



# ZERO REASONS WHY

A TEEN SUICIDE PREVENTION CAMPAIGN

PLAYBOOK

# Foreword



I have worked in community mental health for almost 30 years. The most valuable lesson I've learned over my career is that suicide is not a community mental health center issue, or a school issue or a faith-based issue. It's a community issue and it takes the entire community coming together to address it.

The #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign has provided our community the opportunity to collaborate and take action to prevent suicide and promote mental wellness. With student leaders at the helm, this campaign has brought religious leaders, health professionals, mental health clinicians, elected officials, school teachers, students, parents and community members from across the board together to share real stories of mental health crisis and recovery.

As more people have shared their mental health stories through the campaign, the more open our community has become to other suicide prevention efforts. #ZeroReasonsWhy built community momentum around mental health education and inspired more students to seek help from peers and professionals. It is truly creating a suicide safer community.

The campaign won't look the same from one community to the next, but I believe the outcomes will be the same. It is my hope that this playbook will provide the foundation that you need to see your community come around teens and their mental wellness.

**Tim DeWeese**

**Director, Johnson County Mental Health**

This campaign all began with a group of six school superintendents who came together to address teen suicide and mental health. As we each shared our own stories about teen suicides in our respective communities, we acknowledged current efforts, while well-intended, were not working. We needed to invite people into a community conversation so that collectively our thoughts, ideas and actionable solutions would stop any teen from choosing to die rather than live.

The first countywide mental health convening brought together leaders who were already working in this space – mental health professionals, parents, faith-based leaders, elected officials and health professionals. The synergy that existed was undeniable. Whiteboards in the room were quickly filled with issues, barriers and possible solutions. However, at one point, someone asked a question, the right question, that completely changed the conversation. “I wonder what our kids would think about this list?” That simple question, launched a movement we know today as #ZeroReasonsWhy – a student-led effort fueled by the mantra, “Nothing about us, without us!”

This playbook is specifically designed to assist you in the “how” and “what” of addressing the challenges facing our communities in regard to mental health, while also building the capacity of the next generation of leaders in every community– our children. Your plan will undoubtedly be unique to you and your community, yet still part of this greater movement to address teen suicide and mental health. Best wishes as you face the wind and let the journey begin!

**Dr. Todd White**

**Former Superintendent, Blue Valley School District**



# Table of Contents

The #ZeroReasonsWhy Narrative Playbook highlights, both in philosophy and practice, how the community teen suicide prevention campaign is structured and the teen-led strategy behind the movement. First and foremost, it represents the voice of teens while featuring examples, best practices and resources for storytelling and community mobilization efforts.

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**Acknowledgments**

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The background features a grid of overlapping squares and rectangles in various shades of yellow and orange, creating a textured, geometric pattern.

# **History & Background**

# The Beginnings

**Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 10 and 24.**

## **During the first six months of 2018, teen death by suicide nearly doubled in Johnson County, Kansas.**

A total of fifteen teen suicides occurred during the 2017-2018 academic year in Johnson County, which includes several Kansas City area suburbs and six school districts. This seemingly sudden epidemic mirrored a nationwide trend of increased suicides amongst teens. It called to action the six school district Superintendents, who pulled together leaders in the community including health professionals, the county district attorney, mental health focused nonprofits, the faith community and parent group representatives.

The cross-functional group became known as the Johnson County Mental Health Convening Group.

The convening began meeting monthly, and shortly after, enlisted the help of Overflow Story Lab, a Kansas City-area idea adoption firm, to launch a strategy and propel a movement to prevent teen suicide.

Overflow identified the convening's three recurring themes:

1. We need to hear from teens
2. Stories need to be told
3. The entire community needs to take action

These were the foundational ideas for the #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign, a countywide response to the rise in teen deaths by suicide. The campaign is comprised of two parts: storytelling and community mobilization efforts – both with teen voice at the center.

Now in its second year, the campaign is fiscally sponsored and co-managed by the Johnson County Mental Health Center.

# JOHNSON COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH CONVENING

## School District and Community Leaders Team Up to Address Suicide

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

August 1, 2018

(JOHNSON COUNTY, KANSAS) August 1, 2018 – Six Johnson County school districts are joining forces to address the growing number of teen deaths by suicide. The convening comes after district superintendents shared similar heartbreaking tragedies. As a unified group of school leaders, the superintendents decided it was time to have real conversations about real change.

“These deaths weigh heavy on our hearts,” said Blue Valley Superintendent Todd White. “It is unacceptable for our children to think that the very best way to improve their life is to end it.”

According to Johnson County Mental Health, teen suicides in the county nearly doubled in the first six months of 2018. Teen deaths by suicide are escalating nationally too. Suicide is the third-leading cause of death for children ages 5 to 14 and is the second-leading cause of death for ages 15 to 24.

The superintendents held a kick-off meeting in June and invited influential leaders representing mental health providers, parents, the faith community and local business community.

“As a community, we must all work together and address suicide head-on for the benefit of our children,” said Shawnee Mission Deputy Superintendent Kenny Southwick. “The mental health of our students is a top priority.”

Discussion focused on three key questions:

- Why is there a rising number of teenagers experiencing mental health issues and choosing death by suicide?
- How can school districts and community partners collaborate to multiply the impact of our work?
- What strategies or action plans can we deploy to stop teen suicide and mitigate mental health concerns?

“We do not have all the answers, but through our collective effort and willingness to engage in conversations about suicide, we can provide a system of care and support for our children,” said Olathe Public Schools Superintendent John Allison.

The following Superintendent leadership represents the six school districts of Johnson County, Kansas:

1. Todd White, Blue Valley Schools, Superintendent
2. Frank Harwood, USD 232 – De Soto, Superintendent
3. Pam Stranathan, Gardner Edgerton School District, Superintendent
4. John Allison, Olathe Public Schools, Superintendent
5. Mike Fulton, Shawnee Mission School District, Superintendent and Kenny Southwick, Deputy Superintendent
6. Dr. Wayne Burke, Spring Hill School District, Superintendent



# Branding: Campaign Name



The campaign name was chosen to be instantly recognizable as a teen suicide prevention campaign. It needed to challenge the whole community, speaking directly to teens as well as various audiences who are invested in teen suicide prevention. It needed to activate stories, opinions and ideas toward change.

Linking the name in an instigative manner with the Netflix series *13 Reasons Why* (first released in 2017) helped accomplish the goals, creating momentum and generating needed peer-to-peer conversations. The series was controversial in nature – on one side, people believed it sparked conversations that teens may have otherwise avoided; on the other, people believed it was a dangerous depiction of teen suicide. Naming the campaign #ZeroReasonsWhy was not intended to either contradict or promote the show, but rather to create a recognizable connection to a relevant topic for teens.

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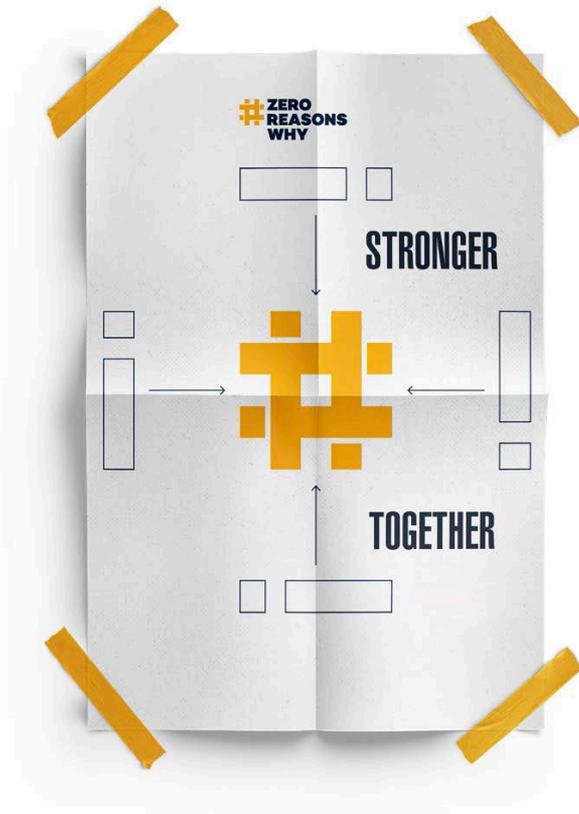
**There are many valid reasons why a person may struggle with their mental health.**

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The name **#ZeroReasonsWhy** does not suggest there are zero reasons why teens should struggle with mental health. Instead, there are zero reasons why we can't equip, empower, discuss, educate, remove stigma and come together as a community to impact prevention, treatment and recovery.

**#ZeroReasonsWhy** seeks to prevent a multitude of reasons contributing to teen suicide. The stigma surrounding mental health, the lack of community support and the lack of comprehensive and early education are three broad reasons of focus.

# Branding: Campaign Logo



The four structural components of the hashtag logo icon represent the campaign's call to action:

**i = individuals uniting**

**! = immediacy of importance**

These structural components combine to make a hashtag symbol, which serves as a representation of unity while also being functional. The hashtag is always used with the campaign name to show ongoing conversation and collective voice.

The logo's inherent call to action offers customization and allows for interaction.

**“There are #ZeroReasonsWhy \_\_\_\_\_.”**  
is a sentence teens, parents, educators, healthcare providers, counselors and community members can all complete to share their distinctive viewpoint.

**The hashtag icon represents unity and strength in numbers.**

**ZERO REASONS WHY**  
**THIS CONVERSATION IS TOO TABOO**

Everyone fills in the blank differently based on what they think, feel and have experienced. The campaign provides literal space for people to share their perspective on how to connect and collaborate in the effort to prevent teen suicide.

# Branding: Visual Style Guide

The campaign's graphic design is intended to be youthful and artful, with a grassroots feel.

The brand is meant to be both a visual identifier as well as an interactive call to action as various stakeholders fill in the blank for themselves:

- “There are #ZeroReasonsWhy mental health isn’t a larger community priority.”
- \*There are #ZeroReasonsWhy teens should have to feel alone in this.”
- “There are #ZeroReasonsWhy we can’t talk about suicide.”
- “There are #ZeroReasonsWhy mental health shouldn’t be equal to physical health.”



Style Guide
V1.3

Zero Reasons Why
2018

Color Palette			Primary & Secondary	
<b>Yellow</b> C-0 M-34 Y-95 K-0  R-255 G-183 B-11  HEX #f9c74f  PMS 716	<b>Gray</b> C-14 M-11 Y-12 K-0  R-217 G-216 B-214  HEX #999999  PMS Cool Gray 1	<b>Dark Gray</b> C-42 M-34 Y-32 K-1  R-155 G-156 B-160  HEX #333333  PMS Cool Gray 7	<b>Dark Teal</b> C-100 M-07 Y-48 K-38  R-0 G-192 B-82  HEX #007070  PMS 7691	<b>Dark Navy</b> C-99 M-84 Y-45 K-51  R-10 G-24 B-64  HEX #001a33  PMS 289

**TEAL**  
 C-94 M-31 Y-42 K-5 // R-0 G-129 B-141 // HEX #007070 // PMS 321

**ORANGE**  
 C-0 M-56 Y-85 K-0 // R-249 G-138 B-40 // HEX #f9c74f // PMS 144

**Social Media**

While we always recommend excellent photography for posts there will be times when graphics will be integrated into that content flow.

