



Zero Reasons Why® is a teen-led storytelling and community mobilization campaign to remove the stigma of mental health and prevent teen suicide.

Adult voices have often been at the center of mental health conversations, but Zero Reasons Why was built to amplify teen voice. Since 2018, the Campaign has shared stories to help remove the stigma of mental health. It has shown promise as one way to help decrease the teen suicide rate in the communities where it has been deployed.

“Adults have tended to be the voice of suicide prevention when it’s happening to teens. We can have a voice.”

POOJA JAIN
Teen Advocate

TEEN MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

It’s no secret – numerous studies and news headlines highlight an alarming uptick in mental health challenges and suicide attempts or deaths amongst teens in recent decades, even before the COVID-19 pandemic. A 2021 Surgeon General’s Advisory affirms this and calls for action. It’s clear that teens and the adults around them need to engage with mental health

issues before a crisis. Who better to help elevate this conversation than teens themselves?

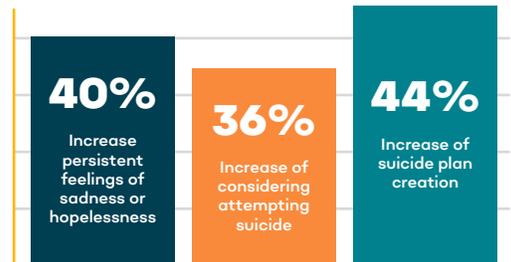
“Youth are experts on their own lives, so it is important to engage youth in community-based mental health efforts. Involve young people in all phases of programming, from ideation to implementation.”

DR. VIVEK MURTHY
2021 Surgeon General’s Youth
Mental Health Advisory

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM

There are many factors that contribute to the teen mental health crisis and plenty of barriers to receiving support. We can’t claim to know the cause, but Zero Reasons Why focuses on two key factors: **reducing mental health stigma and increasing help-seeking behavior.**

FROM 2009 TO 2019, HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS REPORTED:



WE BELIEVE

REMOVING THE STIGMA
Mental health stigma prevents teens from seeking help.



INCREASES HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOR

Reducing mental health stigma can increase help-seeking behavior.



DECREASES TEEN SUICIDE

Increased help-seeking behavior is a key factor to decrease teen suicide.

WHERE TO BEGIN

Removing mental health stigma starts with story.

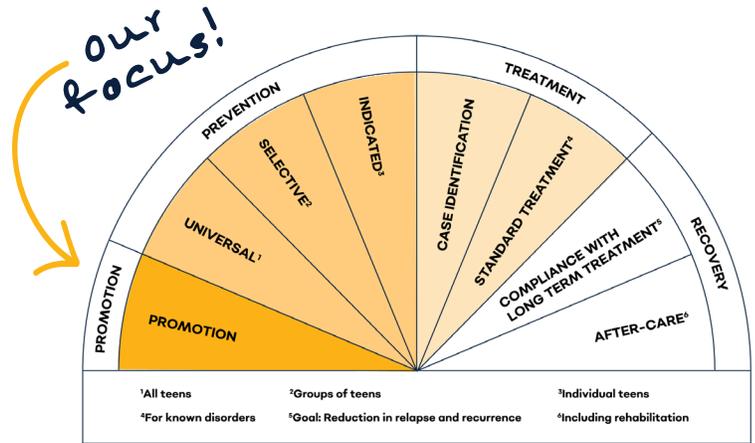
STORYTELLING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Sharing personal narratives is a research-backed and evidence-based approach to address and even treat mental health challenges. The Zero Reasons Why Campaign is not treatment, but it uses the same concept – leveraging the known benefits of reading stories about overcoming mental health challenges – and moves mental health conversations upstream on the continuum of care, out of treatment and into the promotion category.

This is the work of stigma removal. By bringing stories into the forefront, rather than only behind closed doors, mental health conversations become more proactive. In the absence of that stigma, teens can experience feelings of optimism and belonging and are more equipped to ask for help before moving further along the continuum of care.

“The mental health system is a very reactive system. This movement is very much proactive and preventative.”

TIM DEWEESE
Johnson County Mental Health Director



TEEN-LEAD ACTION

Teens have the knowledge, peer influence and energy to put insight into action – but they need adults to remove barriers they face. Zero Reasons Why equips teen activists with the tools and public platform they need to drive change and build societal empathy through strategic storytelling. The stigma-dismantling Storytelling Campaign is delivered via social media, alongside Community Mobilization activities held in person.

Peer-to-peer collaboration and allyship lead to actionable change. As digital natives who have grown up in a movement-centered and connected world, this generation is primed and eager to use their voices for causes they believe in. When their voices are amplified, communities are invited to engage in the conversation. That’s when we see perspectives shift and mental health stigma reduced.

“Zero Reasons Why has given me countless opportunities. I feel more confident and comfortable speaking about mental health and suicide. I am more educated on the topic and can do my part to remove the stigma.”

KYRA FUCHS
Teen Advocate



“Participating in Zero Reasons Why gave me the opportunity to channel my passion for mental health into impactful work through public speaking, event planning and community outreach. It allowed me to channel my fear and frustration into a positive and hopeful direction.”

ROARIKER SWENSON
Teen Advocate

EXPANSION & SUPPORT

We believe the Campaign and its impact can achieve similar results in more communities by building a national network of school and community-based Zero Reasons Why Chapters, along with the content and technology to easily deploy it. Understanding that school administrators typically have small budgets for mental health promotion, our vision is that every school and community in the U.S. could participate free of charge. To do that, we are seeking financial support to launch and promote a national chapter model, to train and onboard new chapter sponsors and to implement the technology that will bring the power of Zero Reasons Why to teens and mental health advocates everywhere.



Zero Reasons Why® was created by Overflow, LLC with the guidance of mental health experts and community partners. Overflow deploys the Campaign alongside teens, mental health experts and community champions to promote help-seeking behaviors in young people across the United States.

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