

Teen Depression/Suicide Evaluation #1

Haley was sixteen and had been dealing with depression since she was 12 years old. She never felt 'quite right' in middle school, feeling like she didn't fit in and sad all the time. She started using drugs to try to cope.

Most of her old friends didn't do this, so she started hanging around with a different group of teenagers. Since school didn't seem important anymore, she started skipping classes.

She was sinking lower and lower, and thinking that it was not going to get any better. She told her mom that she accidentally threw away her prescription anti-depressant drugs, and needed a new bottle. Her mom got the bottle refilled.

She told her friends that "life wasn't worth living," and said she was going to run away the next weekend.

1. What might be the cause of her depression?
2. What is/are the signs from the scenario that have to be present to diagnose her with depression? (remember you have to have at least 1 of 2 present – be specific to the scenario)
3. What warning signs from the scenario are evident of depression or suicide?
4. How long would she have to experience these symptoms to be diagnosed with depression?

Teen Depression/Suicide Evaluation #2

Ryan was a 17-year-old who seemed to "have it all." He was popular at school, had lots of friends, and his grades were always straight "A". He was a member of the soccer and golf team, and president of a school club. He strived to be the very best that he could, since his father had died and he wanted to be a good example for his younger siblings.

He filled out many college applications, but because of a poor SAT score, just couldn't seem to get admitted to the top colleges. His family thought that he should study harder and retake the test. Ryan started to feel very anxious, sad, and desperate. He told his brother and sisters that "it just wasn't worth it anymore". He's not interested in eating anymore and would rather spend his time napping instead of playing golf or soccer.

1. What might be the cause of his depression?
2. What is/are the signs from the scenario that have to be present to diagnose him with depression? (remember you have to have at least 1 of 2 present – be specific to the scenario)
3. What warning signs from the scenario are evident of depression or suicide?
4. How long would he have to experience these symptoms to be diagnosed with depression?
5. You decide to engage in a conversation with Ryan. What do you say? (there should be at least 3 parts)
6. Connecting this scenario to what you know about the teenage brain. Explain why Ryan might be contemplating suicide

Teen Depression/Suicide Evaluation #3

Peter, 16 years old, never did very well at school. In fact, he was barely passing. But he was a very talented musician, and wrote many songs about death and the life here after. He changed his appearance, colored his hair, and experimented a little with drugs.

During his 9th grade year, he realized that his feelings about his friends were different. He felt an attraction to his male friends, but never addressed the feelings. He knew that they wouldn't understand, and the worst thing in the world would be to be excluded and bullied. He started to be irritable and take his feelings out on his friends, but then when he was by himself and alone he felt sad.

He started to use heavier drugs to help him handle the feelings. He bought a gun from one of his new friends. He wrote a song, "I Found The Way," after a long night of drinking.

1. What might be the cause of his depression?
2. What is/are the signs from the scenario that have to be present to diagnose him with depression? (remember you have to have at least 1 of 2 present – be specific to the scenario)
3. What warning signs from the scenario are evident of depression or suicide?
4. How long would he have to experience these symptoms to be diagnosed with depression?
5. You decide to engage in a conversation with Peter. What do you say? (there should be at least 3 parts)

Writing Condolences

Expressing sadness for someone else's loss can be an integral part of their healing and grieving. It may be a loss that was expected or unexpected. No matter how it happens, it's not easy to deal with.

For this activity, pretend you are a friend or even an acquaintance of the person who committed suicide. Write a letter of condolence to their family. Writing these letters can be extremely difficult as it is important to be tactful so as to respect the feelings of everyone involved. Here are some guidelines for you to follow.

Guidelines for letters expressing condolences:

- Send out the letter within two weeks of the loss
- Handwrite the letter rather than typing it
- If using a store bought card, write the letter on stationary and include it inside the card
- Write the letter the way you would speak to the person who is receiving it

What to include in the letter:

- Acknowledge the loss and refer to the deceased by name
- Express your sympathy
- Note special qualities of the deceased that you might know
- Note favorite memories of the deceased that you have
- Remind the family of their personal strengths or special qualities
- Offer help, but specific help...not merely, "let me know if there's anything I can do"
- End the letter with a thoughtful word, hope, wish, or expression of sympathy

If you do not know the deceased or the family well, you may include a shorter version of the letter including an acknowledgement, your sympathy, special qualities or memories, and a thoughtful ending. For the purposes of this assignment, we will write the full letter.

See attached rubric for grading of the letter.

	Put It In The Mail (5)	Needs Some Improvements Before You Send It (3)	Rewrite It (1)
Letter format	Written in a standard format; includes date, greeting, body, and closing	Has all the parts of a letter, but they are not in the right spot	Missing some pieces of the format
Followed guidelines	Handwritten and neat on paper or stationary; Written to the recipient from your point of view	Letter may be handwritten but is difficult to read or has many spelling or grammar errors	Typed letter; Did not represent yourself in the letter; used others words
Letter had all appropriate requirements	Included all 7 requirements and used appropriate examples for each	Has all requirements but poor choice of words OR missing some of the requirements but word choice is appropriate	Letter is missing some of the requirements; Some of the words used do not respect the recipient
Total and Comments			

Depression Notes

1. What is major depression?
2. What are the symptoms of depression?
3. True or False do people engage in risky behaviors when depressed
4. What are the causes of Major Depression?
5. List at least 3 treatments for depression
6. How can I help someone if they are depressed? list 3