# #ZeroReasonsWhy Campaign Launched by Johnson County School Districts & Community Leaders to Prevent Teen Suicide

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Thursday, September 13, 2018

(JOHNSON COUNTY, KANSAS) September 13, 2018 – During this National Suicide Prevention Week (September 9-15) and National Suicide Prevention Month (September), the six School Districts in Johnson County, Kansas are joining together to launch the **#ZeroReasonsWhy** community mobilization campaign to prevent teen suicide. Focused on empowering community members to take action toward change, the campaign will organize, facilitate and support students, parents, educators, health providers, and other stakeholders in implementing action plans, programs, events and outreach efforts – as there are zero reasons why we cannot come together to make a difference on this community issue.

“We feel strongly that by mobilizing necessary resources, disseminating information, generating support, and fostering cooperation across public and Private sectors in the community, we can influence the conversation and de-stigmatize the issue,” said Gardner Edgerton Superintendent Pam Stranathan. “Attempted suicides have increased, and teen death by suicide has nearly doubled in Johnson County in the first six months of 2018.”

In June, the superintendents of Johnson County initiated a deeper dialogue and identified collaboration opportunities. The

**#ZeroReasonsWhy** campaign is intended to mobilize the community around this preventable epidemic. The campaign’s website and logo were unveiled this week at [zeroreasonswhy.org](http://zeroreasonswhy.org).

“We envision **#ZeroReasonsWhy** as the intense and passionate engagement of the community,” said Blue Valley Superintendent Todd White. “We must help students see the future and remove any barriers that stand in the way.”

Two key efforts of the campaign will involve a story campaign and community mobilization team. The **#ZeroReasonsWhy** campaign will take place during the 2018-2019 academic year, and it is supported by the Johnson County School Districts of Blue Valley, De Soto, Gardner Edgerton, Olathe, Shawnee Mission and Spring Hill. The campaign will work closely with influential leaders representing mental health providers, parents, the faith community and local business community to multiply and amplify the impact of their work.

“If we work together as a community we can change this narrative. There should be zero reasons why we can’t make a difference and change this conversation for the social well-being of our children,” said De Soto Superintendent, Frank Harwood.

Led by student ambassadors, parent volunteers, teacher advocates, health experts and non-profit leaders, the **#ZeroReasonsWhy** campaign activities are gearing up to include student-led initiatives, rallies, and meet-ups cross-district programs; social media efforts; response and street teams; parent-to-parent support; mental health expert collaboration; as well as posters, banners, yard signs and more.

“Our collective efforts will allow us to strengthen the system of care and support for our children in Johnson County,” said Olathe Public Schools Superintendent John Allison.

1. Todd White, Blue Valley Schools, Superintendent
2. Frank Harwood, USD 232 – De Soto, Superintendent
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# 13 Reasons Why Research Findings

## Northwestern University

The Center on Media & Human Development in the School of Communication at Northwestern University investigates traditional media, such as television and advertising, as well as new media, such as social media and apps.

Led by Dr. Ellen Wartella, The Center explores a variety of topics like educational learning, social interactions, advertising and health within the intersection of children and media.

In March 2018, one year after the first season of the series premiered on Netflix, Northwestern's Center on Media & Human Development issued a Global Report on how teens and parents responded to *13 Reasons Why*.

This research report presents findings from a global survey of more than 5,000 adolescents, young adults, and parents of adolescents from the United States, United Kingdom, Brazil and Australia/New Zealand.

## Key findings

- *13 Reasons Why* resonated with teens and young adults in all 4 regions, and they felt it was beneficial
- *13 Reasons Why* provided teens, young adults and parents in all regions with information and supported conversations about difficult topics
- In all four regions, adolescents and young adults reported seeking more information following exposure
- While there were graphic and intense scenes in the show, teens and young adult viewers in each region were generally not opposed to the way the show dealt with these tough topics
- In all four regions, viewers of *13 Reasons Why* reported helping others and engaging in other empathetic behaviors after watching

# 13 Reasons Why Research Findings

## Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

The publication is the official journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. It is focused on pediatric psychiatry topics and is a peer-reviewed medical journal.

The AACAP's mission is to promote the healthy development of children, adolescents and families through advocacy, education and research.

The Journal published a study in April 2019 estimating the association between the release of the Netflix series *13 Reasons Why* (released March 2017) and suicide rates in the United States.

### Key findings

- The overall suicide rate among 10- to 17-year-olds increased by 28.9% in the month immediately following the release of *13 Reasons Why*
- The April 2017 suicide rate was the highest monthly suicide rate of any month during the 5-year study period
- No significant change in suicide rate occurred amongst other age bracket populations

### Study citation

Title: Association Between the Release of Netflix's *13 Reasons Why* and Suicide Rates in the United States: An Interrupted Time Series Analysis

Author: Bridge, Jeffrey A. et al.

Published: Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, Volume 59, Issue 2, 236 - 243

## AGGIE

SHAWNEE MISSION SCHOOL DISTRICT

“I have a lot of strikes against me in life, and I think that it’s important to share my story so other people can relate. People know that they’re not alone. I’m black, I’m a woman, I’m a part of the LGBT community, I’m also overweight for my age. All four of those things play a role in my life. High school kids have a lot of problems with body image and just trying to figure out who they are.

Listening and respecting people is the most important thing you can do. It’s so important to surround yourself with people that are different than you, so you see people that are different than you and you can learn to accept people that are different than you. There are people of many backgrounds and many skin colors and many sexualities. You have to listen to people and listen to their stories. You don’t have to accept their stories, but you have to respect them.”

“Your wisdom defies your age.”



“I’m sure she’ll be a voice and vessel of positive change ❤️.”



“Thank you for helping to clear the path for others to do the same who may not initially feel so confident as you.”



# Story

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## POOJA

BLUE VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

“I have had a good amount of friends and family who have gone through thoughts of suicide, but also just mental health in general. I can really see how it affects them. You don't want to say the wrong thing, but it's also really important for people to know that if someone is opening up to you, a lot of times they just want to talk. They just need someone to hear them out. It's important for people to say, 'I'm here for you. Call me if you need anything.' People aren't alone in what they're going through. It's so important to reach out, because things can sound a lot worse in your head than they do out loud.

I put together a little group of students who feel the same way about this. We meet about once a month with administration to talk about things that we can do in the school. We just finished planning suicide prevention lessons, which is awesome that the faculty and administration were so open to that and our voices are being heard.”



“These are important conversations. Thanks for sharing.”



“You are saving lives!”



“So proud of you!”

## KYLEIGH

GARDNER EDGERTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

“Going into high school with anxiety is pretty rough. It’s there every day. A few weeks ago I was pretty upset. I felt like it was the end of the world. I called my friend. I said, ‘I’m not doing so well’ and she said, ‘Do you want me to come over?’ And I said, ‘No, just stay on the line with me. Just help me talk things out.’

That was really one of the most eye-opening situations for me. I didn’t realize I could get that bad with anxiety. Just her sitting there and talking to me really makes a difference.

That one person you can count on can really make a difference in your life. Find someone who can be there for you. Reach out to them.

There are #ZeroReasonsWhy you should do it alone.”



“I’m so glad you have that friend. You are so brave for joining this conversation to help others.”



“Thank you for being you! We all care about you and want you to be happy in life! I love that you shared this! So much strength!”



## CAMERON

BLUE VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

"In this world, I feel like we're all striving for As and sometimes that's not realistic. The bar is too high and we're all pushing too much. It's just the pressure is too great. When people don't reach that bar, they're starting to hurt themselves - mentally or even physically. It's okay to not get a 100% on a test or to succeed in every way. It's okay, there's always going to be failures in life. It's okay to fail at something.

I think the thing adults can really do for high school students is really acknowledging how much they love the students. With the stress we have in high school, a greater acknowledgment of love would go a long way. Especially with the achievements and successes that students have - or the lack of achievements and successes that someone has - it's important to love someone the same.

There are #ZeroReasonsWhy you should feel pressured to be perfect."



"I love how you label the problem and then provide solutions. You are right, kids are under way too much pressure."



"Keep being a light in a dark world. You are making a difference!!!"



"What a (seemingly) simple concept, but such an impactful reminder!"

I want to make a difference, even if it's just in my friend group.

— MATTIE, SPRING HILL



I'm going to feel a certain way sometimes but it's okay. I'm a human being, it's normal.

— CARLIE, BLUE VALLEY



GIVE IT TIME,  
KEEP MOVING FORWARD,  
AND NEVER GIVE UP

LOREN, SPRING HILL



"The impact of your life on the people around you is bigger than you could ever imagine."

WILL, FOUNDER OF YOU MATTER FESTIVAL



WE CAN START THIS CONVERSATION.

MICAH, OLATHE



Someone loves you  
More than they love themselves  
If only you lifted your head  
enough to see  
That you are not as lonely  
as you feel  
And feeling sad was not  
such a big deal

— "DON'T GO AWAY" WRITTEN BY  
EMMA MATHIESON, SHAWNEE MISSION



The background features a solid yellow color with several overlapping, semi-transparent rectangular shapes in a lighter yellow and orange hue, creating a layered, abstract geometric pattern.

# **Campaign Structure**

# Campaign Organization



The effectiveness of the #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign is based on its ability to effectively deploy teen-prioritized action.

### 1. Executive Team

**Teen Council:** Consisting of 1-2 teens per school district, this leadership board is responsible for strategic vision, direction and guidance to campaign stakeholders. They are also the public face of the campaign.

### 2. Implementation Team

**Mental Health Convening Group:** This comprehensive cohort includes a core group of school district superintendents, health care providers, mental health non-profits, faith-based leaders, civic leaders and parent groups. These individuals are responsible for coordinating and implementing the campaign strategy.

### 3. Deployment Team

This extensive group includes an entire community – student ambassadors from each high school, parent advocates, health professionals, educators, school communications professionals, community volunteers, civic leaders and the faith community. This group is committed to spreading and delivering key messages and implementing strategic plan tactics as developed as part of the campaign’s community strategy.

**Campaign Team:** Johnson County Mental Health Center and Overflow co-manage the countywide campaign in Johnson County, Kansas, in consultation with the superintendents of the participating school districts in the county. The campaign has been incorporated as a Collective Impact Project into the mental health center’s portfolio of initiatives and programming.



