causes of death among adolescents, and mental health disorders are increasingly prevalent in this age group. Prevention efforts that focus on early education, awareness, and stigma reduction are essential components of a comprehensive public health response.

This project aligns with core public health principles, including prevention, health promotion, and community engagement. Rather than waiting for crises to occur, the campaign aimed to equip students with knowledge and resources that could reduce risk and promote well-being.

Schools serve as important community settings where preventive interventions can reach large populations efficiently.

The campaign also reflects the social-ecological model of public health by engaging multiple levels of influence. Students, teachers, counsellors, administrators, and parents all played roles in supporting mental health awareness. Addressing mental health at multiple levels increases the likelihood of meaningful and sustained impact.

Additionally, the project highlights the importance of culturally and developmentally appropriate health communication. By tailoring messages to a high school audience and collaborating with school professionals, the campaign ensured that information was relevant and accessible. This approach is critical in public health practice, particularly when addressing sensitive topics.

### **Student Reflection and Learning Outcomes**

This capstone project provided valuable learning opportunities that extended beyond academic knowledge. Planning and implementing a real-world public health initiative required applying skills developed throughout the MPH program, including research, communication, collaboration, and evaluation.

One key learning outcome was the importance of stakeholder engagement. Working closely with school administrators, counsellors, and teachers reinforced the value of collaboration in public health practice. Each stakeholder brought unique perspectives and expertise, strengthening the project. This experience highlighted that effective public health interventions rarely succeed in isolation and depend heavily on partnerships.

Another important lesson involved ethical responsibility. Addressing suicide prevention required careful consideration of language, content, and student well-being. This project reinforced the importance of ethical decision-making and sensitivity when working with vulnerable populations. Ensuring student safety and emotional comfort remained a priority throughout implementation.

The evaluation process also provided valuable insight into the role of data in public health. Designing surveys, collecting responses, and analyzing results demonstrated how data can inform conclusions and guide recommendations. At the same time, the project highlighted the limitations of short-term evaluations and the need for ongoing assessment.

Overall, this capstone project strengthened practical public health skills and reinforced the importance of prevention-focused interventions. The experience contributed to professional growth and increased confidence in designing and implementing community-based health initiatives.

### **Final Remarks**

In conclusion, this capstone project expanded beyond a simple awareness campaign to become a meaningful public health intervention. Through careful planning, collaboration, implementation, and evaluation, the Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Support Awareness Campaign addressed a critical issue affecting adolescents today.

The project demonstrated that schools are effective settings for mental health education and suicide prevention efforts. By increasing awareness, reducing stigma, and promoting access to support resources, the campaign contributed to a more informed and supportive school environment.

Although challenges and limitations were present, the overall outcomes were positive and aligned with the project's objectives. The lessons learned from this experience can inform future initiatives and reinforce the value of prevention-focused public health strategies.

This project ultimately highlights the role of public health professionals in addressing complex mental health challenges through education, collaboration, and community engagement.

Continued efforts in this area are essential to protecting the well-being of young people and promoting healthier futures.

### **Conclusion**

The Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Support Awareness Campaign successfully translated research and planning into meaningful action within a school setting. The project addressed a critical public health issue by focusing on education, awareness, and stigma reduction among high school students. Through the use of visual materials, professional presentations, collaboration with school staff, and structured evaluation, the campaign achieved its primary objectives.

The results of the pre- and post-campaign surveys demonstrated improvements in students' knowledge of mental health and suicide warning signs, as well as increased awareness of available support resources. Feedback from students and staff suggested that the campaign

created a more open and supportive environment for discussing mental health concerns. These outcomes highlight the value of school-based awareness initiatives as a preventive strategy. While the project had limitations, including a limited time frame and single-site implementation, it provided valuable insights into effective approaches for mental health education. The collaborative nature of the project, particularly the involvement of school counsellors and a mental health professional, was a key strength that contributed to its success. Overall, this capstone project demonstrated the importance of proactive mental health awareness efforts in schools. By increasing knowledge, reducing stigma, and promoting help-seeking behaviour, such initiatives can make a meaningful difference in students' lives. This project also provided an opportunity to apply public health principles in a real-world setting, reinforcing the value of prevention, education, and community collaboration in addressing complex health challenges.

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