## Teen Council

### Purpose

To strengthen and formalize teen voice, #ZeroReasonsWhy formed a Teen Council. From developing the initial strategic pillars for the campaign, to developing initiatives and suggested tactics, the Teen Council is actively engaged in addressing deployment strategies to prevent teen suicide.

They collaborate and share their perspective with adults to improve social and emotional wellbeing for teens across the county.

Representatives were initially chosen by superintendents from each school district in the county, but after the initial campaign year, sign-ups for Teen Council were made widely available to teens. Each school district's Teen Council members work to activate Student Ambassadors in each high school in their district.

### Roles & Expectations

As representatives of the greater teen population, Teen Council members accept many opportunities to voice their insights in the community. They present ideas and/or provide feedback to civic leaders, parent groups, education representatives, health professionals, community groups and faith leaders. The full support of the campaign team, as well as their school district superintendents and principals, helps members manage obligations. Monthly meetings of the Teen Council allow for regular progress in the campaign.



## Student Ambassadors

### Purpose

Student Ambassadors are representatives from each high school across the county. As part of the Deployment Team, they work to promote awareness of the campaign at the school building level. They may be identified by a Teen Council member, educator or self-elect. Student Ambassadors are invested in promoting the overall campaign.

### Roles & Expectations

Student Ambassadors choose to be as involved or engaged as they can. Each Student Ambassador defines the depth of their role as a campaign representative within their school.

Student Ambassadors may accept speaking opportunities in the community, execute tactics with the campaign, share social media posts, talk with peers about the campaign or promote campaign collateral.



# Mental Health Convening Group

## Purpose

To bring together key stakeholders supporting teen suicide prevention, the six school district superintendents formed a Mental Health Convening group. The superintendents were joined by Johnson County Mental Health Center, health care providers, non-profit organizations, parent groups, civic leaders and others. This cohort has grown to include community members who attend Community Mental Health Convening meetings once per quarter.

## Roles & Expectations

Individuals and organizations commit to attend Community Mental Health Convening group meetings each quarter. They participate in small group breakout sessions and work to realize the suggested tactics directed by the Teen Council. They bring the infrastructure, capacity and resources to deliver systemic social change.

## Key Participants

- Community Mental Health Centers
- Educators
- Counselor and clinician champions
- Mental health organizations
- Community volunteers
- Insurance carriers and providers
- Government and elected officials
- Law enforcement
- Civic and faith leaders



## Parent Advocates

### Purpose

Parent Advocates are parents who care. Many have made a commitment toward change because of their own personal experience losing, or nearly losing, a child to suicide. Some have faced struggles navigating the process of getting professional help. Nonprofits across the community have been formed as a result of these difficult experiences.

Because of the open framework of the campaign, Parent Advocates can get their own organizations involved in the campaign via the Mental Health Convening Group.

Some have even built beneficial collaborations between the campaign and their own non-profits.

As part of the Deployment Team, Parent Advocates work to promote peer conversations and action. They drive awareness across the community and with other parents.

### Roles & Expectations

Parent Advocates can choose to be as involved as they want. Each Parent Advocate can define the depth of their role as a campaign representative in the community.

The most active Parent Advocates seek out opportunities to voice their insights and either volunteer or participate in large and small events. Parent Advocates can also choose to be casually involved by regularly wearing a campaign t-shirt or wristband, sharing field journalism posts on social media, and talking to their peers about the campaign.



## Educators

### Purpose

Principals, vice principals, teachers, coaches, librarians, bus drivers, cafeteria workers and administrative personnel, many adults who work with teens in schools every day wish to advocate for teen suicide prevention and promote mental wellness. Educator Representatives are visible and active at the school building level and have the unique opportunity to serve as trusted adults for teens as they advocate that positive mental health is foundational to learning.

### Roles & Expectations

Educator Representatives perform key functions in the campaign to help further the campaign goals:

- Plan and implement Teen and Parent Reverse Hacks
- Excuse Teen Council members when appropriate to participate in campaign events and speaking opportunities
- Collaborate with individuals responsible for analyzing, purchasing, designing and delivering mental health curriculum in schools
- Connect campaign field journalists to students with a story to share
- Help teens plan and execute events within their schools



## Counselor & Clinician Champions

### Purpose

Counselor and Clinician Champions are psychologists, social workers or counselors inside or outside a school building, who are either direct employees of a school district or employees of mental health Partner Organizations. These are visible professionals and trusted adults who assess, guide, and support the mental health of teens in our schools and community every day. They work in collaboration with Educator Representatives, Teen Council members and Student Ambassadors.

### Roles & Expectations

Counselor and Clinician Champions participate in the following activities to further the campaign goals:

- Attend and participate in Teen and Parent Reverse Hacks, as well as other school events
- Share their stories and perspectives about teen suicide prevention and mental wellness in the story campaign
- Collaborate with individuals responsible for analyzing, purchasing, designing and delivering mental health curriculum in schools
- Serve as visible, actively engaged adults who teens can approach during the school day with struggles and concerns



INVOLVE

Involve a trusted adult to determine the best course of action



# School District Communication Professionals

## Purpose

School superintendents assigned their respective school communication professionals to be part of the “Comms Cabinet.” This core group of school communications professionals serve important functions to help promote understanding of the campaign. Members of the Comms Cabinet assist in developing and delivering key campaign messages and tactics to their school districts, reaching their district’s student, parent and educator audiences.

Communication professionals are vitally important to leverage their media relationships for campaign awareness, as well as establishing a consistent approach alongside the Mental Health Center, when responding to concerns.

## Roles & Expectations

Communications Professionals participate in the following activities to further the campaign goals:

- Manage school district editing and approval processes for news release content
- Provide guidance for standardization of campaign media release forms for photos, videos and stories
- Connect #ZeroReasonsWhy field journalists to school personnel and develop contact protocols

- Address any roadblocks in #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign operations gaining school access
- Serve as program managers within school districts, helping plan and implement events, facilitate featured podcasts and serve as a point of contact between the campaign and district leadership



# #ZeroReasonsWhy Campaign Forms Johnson County Teen Council to Voice Teen Perceptions to City, County, and State Civic Leaders

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
Thursday, November 29, 2018

(JOHNSON COUNTY, KANSAS) November 27, 2018 – The **#ZeroReasonsWhy Campaign** formed the Johnson County Teen Council to address teen suicide prevention strategies in an effort to strengthen the voices of teens and share their unique insights. In collaboration with the members of the countywide Superintendents' Mental Health Convening, SpeakUp Foundation, and Tom Karlin Foundation, teenagers from each of the six Johnson County school districts are tackling strategy, initiatives, and tactics to improve social and emotional well-being for teens.

"It has become increasingly clear since we launched the #ZeroReasonsWhy Campaign in September we need to listen to the teens in order to disrupt this preventable epidemic," said Spring Hill Superintendent Dr. Wayne Burke. "The Teen Council is the cornerstone of the #ZeroReasonsWhy story campaign and community mobilization effort to prevent teen suicide."

Consisting of nine students from the six Johnson County school districts, the Teen Council met for its inaugural meeting on November 19 and plans to meet monthly through the end of the campaign in May 2019. Out of the first meeting, three pillars and objectives were identified and formed by the Teen Council to address teen suicide during the campaign.

1. **Remove the Stigma:** Eliminate the stigma associated with suicide and open the dialogue for change.
2. **Build Community Support:** Bring the community closer to spur unconditional support without judgement.
3. **Commit to Education:** Improve and implement mental health (and suicide prevention) education consistently and earlier in school.

Acting as an Executive Team, the Teen Council is directing the #ZeroReasonsWhy Campaign team in leading student, parent, educator and practitioner initiatives and tactics related to the three objectives above.

"To be effective, the #ZeroReasonsWhy Campaign is relying on the collaboration across leaders in health, government and education, and we are excited for the leadership of the Teen Council," said Shawnee Mission Superintendent Mike Fulton. "They really are making the difference."

## BACKGROUND

#ZeroReasonsWhy is a countywide teen suicide prevention campaign. Sparked by a Superintendent-led Mental Health Convening Group to address the social and emotional well-

being of students, #ZeroReasonsWhy is a story campaign and community mobilization effort that seeks to mobilize student, parent, educator and practitioner stories around a community standard of care and prevention. Focused on empowering community members to take action toward change, the campaign is organizing, facilitating, and supporting students, parents, educators, and practitioners in implementing action plans, programs, events, and collaborative outreach efforts. The community in Johnson County is coming together to remove the reasons why suicide would be an option for any teen. The following Superintendent leadership represents the six school districts of Johnson County, Kansas:

1. Todd White, Blue Valley Schools, Superintendent
2. Frank Harwood, USD 232 – De Soto, Superintendent
3. Pam Stranathan, Gardner Edgerton School District, Superintendent
4. John Allison, Olathe Public Schools, Superintendent
5. Mike Fulton, Shawnee Mission School District, Superintendent and Kenny Southwick, Deputy Superintendent
6. Dr. Wayne Burke, Spring Hill School District, Superintendent

## GLORY

SHAWNEE MISSION SCHOOL DISTRICT

“I take psychology class and it’s been a big blessing to me because I’ve learned so much -- seeing that this is an actual thing that has roots, you see the patterns. It’s not like mental health just started now. Mental health has been a problem for a really long time.

As a teenager, I've dealt with mental health issues. I do a lot of stuff -- schoolwork, extracurricular activities, all honors classes. It gets to be too much and I just start crumbling. Sometimes it just feels like there's no way it's ever going to end.

Sometimes I forget the teachers are people and you can talk to them. Freshman year was really hard for me - new atmosphere, new high school, and I expected 200% for myself. And [a teacher] was a really big comfort for me. It’s a form of therapy, just getting everything out in the open and knowing that somebody else knows it. I'm not your thing to carry, but somebody else is sharing that with you.”

“You are a wonderful person and an inspiration.”



“Thank you for sharing this. It’s hard to be vulnerable.”



“Thank you for this project and for making mental health issues easier to talk about.”



# Story

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## JESSICA

OLATHE SCHOOL DISTRICT

“I am a survivor myself. I have a lot of friends who are also survivors. I've been an online advocate for helping people to get through those feelings and those thoughts. It's a big thing in my life that I like to do and it's important. I'm always looking at what people say and if people are super down on themselves or anything, I try to give them uplifting messages or I ask them, do you need to talk or anything just to vent or whatever? I realized I saw a lot of my problems in other people, so the advice that I gave them was what I wish I could have done. And then I started doing that for myself and it's just made myself so much better.

Being yourself is probably one of the most difficult things in high school. A large part of my friend group is [in GSA], which has really been a big help for me because I lost a lot of friends coming here and transitioning into high school. They're always there, especially the teachers in that room are amazing people. It's allowed me to make friends and have good memories in high school.

There are #ZeroReasonsWhy you can't be yourself.”



“Thanks for sharing your story!”



“Thank you for making a positive difference in this world!”

## SHANNON

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT, KIDS TLG

“One of the things that is really our responsibility in the community is to help raise awareness and advocate. And it's really to advocate that mental health is health. And to start to talk about it in terms that helps break down the stigma that surrounded mental and behavioral health for so long. Because we work so much with youth and adolescents, it's our primary mission that you don't have to feel shame or feel stigmatized because they are dealing with something and want to seek help. We would never shame someone that had an upset stomach for going to a doctor. So why on earth would we do that for someone who — particularly our youth — has recognized in their self that something just doesn't seem right. Why would we make it any less accessible for them to seek help?”

We tend to think about folks who are dealing with mental and behavioral health issues as others. It's those people, that's not me. And so it really is bringing people to the realization and acceptance that yes, it's others. And it's also my kid and my family and my neighbors. It's everyone and it is a community issue.”

“Excellent statement, Shannon!”



“SO true!”



## KEITH

COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST, JOHNSON COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH

“Because of my career, I have to be a social media all the time. My mantra about social media is that it should make real life relationships better. I'm only using social media in a way that enhances my real life relationships in some way. That really helps me decide how I'm spending my time on social media.

People every age, teenagers included, have to think about what is the healthy level of social media use for them. We are all learning how to have mature relationships with other people and how to have confidence in ourselves and have good, positive self image. The stronger we are in those areas, the less impactful social media will be for us in a negative way. There's not a straight rule, but trying to knowing yourself and knowing when social media is making your life better versus when it's making it worse is a good starting place. If at any point you say, ‘This is making my life harder or more difficult. This is making me feel sad or this is making me feel bad about myself. I feel really lonely,’ these are all messages to you to say, ‘Maybe I need to be on social media less and invest my time doing other things.’”



“How awesome you are to share and be an example to others who may be struggling with the same things.”



“Thank you for sharing your story, I KNOW others will feel the impact which will help them in return.”

EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW  
THAT THEY ARE IMPORTANT.

MALIA, OLATHE



Listen to people and  
listen to their stories. You  
don't have to accept their  
stories, but you have to  
respect them.

— AGGIE, SHAWNEE MISSION



YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DOESN'T  
DEFINE YOU.

SLOANE, SPRING HILL



Be kind to everyone  
around you. Not only  
that, but be kind  
to yourself.

KYRA, SPRING HILL



NO GREAT HERO HAS EVER  
WON A WAR ALONE.

MATT, OLATHE



It's important to find  
value in every single  
person. You're special  
for a reason.

LOGAN, OLATHE



The background features a solid yellow color with several overlapping, semi-transparent rectangular shapes in a lighter yellow and orange hue, creating a layered, abstract geometric pattern.

# **Community Plan**

## About the Strategy



The campaign’s strategy needed to give people a unifying reason to work together toward common priorities.

Many stakeholders in the community had been working in silos in the past, and the key to the strategy of the #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign was to promote collaboration under a common movement and effort.

The campaign strategy was created by the Teen Council, with validation from community.

It is categorized by three strategic pillars, outlined on the following pages:

1. Remove the Stigma
2. Build Community Support
3. Commit to Education

**“This is the movement of our time, making mental health equal to physical health.”**

Pooja Jain, Teen Council Member

Committing to these core strategy pillars allows the community to identify the most immediate impactful actions to collectively disrupt the rise in teen suicide. The following pages offer a deeper look at the community plan for each pillar of the campaign and specific examples of how tactics and initiatives for each focus area came about. Worksheets for mapping your own community strategy within this pillar framework are also included.

## Building the Strategy

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**“If we turn to those people that are most affected by an issue and say, help us understand it better, and have the courage to follow through with those things, great things can happen.”**

Dr. Todd White  
Superintendent, Blue Valley School District

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### Teen Council

In order to be effective, the campaign had to be teen-led. School leaders were clear that what they had been doing, however well-intended, was not working.

The nine members of the original Teen Council had strong priorities. They hadn't earned a degree or certification in mental health, but they knew the issue personally. They had seen friends struggle, experienced issues themselves or felt the challenges in their schools and community.

The building of the campaign strategy began with the Teen Council individually sharing their stories, opinions and ideas. Three clear pillars arose out of the teens' concerns and objectives. Specific initiatives and tactics were categorized under each pillar.

Then, the teen council presented an overview of the strategy to various community groups.

### Community Validation

Over the course of a three-month period, the Teen Council shared the strategic plan across the community. They spoke at health conferences, visited lawmakers, presented at schools and appeared at community events.

Community members affirmed the strategic pillars and provided feedback to further initiatives and tactics.

To complete the process, the strategic plan was presented at a community-wide symposium sponsored by a partner non-profit organization, The Tom Karlin Foundation. Attendees reviewed the teens' strategic objectives, initiatives and proposed tactics and cast votes on which priorities to focus on in a dot-mocracy format.

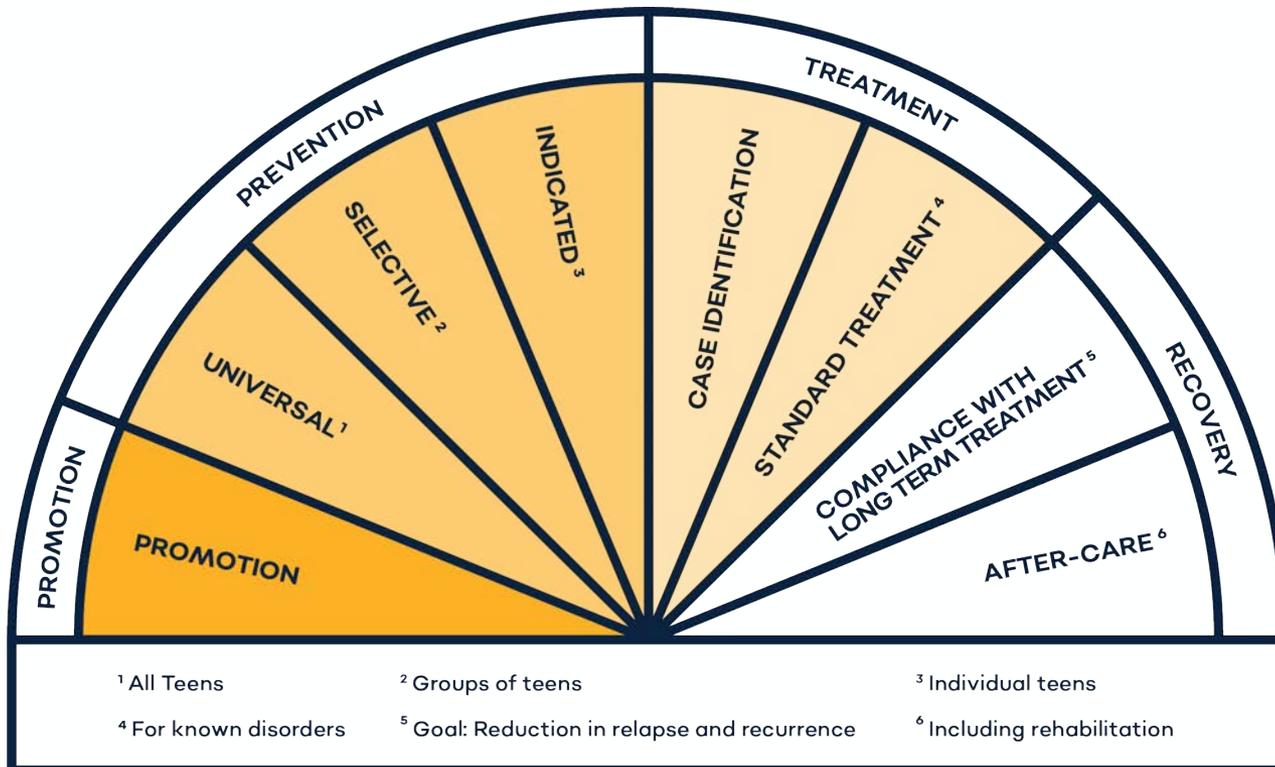
### ABOUT OUR STRATEGY

The student-led campaign is intended to drive “peer-to-peer” conversations and pull the community together toward common strategic initiatives and tactics.

By investing in the three strategic pillars – Remove the Stigma, Build Community Support and Commit to Education – the community is able to identify the most impactful actions they can individually and collectively take to disrupt the rise in teen suicides.

### ABOUT OUR GOAL

Strategies are focused around addressing the community’s mental health continuum of care across four areas: promotion, prevention, treatment and recovery. The adapted continuum of care graphic below identifies multiple areas for addressing mental health needs in a community. Every stakeholder in a community fits somewhere along the continuum of care.



#### REMOVE THE STIGMA

##### INITIATIVES

- Recognize different kinds of stigma
- Address the importance of words
- Confront the stigma
- Mental health is for everyone

##### TOP TEEN TACTICS

- Implement teen-to-teen programs
- Publicize/sign-up for daily positivity texts
- Develop parent training

#### BUILD COMMUNITY SUPPORT

##### INITIATIVES

- Help people feel they belong
- Community peer-to-peer support
- Community-wide teen check-ins
- Standardized best practices

##### TOP TEEN TACTICS

- Annual teen mental wellness “physicals”
- Establish parent mental health groups
- Create entry/re-entry support program

#### COMMIT TO EDUCATION

##### INITIATIVES

- Early formal education
- Best practice, teen-led programs
- Make learning more interactive
- Formalize teen voice

##### TOP TEEN TACTICS

- Begin mental health education alongside physical health education
- Establish student-to-student education and involve mentors
- Establish mental wellness “coaches” with teen input

# # ZERO REASONS WHY

## STRATEGY MAP



### REMOVE THE STIGMA

Eliminate the stigma associated with suicide and open the dialogue for real change.



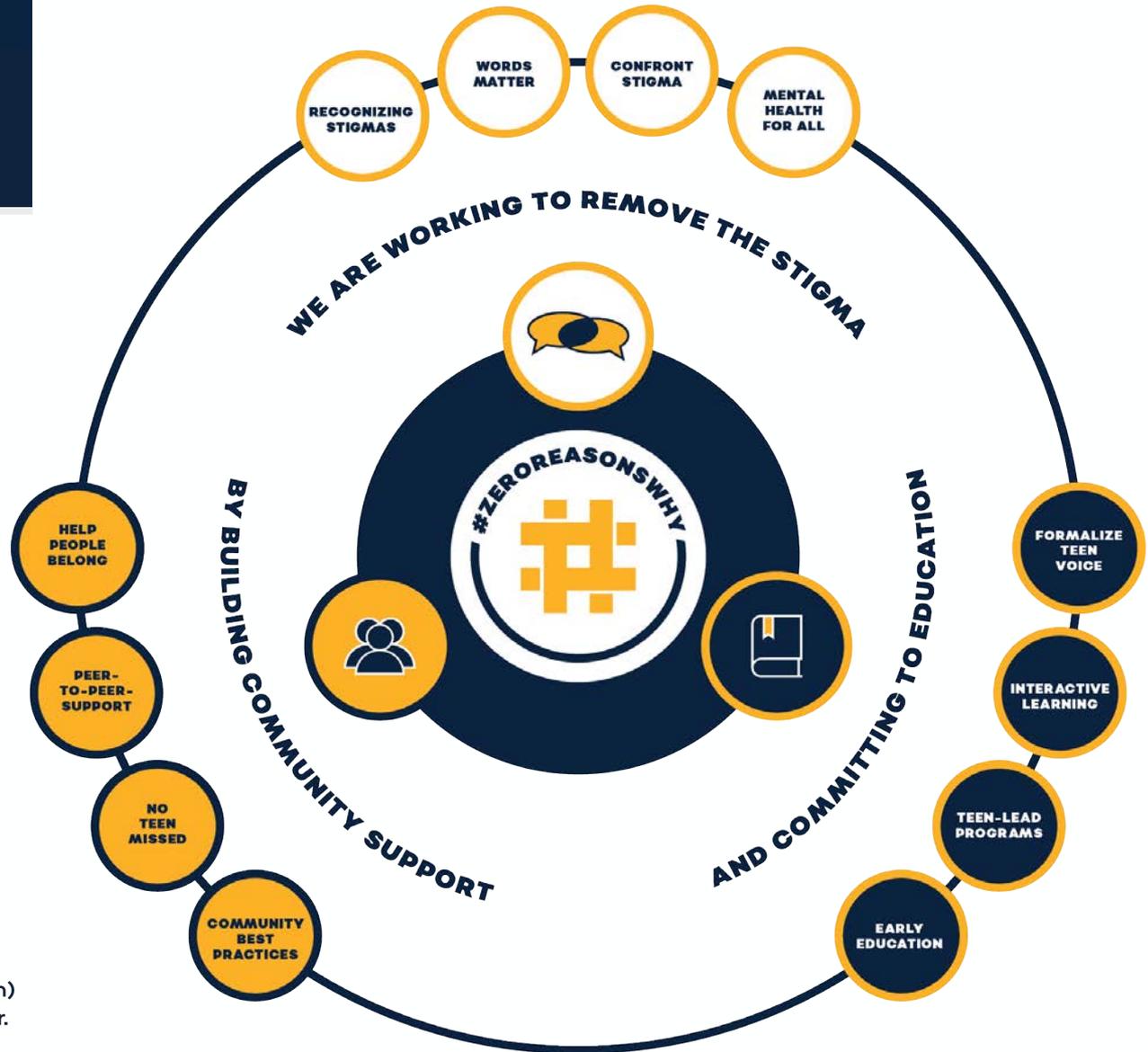
### BUILD COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Bring the community closer to spur unconditional support without judgement.



### COMMIT TO EDUCATION

Improve/implement mental health (and suicide prevention) education consistently/earlier.





# Remove the Stigma: Initiatives & Tactics

*Eliminate the stigma associated with suicide and open the dialogue for real change.*

## INITIATIVES

- Recognize the different kinds of stigma
- Address the importance of every word
- Confront the stigma
- Mental health is for all of us

## TOP TEEN TACTICS

- Implement Teen-to-Teen programs
  - PALS, Yellow Ribbon, First Aid
- Publicize and sign-up for daily positivity texts
  - Shine, NeuroGym, The Brain Break, #ZeroReasonsWhy-specific content
- Parent training
  - “You’re not a bad parent” – educate them to just talk with their kids

## OTHER TACTICS

- Implement School-Based Programs for Teens
  - Sources of Strength, Signs of Suicide



**“We need to stop this, ‘If you talk about it, it will happen’ type of thinking.”**

Drew Langston, Teen Council Member



# Build Community Support: Initiatives & Tactics

*Bring the community together to spur unconditional support without judgement.*

## INITIATIVES

- Help people feel they belong
- Create community peer-to-peer support
- No teen missed: community-wide check-in
- Community-wide standardized best practices

## TOP TEEN TACTICS

- Annual mental wellness “physicals” for teens
  - Should be no different than a physical “physical”
- Establish parent mental health groups
  - Educate parents to stop judging each other, develop a resource center for parents
- Create entry/re-entry support programs
  - i.e. When a teen comes home from in-patient mental health care



**“The approach and support for mental health should be equal to physical health.”**

Rory Swenson, Teen Council Member



## Build Community Support: Additional Tactics

*Bring the community together to spur unconditional support without judgement.*

### OTHER TACTICS

- Create a text line or mobile app for teens in crisis
- Create regional telepsychiatry resource
  - AV, web-based, or text resource
- Embed mental health professionals in all schools
  - Ensure access to mental health professionals in schools to help teens in crisis
  - Implement counselor sessions more often in schools



**“Accessibility  
should be a  
priority. Meet  
teens where they  
are.”**

Courtney Costain, Teen Council Member



# Commit to Education: Initiatives & Tactics

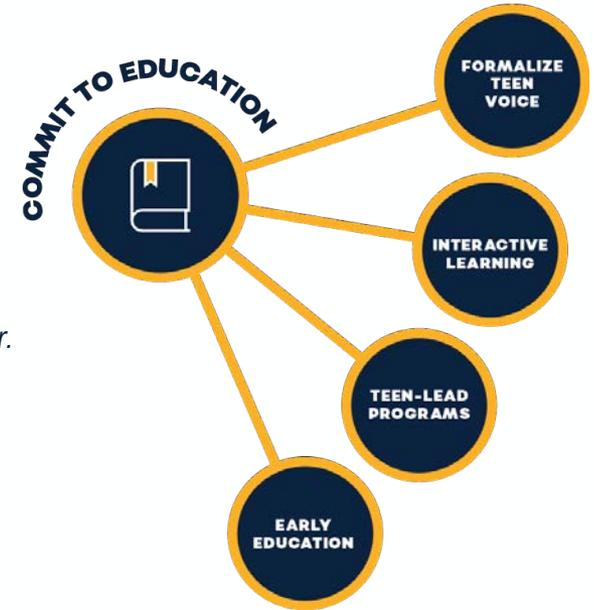
*Improve and implement mental health and suicide prevention education consistently and earlier.*

## INITIATIVES

- Early formal education
- Best practices, teen-led programs
- Make learning more interactive
- Formalize teen voice

## TOP TEEN TACTICS

- Start mental health education with physical health education
- Establish student-to-student education and involve mentors
  - i.e. buddy system with upperclassmen mentors, creating teen-produced videos, fostering in person dialogue, high school broadcast classes and peer-to-peer training
- Collaboration between social workers and students to increase engagement and identify mental wellness “coaches” for students
- Integrate mental wellness messages, along with education and training, into existing school periods



**“Students feel accountable and responsible for their friends. We need training just like CPR.”**

Abby Hoepner, Teen Council Member

## Highlight: Reverse Hacks

### Student & Parent Reverse Hacks

Reverse Hacks are opportunities for stakeholder voices to be heard during the campaign ideation process. At the beginning of #ZeroReasonsWhy, Reverse Hacks were held around the county to give students and parents the ability to voice their perspectives, challenges and opinions as the campaign structure and strategy was being created. These events provided valuable forums for identifying initial reactions, gathering feedback and identifying areas the community felt should be addressed.

A Reverse Hack is best organized by audience type – hosting separate events for teens, parents, educators and health professionals, for example. By hosting separate events for each group of key stakeholders, participants will likely share a common perspective or will have relatable experiences to help further discussion. They can ideate potential solutions to help solve their specific group’s pain points. The biggest issue for a teen struggling with mental health would likely differ from what a parent or educator would identify as their biggest challenge.

On page 62 of this playbook, more detail is provided about the key pieces of feedback, common statements and main storylines for four stakeholder groups in this campaign, later defined as audience types. This feedback was a result of hosting events like Reverse Hacks or talking one-on-one with community members as the campaign began.



## Resource: Hosting a Reverse Hack

### Reverse Hack How-To

1. Research the issue and share facts from credible sources to establish the need for a solution.
2. Learn what other potential solutions have already been implemented, especially in your own community.
3. Encourage unique ideas to spur conversation and change – chances are, what has already been done might not be working if the problem persists.

4. Separate the group into smaller table discussion groups to work together.

5. Each table group should identify a problem or key pain point inside the greater issue and discuss potential solutions to the problem.

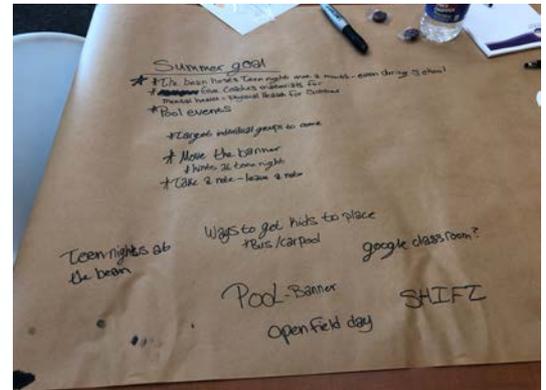
6. Groups should respectfully debate the merits of multiple solutions before focusing on one unified solution as a small group.

7. Brand your solution, providing a creative name for your solution or your team.

8. Practice a 3-minute pitch as a group, setting up the problem and proposed solution. Include every member of the group in some way.

9. Present your pitch to the larger group for feedback.

10. Allow time for questions and discussion at the end of the event.



## Highlight: Let's Connect Symposium

### Community Symposium

The #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign partnered with a mental health foundation, started by local parents after the loss of their son. The Tom Karlin Foundation partnered with #ZeroReasonsWhy for an annual Let's Connect Symposium. The Tom Karlin Foundation seeks to improve the quality of teens' lives and reduce teen suicides through education and awareness. At the 2019 symposium, teens, parents, educators, health professionals, civic leaders and community advocates came together to discuss mental health and suicide prevention efforts in the community.

The symposium was the first in-depth presentation of the #ZeroReasonsWhy strategic pillars proposed by the Teen Council, which were validated by the community's response to the proposed strategies.

Event attendees viewed the campaign strategies displayed on the wall. Then, they participated in a "dot-mocracy" format vote to determine which tactics should be prioritized moving forward in the campaign. They also identified which strategy pillar they most identified with and what tactics or initiatives they or their organizations could help the teens accomplish.

The symposium featured panel discussions throughout the day, with many teen voices represented. Attendees interacted by texting questions to the panel to spur additional dialogue and increase community support.



## Resource: Strategy Creation Exercise

### Create a Community Plan

The following pages contain strategy mapping worksheets to form and implement tactics and initiatives for each campaign pillar.

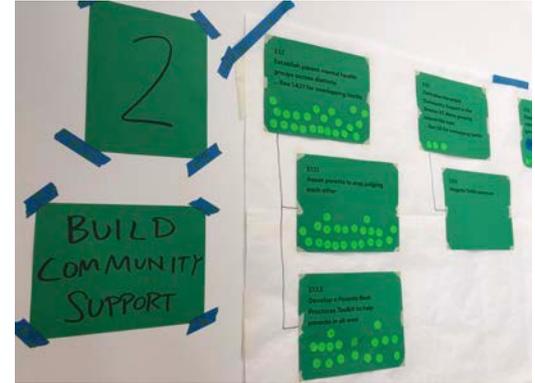
By keeping the three pillars consistent with the #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign and voting on specific actionable steps underneath each pillar, a community's strategy can be quickly activated.

Use the strategy map worksheets on the following pages to gather feedback from key stakeholders and formulate specific tactics and initiatives in your community plan.

Follow these steps:

1. Gather the Mental Health Convening Group, Teen Council and Student Ambassadors.
2. Provide participants with all three worksheets.
3. Ask the group to read all proposed initiatives and indicate their top choices.
4. Tally the votes to create your campaign's strategy.

*(Note: the original tallies from the 2019 Let's Connect Symposium are noted in parentheses on the following pages as a reference)*





## REMOVE THE STIGMA

Eliminate the stigma associated with suicide & open the dialogue for real change.

### INITIATIVES

**1.1 Recognize different stigmas**

**1.2 Emphasize words matter**

**1.3 Confront the stigma**

**1.4 Mental health is for all of us**

### TACTICS

- 1.1.1 Identify ALL the stigmas and document / share with / educate the whole community about them (19)
      - Parent-to-Parent Stigma (You're a bad parent. You don't pay attention to/ love your kids.)
      - Peer-to-Peer Stigma (You're crazy/ dangerous. You're failing/ attention seeking/ overreacting.)
      - Self-Stigma (I'm crazy/ mean/ alone/ ashamed/ embarrassed/ defective. I don't want to take pills.)
    - 1.2.1 Publicize and sign-up for daily positivity texts (Shine, NeuroGym, The Brain Break) (3)
    - 1.2.2 Establish more local projects: Kindness Rocks and community ambassadors (7)
  - 1.3.1 Ensure the widespread use of the centralized Community Mobilization Portal to keep all on same page. See 2.2.1 for overlapping tactic. (4)
    - 1.3.2 Research, analyze, and curate comprehensive lists/ databases of Mental Health Education and Training Programs within the Portal (share data on costs, timing, audience, setting, links, and testimonials) (4):
      - 1.3.2.1 Implement Teen-to-Teen programs (PALS, Yellow Ribbon, First Aid) (29)
      - 1.3.2.2 Implement Adult-to-Student programs (Yellow Ribbon, ASIST, First Aid) (9)
      - 1.3.2.3 Implement Adult-to-Adult programs and provide more information on adult support groups
    - 1.3.2.3.1 Parent training: "You're not a bad parent" – just talk to your kids (25)
    - 1.3.2.3.2 Coaches training: Coaching w/ Courage – No more "get tough" mentality (8)
    - 1.3.2.4 Implement School-Based Programs for Teens (Sources of Strength, Signs of Suicide). See 3.1.1 and 3.3.3 for overlapping tactic. (5)
    - 1.3.3 Saturate school districts and community to get everyone on board with this topic; ensure peer-to-peer learning happens among everyone who has regular contact with kids/ teens: (13)
      - 1.3.3.1 Script and produce a series of realistic role-playing videos/ live trainings/ practice interactions that can be posted via Facebook and/ or shared with Teens, Parents, and Teachers at school events and in presentations and small-group interactions: (14)
        - 1.3.3.1.1 Teen-to-Teen (10)
        - 1.3.3.1.2 Parent-to-Teen
        - 1.3.3.1.3 Parent-to-Parent (1)
          - 1.3.3.1.4 Educator or Admin/ School Adult-to-Teen (i.e. Counselor/ Coach/ Band Director/ Art Teacher/ Custodian/ Lunch Attendant/ Office Staff/ Nurse/ Bus Driver) (2)
      - 1.4.1 Identify/ create and document/ share about more orgs that support adults with stress/ pressure. (7)
        - 1.4.1.1 Parents (i.e. BV Well, parent resource center) See 1.3.2.3 and 2.1.1 for overlapping tactics. (4)
        - 1.4.1.2 Teachers (4)
        - 1.4.1.3 Survivors (1)
      - 1.4.2 Develop new school-wide efforts ... See 1.2.1 and 3.2.2 for overlapping tactics:
        - 1.4.2.1 During 1st hour, every student writes 3 things they're grateful for/ excited about (2)
        - 1.4.2.2 "Don't Worry, Be Happy, or Cope-cake" events help teens w/ coping strategies (1)



## REMOVE THE STIGMA

Eliminate the stigma associated with suicide & open the dialogue for real change.

### INITIATIVES

1.1 Recognize different stigmas

1.2 Emphasize words matter

1.3 Confront the stigma

1.4 Mental health is for all of us

### TOP TACTICS

_____	_____	_____	_____
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## BUILD COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Bring the community closer to spur unconditional support without judgement

### INITIATIVES

**2.1 Help people feel they belong**

**2.2 Create community peer-to-peer support**

**2.3 No teen missed: community-wide check-ins**

**2.4 Community-wide standardized, best practices**

### TACTICS

- |  |  |   |  |   |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ 2.1.1 Establish parent mental health groups in all districts. See 1.3.2.3 and 1.4.1.1 for overlapping tactics (24)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ 2.1.1.1 Assist parents to stop judging each other (22)</li> <li>❑ 2.1.1.2 Develop a Parents Best Practices Toolkit/ Resource Center to help parents (i.e. library?) (17)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ 2.2.1 Identify and centralize the ample Community Support among all groups working on these issues in the Greater Kansas City Metropolitan Area. See 1.3.1 for overlapping tactic.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ 2.2.1.1 Integrate/ make available resources (i.e. TASN, JoCo Juvenile Cross-System Collaboration)</li> <li>❑ 2.2.1.2 Create appropriate/ timely referral network with availability based on assessments (i.e. IRIS) (2)</li> </ul> </li> <li>❑ 2.2.2 Support Churches in their collaborative efforts that are growing around this topic. See 1.3.1 and 2.2.1 for overlapping tactics. (12)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ 2.3.1 Constant community-wide check-ins to help teens handle emotions and anxiety (Every interaction with a teen is an opportunity to check-in with a teen; See something, say something) (13)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ 2.3.1.1 Teens get mental wellness “physical” annually just as they get physical “physical” (33)</li> <li>❑ 2.3.1.2 Develop system of child-to-teen-to-adult transition of medical providers and encourage “private” discussions of mental health concerns to assess (1)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ 2.4.1 Improve data/ visibility of attempts/ suicides (5)</li> <li>❑ 2.4.2 Implement expanded crisis response teams and co-responder programs (7)</li> <li>❑ 2.4.3 Create a Teens in Crisis Text Line / App. See 2.4.9 for overlapping tactic. (14)</li> <li>❑ 2.4.4 Identify how / where and document / share “the mental health system is broken” (access to care) (16)</li> <li>❑ 2.4.5 Create entry/ re-entry support program (i.e. when a teen comes home from in-patient care) (36)</li> <li>❑ 2.4.6 Train parents on social and emotional skills and learn what their kids are learning (i.e. resource center). See 1.3.2.3 and 2.1.1 for overlapping tactics. (8)</li> <li>❑ 2.4.7 Expand effort deeply into the community and meet kids where they are: go to physical locations like malls,</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>gyms, pools, nail/hair salons and barbershops, other retail outlets; be on social media (i.e. Snapchat) (1)</li> <li>❑ 2.4.8 Reach out to leadership connected with communities of color (1)</li> <li>❑ 2.4.9 Create regional Telepsychiatry resource (AV/ web-based) ... Text). See 2.4.3 for overlapping tactic. (2)</li> <li>❑ 2.4.10 Embed mental health professionals in all schools in the community             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ 2.4.10.1 Ensure there are mental health professionals in schools who are trained to help teens in crisis</li> <li>❑ 2.4.10.2 Implement counselor sessions more often at all schools</li> </ul> </li> <li>❑ 2.4.11 Establish better communications across all school districts and jurisdictions in the community.</li> </ul> |
|--|--|---|--|---|



## BUILD COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Bring the community closer to spur unconditional support without judgement

### INITIATIVES

2.1 Help people feel they belong

2.2 Create community peer-to-peer support

2.3 No teen missed: community-wide check-ins

2.4 Community-wide standardized, best practices

### TOP TACTICS

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## COMMIT TO EDUCATION

Improve and implement mental health and suicide prevention education consistently and earlier.

### INITIATIVES

#### 3.1 Early formal education

#### 3.2 Best practice, teen-led programs

#### 3.3 Make learning more interactive

#### 3.4 Formalize teen voice

### TACTICS

- 3.1.1.1 Identify and implement School-Based Programs for elementary school kids (18)
    - 3.1.1.2 Identify and implement School-Based Programs for middle school kids (22)
    - 3.1.1.3 Identify and implement School-Based Programs for high school kids (after-school/ summer too)
  - 3.1.2 Collect data regularly/ standardize assessments across all districts See 3.4.8 for overlapping tactic. (3)
  - 3.2.1 Implement First Aid programs led by students (Yellow Ribbon, ASIST). See 1.3.2.1 for overlapping tactic. (14)
- 3.2.2 Integrate mental wellness messages/ education into existing periods (i.e. Gym, Homeroom, etc.) (22)
  - 3.2.3 Establish Student-to-Student Education that could involve mentors (i.e. Juniors, Seniors) (23)
      - 3.2.3.1 Create teen-produced videos. See 1.3.3.1.1 for overlapping tactic. (14)
      - 3.2.3.2 Foster teen-led convos (3)
      - 3.2.3.3 Create teen-scripted templates for high school broadcast classes (3)
      - 3.2.3.4 Create peer-to-peer education and training (HS students present to peers, middle and elementary students) (8)
      - 3.2.3.5 Start a campaign to promote time for face-to-face connection and periods of time committed to not being alone (1)
- 3.2.3.6 Create/ expand comprehensive school programs from K-12 that involve students/ schools/ community in educating students on mental health (4)
  - 3.3.1 No more assemblies; convene breakouts / small group discussions instead (25)
  - 3.3.2 Create one-stop online resource (on school websites?) to connect to Health Professionals (2-1-1 United Way, IRIS, My Resource Connection, the Portal, or other) (11)
  - 3.3.3 Create education for building resilience/ understanding stressful situations are solvable. Message: "We have community to help us through hardship." See 1.3.2.4 and 3.1.1. for overlapping tactics. (8)
  - 3.3.4 Support and promote Youth "Life" Coach program to bridge the gap between parenting, teaching, and therapy (2)
- 3.4.1 Make Social Workers and Mental Wellness "Coaches" (Teachers and Administration with natural connections to kids) work closer with teens/ student ambassadors to increase visibility (14)
    - 3.4.1.1 Identify and provide any training and resources needed for Mental Wellness "Coaches" (16)
  - 3.4.2 (TIME) Make educators shadow teens as students for 1 day/ year (at another school) (1)
  - 3.4.3 Ensure teen voice continues to be heard throughout the day (9)
  - 3.4.4 Teens inform Parent Education provided, so parents do better/ are more comfortable talking w/ teens (12)
  - 3.4.5 Teens request Parent Orientations include mental health information and are mandatory (16)
- 3.4.6 Teens request Parent-Teacher Conferences adjusted to include mental health information (10)
  - 3.4.7 Teens inform Teachers, so teachers do better/ are more comfortable talking with teens (23)
  - 3.4.8 Conduct teen Mental Health Assessments: captive/ opportune times. See 3.1.2 for overlapping tactic. (14)
    - 3.4.8.1 Concussion Protocol (5)
    - 3.4.8.2 Athlete Physical Form (5)
    - 3.4.8.3 Incoming 6th Grader Events (19)
    - 3.4.8.4 Incoming 9th Grader Events (16)
    - 3.4.8.5 Regular Back to School Nights (5)
  - 3.4.9 Develop a School Best Practices Toolkit (15)



## COMMIT TO EDUCATION

Improve and implement mental health and suicide prevention education consistently and earlier.

### INITIATIVES

3.1 Early formal education

3.2 Best practice, teen-led programs

3.3 Make learning more interactive

3.4 Formalize teen voice

### TOP TACTICS

_____	_____	_____	_____
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# AVERY

UNITED SCHOOL DISTRICT 232

“We’ve always been told to be nice to other people, but no one ever taught us to be nice to ourselves. We put so much blame on ourselves and we don’t know how to train our thoughts to not listen when those negative things come up.

Feed the positive things, take control of your mind. Even being aware that there is negative self talk because we’re always in our heads. When we’re not being consciously aware of what thoughts we’re feeding, it becomes a really toxic place to live and nobody knows what’s going on up there. It’s okay to feel things that are not always happy and successful. It’s okay to fail. Give yourself the time that you would give to a friend if they were struggling. We don’t give that to ourselves. But to get better and to heal, you have to be kind and give yourself the love.

There are #ZeroReasonsWhy I can’t make my mind a home instead of something toxic.”



“Great message, Avery!”



““You are making a difference, Avery. Great piece of reflection and wisdom.”



“Very beautifully said. ❤️”



## CALVIN

BLUE VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

“My biggest challenge was stress and anxiety, especially freshman and sophomore year. You kind of feel like you’re just thrown into a bunch of really difficult classes. I didn’t really have any good strategies for maintaining that stress.

In my gifted class this year, the teacher has been really good about doing mindfulness in class. We do it almost every day. That’s really helped me control my stress this year, and especially last year. I try to meditate most days and take time to put things in perspective and realize that whatever test seems like the end all be all that day really won’t matter in two weeks. A lot of students say their junior year is their most stressful year, but once I picked up mindfulness, I found that junior year was probably my best and least stressed. Even though I had the most going on, I had the strategy to put it in perspective which really helped me. Meditation has worked for me, but the most successful people in high school are ones who’ve identified a strategy that works for them.

There are #ZeroReasonsWhy you can’t find your strategy.”



“Good for you for putting those skills in place and utilizing them to benefit you. You will use them the rest of your life.”



“Sharing your story will undoubtedly help other people identify their own anxiety-reducing strategies.”

## COACH FEEDBACK

SPRING HILL SCHOOL DISTRICT

“One of the worst things as an educator and coach you can ever go through is sitting through your kid's funeral. And I've been to too many of them. I'm trying to be more proactive, trying to make sure that we're building real relationships with kids and relationships that aren't built on production. I think that's important, because so often they base their value on how well they play sports. I've been there myself as a college athlete and if it was a bad day lifting, it was a bad day overall. It's just a mindset you can get caught into.

I think the most important thing is just loving kids, enjoying them, having the tough conversations and being there when they're struggling. They're trying to figure out life and they don't have the coping skills to get through some things yet just because they lack those experiences. I think the most important thing is trying to be that family and giving them a place where they can feel comfortable to be themselves.

Mistakes are going to happen. Your value isn't based on your performance. Enjoy your activities, go have fun, get involved and build those relationships.”

“That's my coach!!!”



“I don't know this coach but sure wish my boys could have had him.”



“Great perspective & wisdom! Can you get your message to all the local high school coaches please?”



# Story

## EDEN

BLUE VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

"I've struggled a lot with like mental health and stuff, but something that makes me feel really good is helping other people and feeling like I'm changing the narrative. I'm trying to end these bad cycles, at least with myself, and focus on positive things. So how can we change things for the future and not keep going down this road?"

I run this account called Humans of Blue Valley North. The goal of that account is to make social media more authentic and also bring our community together through stories.

People can kind of get to know each other and realize we all have things we're passionate about. Everybody has something really interesting about them and everybody has something to say. It's a platform where we can all do that in a nonjudgmental way. It's making me feel like I'm creating a difference."



"You make me happy. Well done. Can't wait to see where your brain and talents take you next."



"I love this -- bringing the community together through stories! You are so thoughtful, Eden!"

“Everyone is worth more than anything you could ever put a price on.”

— MORGAN, GARDNER EDGERTON



BEING GRATEFUL IS THE GATEWAY TO AWESOMENESS.

— JANIE, SHAWNEE MISSION



THE SMALLEST ACTS OF KINDNESS CAN GO SO FAR FOR SOMEBODY.

BELLA, MILL VALLEY



YOU'RE NOT DEFINED BY NUMBERS

WILLIAM, OLATHE



The tunnel seems really long but if you keep digging and keep walking there will be a light at the end.

HANNAH, SPRING HILL



What if you took 5 minutes out of your day to say, ‘Hey, I’m thinking about you. You’re safe. You’re okay. And I’m here to help with anything you need.’

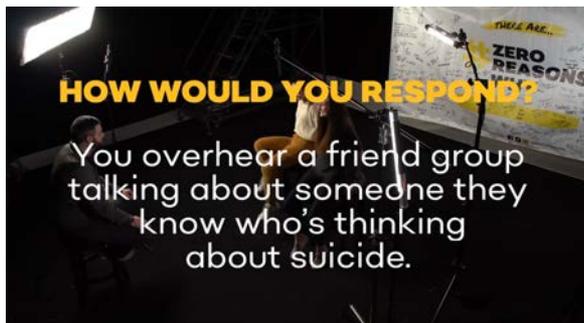
KENNEDY, SPRING HILL





# **Story Campaign**

# Story Campaign



The story campaign focuses on creating engaging content with an underlying educational purpose to build empathy and remove stigma.

The #ZeroReasonsWhy story campaign produces and distributes multimedia content to instigate peer-to-peer conversations among teens, parents, educators and health professionals.

Audience voices are categorized in two ways: teens and adults. Teen stories transcend beyond their peer group and are instigative and valuable across all audiences. The content authentically represents teen voice and provides adults with a reference when considering necessary action.

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

Pooja Jain, Teen Council Member

In many cases, conversations instigated after hearing a teen’s story led adults to consider changes within existing programs and services. As a result, videos or posts featuring teens were often used in persuasive presentations with educators and health professionals advocating for change within their organizations.

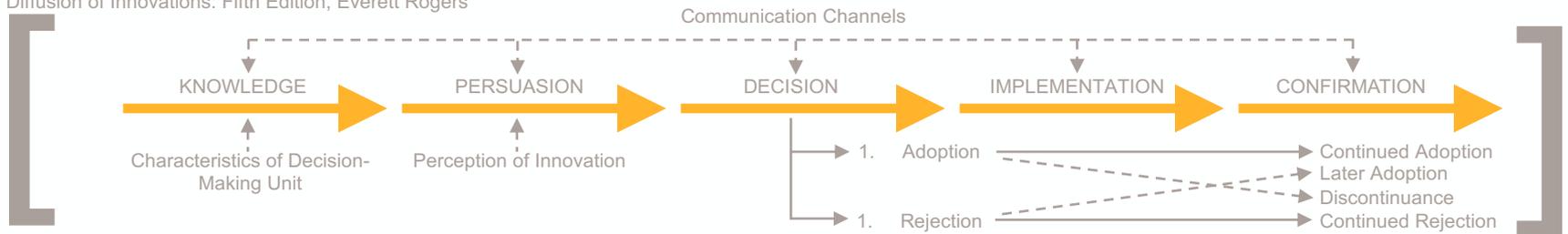
# Packaging Influence: Story, Content & Delivery

## Get Ideas Adopted

In creating the story campaign approach, Overflow’s goal was to accelerate the adoption of ideas surrounding mental health and suicide prevention. The approach involved a sociological view in designing what it would take to move large groups of people toward change within an existing social system. The process of change is defined by moving people through the five stages of the innovation-decision process as reflected in the graphic below.

Rather than focus on only the production of public service announcements or similar media, Overflow designed an approach to comprehensively package influence in a story campaign, based on the teen council strategic plan with proposed delivery methods to meet the audience where they are.

FIVE STAGE INNOVATION-DECISION MODEL  
Diffusion of Innovations: Fifth Edition, Everett Rogers



### STORY

Ideas, opinions and stories from teens, parents, educators and health professionals. Intended to address the strategic plan’s intentions, obstacles and desired outcomes.

### CONTENT

Engaging and consistent content that furthers the community plan through video story trailers, vignettes, photojournalism and quotes from all audience perspectives.

### DELIVERY

Mediums of delivery to meet the audience where they are in visual, verbal or written formats. Delivery methods are tailored to various content types and audiences.

# Story: Audience Storylines

## Perception is Reality

A story happens in the mind of the receiver. Your story, and how you interpret others' stories, is based on your unique prior experiences and knowledge. It is how you connect the dots and interpret the world.

Below are some of the main themes and storylines heard across the county from each audience. These were the foundational topics used to accelerate peer-to-peer conversations in each audience group.

### TEENS

I feel responsible for my friend.

These feelings started in middle school.

Why is everyone afraid to talk openly about it?

I hate when friends do badly on a test and joke, "I'm going to kill myself."

What is the most I can say without notification to my parents?

### PARENTS

I feel like I failed.

How did I miss it?

My child doesn't have an issue.

Toughen up and figure it out.

Don't put ideas in my child's head.

I don't want anyone to know.

It wasn't suicide, it was an overdose.

### EDUCATORS

I feel helpless.

I need more time to really listen to students.

Learning should be second to good mental health.

We need support outside of the school building.

How can we help students with everything they carry with them into the classroom?

### HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

We want to help, but we need more access to students.

Teens have a great deal of exposure and knowledge about suicide and are utilizing more lethal means.

There is a lot of work going on, but it's in silos.

While there is a lack of resources, there is also a lack of teens accessing available resources directly.

## Content: Strategic Communication

### Something for Everyone

Original content produced by #ZeroReasonsWhy is intended to further the community plan and strategic pillars of the campaign: reduce the stigma, build community support and commit to education. Using a variety of content types and delivery mechanisms, the story campaign highlights perspectives and furthers the conversation across all four audience types and within each of the three strategic pillars.

#### PHOTOJOURNALISM

Personal stories representing various perspectives. These are recorded, transcribed and paired with a photograph of the person. These are stories of hope, support, struggle, personal experience and overall mental wellness. Participants often finish the sentence, “There are #ZeroReasonsWhy \_\_\_\_\_.”



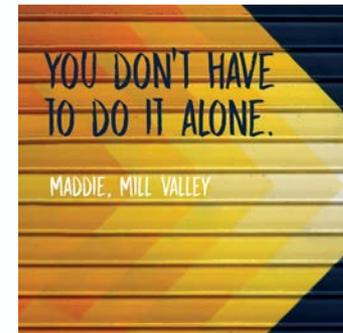
#### VIGNETTE VIDEOS

Short video content featuring individual voices, intended to powerfully spread #ZeroReasonsWhy messaging with brevity and “share-ability.” Video has proven to be the most interacted with content type across social media platforms and provides a personal connection between the subject and the viewer.



#### QUOTE GRAPHICS

Using content gathered during the photojournalism or video filming processes, impactful pull-quotes were designed into shareable graphics for social media. Pulling one short and powerful quote appeals to the short online attention span and allows for something visually on-brand to be easily shared amongst peers.



## Content: Strategic Communication

### SIGNATURE STORY TRAILERS

These videos are public “campaign anthem” videos – cinematic and emotive productions distributed widely to support community mobilization efforts. The audience for this high-level content is broad and is aimed at reaching both key audiences and the community who may not have interacted with the campaign in the past.



### COMMUNITY FEATURES

Videos that feature adult voices in the community who care about the topic – including mental health professionals, school counselors or mental health focused non-profit organizations. These are often aimed at educating and equipping various audiences with strategies or tactics connected to the campaign’s priorities.



### EVENT REPORTING

A campaign field journalist attends many events in the community and documents with photography, videography or both. Sharing community events in advance and recapping events after they have occurred shows community mobilization efforts across the region and helps further the initiatives of others working in the space in the community.



## Delivery: Visual, Verbal & Written

### Meet the Audience Where They Are

Delivery mechanisms for the campaign's messaging varied based on need. For most audiences and content types, visual content distributed on social media was effective to reduce the stigma of mental health and bring it to the forefront. For other audiences, interpersonal verbal communication helped reduce stigma and gain community support. Other groups responded well to written articles or resources to further educate audiences on the topic.

#### VISUAL

Non-verbal communication including photography, videography, graphics, drawings, emojis and campaign collateral such as shirts, bracelets, stickers and signs.



#### VERBAL

Spoken language in interpersonal conversations, video interviews, audio podcasts, in-person presentations, music or television and radio news coverage.



#### WRITTEN

Handwritten letters, text messages, electronic articles, educational resources, word-only social media posts, digital group chat and other communication via written language.

By talking about it, it doesn't mean that someone is going to get the idea in their head. It helps them get educated.

— ABBIE, OLATHE



## Highlight: Story Days

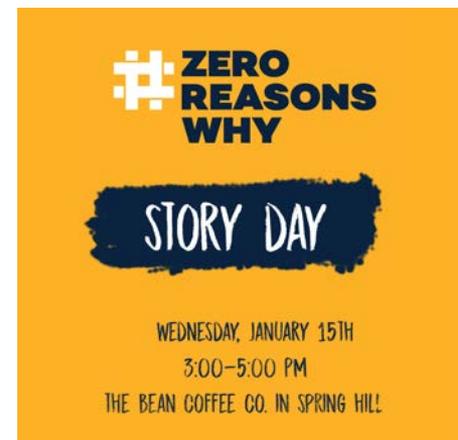
### Community Story Days

These events furthered the efforts of all three strategic pillars:

1. Having open conversations in a public setting helped **reduce the stigma** surrounding mental health.
2. Involving local businesses to host the events increased **community support**.
3. Providing resources from the Community Mental Health Center offered **education** to participants or interested community members.

Community Story Days were an opportunity to gather unique content for the story campaign while accomplishing additional goals of the campaign. Gathering personal stories of various stakeholders was also done one-on-one, but hosting a community story day was a way to bring broader visibility to the topic, foster community support and engage a broader audience of people who wanted to participate in the campaign. Stories were gathered in either a photojournalism format, pairing interview text with a photograph, or as video content with an on-camera interview.

Community Story Days were hosted around the region in coffee shops, public locations or businesses. Participants were invited to meet with the campaign team and Teen Council representatives to share their perspectives, which were later shared publicly through social media or other outlets. The events also included mental health resources and representatives from the Community Mental Health Center.



## Resource: Hosting a Story Day

### Story Day Best Practices

Having community support and participating is key to the success of the #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign. By hosting community-based Story Days, the campaign provides a public place outside of school hours for teens to share their stories, as well as an opportunity for community members to lend their voices to the campaign or hear about the movement for the first time.

Typically, a campaign field journalist, a Teen Council or Student Ambassador and a mental health professional attend each Story Day.

Steps for a successful Story Day:

1. Recruit a well-known, easily accessible business to host the event. Local business owners are eager to be a part of the movement – give them something tangible they can do to help. It also brings patrons into their business.
2. Promote the event beforehand on social media, through the schools nearest the location and the business itself. Make personal invitations when necessary or ask teen campaign members to invite friends.
3. Use the time to gather quick thoughts from anyone who wants to share their story and educate participants about the campaign pillars and other upcoming activities.
4. Pass out free campaign materials like yard signs or wristbands.
5. Have a mental health professional available with resources and for further conversation with attendees.



## Resource: Storytelling in Schools

### School Participation

#ZeroReasonsWhy stories can be gathered in a variety of locations in the community. One of the most successful ways is to work with school communications professionals to gain access to each high school.

While teen suicide prevention should be a community-wide effort, teens are at school a majority of their time. Focusing storytelling efforts inside schools helps provide a safe space for students to participate in the campaign by sharing their story and allows for school support and follow-up if an issue arises.

1. Discuss district protocol for school clearance.
2. Establish school district policies for reporting any concerns or initiating follow-up practices with students who may express a mental health need during the story gathering effort.
3. Identify contacts for each school building (i.e. social workers, principals) who can help identify students who would want to share a story or words of encouragement.
4. Teen Council and Student Ambassadors can be the bridge to peers who are passionate about the topic.
5. Many schools have mental health related clubs. Attend a club meeting to gather their stories or feature their efforts.
6. Featuring educator voices also helps inform teens that adults in their lives care and want to help.



## Resource: Sample Questions

### Start the Conversation

The storytelling effort doesn't have to be complicated. Starting with a few questions to spark conversation and asking follow-up questions based on the answers can lead to great insight and perspective.

Each person sharing their story will approach the topic from their unique perspective and is drawing on their life experiences to inform how they think, feel or assess an issue. Broad questions allow for individuals to tailor their answers to their own perspective and passion for the topic.

1. Why are you passionate about mental health and suicide prevention?
2. If they share a personal story, thank them and ask a follow-up question about their experience.
3. How can we work together to reduce the stigma around mental health?
4. What are some ways we can build community support for teens?
5. How does education play a role in mental health?
6. What encouragement do you have for teens (*or other key audience storylines*) who are struggling?
7. What do you hope for the future of our community as it relates to mental health?



# Resource: Social Media Policies

### Establishing Protocols

As with any personal and sensitive topic, protocols for responding to various situations are necessary. Establishing clear expectations for how potential issues will be addressed is vital. Most importantly, the campaign should involve and seek counsel of mental health professionals in the creation of those policies and appropriate responses both before an issue arises and during any problem in real-time. Having the Community Mental Health Center at the core of the campaign efforts makes this possible.

Social media policies should be established to create a welcoming, positive outlet for stories and education to be shared. Sample policies:

1. All negative comments will be deleted. Include this disclaimer on any social media profile page.
2. List the local crisis line phone number on any social media profiles, since the profile itself will likely not be monitored 24/7.
3. Require all participants in storytelling efforts to sign a release form. If they are a minor, their parent must also consent to their participation.
4. If an issue arises, including negative comments or online actions that are either a mental health concern or that seem derogatory towards others, notify appropriate mental health professionals at the time of the concern.



*\*Note: this document does not constitute legal advice. All information is intended for general purposes only. Consult a professional attorney for assistance in creating legal documents.*

**Photograph & Video Release Form**

I hereby grant permission to the rights of my image, likeness and sound of my voice as recorded on audio or video tape without payment or any other consideration. I understand that my image may be edited, copied, exhibited, published or distributed and waive the right to inspect or approve the finished product wherein my likeness appears. Additionally, I waive any right to royalties or other compensation arising or related to the use of my image or recording. I also understand that this material may be used in diverse educational and professional settings within an unrestricted geographic area.

Photographic, audio or video recordings may be used for the following purposes:

- professional, conference, educational, or informational presentations
- promotional/marketing purposes to raise awareness for #ZeroReasonsWhy and/or Overflow Story Lab

By signing this release, I understand this permission signifies that photographic or video recordings of me may be electronically displayed via the Internet or in the public setting.

I will be consulted about the use of the photographs or video recording for any purpose other than those listed above.

There is no time limit on the validity of this release nor is there any geographic limitation on where these materials may be distributed.

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have completely read and fully understand the above release and agree to be bound thereby. I hereby release any and all claims against any person or organization utilizing this material for educational purposes.

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address/P.O. Box \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Prov/Postal Code/Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

If this release is obtained from a presenter under the age of 19, then the signature of that presenter's parent or legal guardian is also required.

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# ABBY

THERAPIST, ADVENTHEALTH SHAWNEE MISSION

“I actually walked with a close friend who was suicidal for a few years and watching the struggle that she went through battling these thoughts – it’s something way deeper, something you’re battling within that’s really hard to relay how you’re really deeply feeling. It was a very foreign topic for me to learn how to navigate. I learned a lot about the real struggle that goes on in people’s lives, and the importance of having consistent care with professionals and a good therapeutic relationship with that person. It opened my eyes to want to help people. I’m passionate about this field and helping people with mental health.”

Make sure you set boundaries with people that you’re helping. You cannot change their thought process as much as you love this person. Take off your expectation that you are the person that’s going to save that other person. You can be a supportive friend, but you need to be in communication with family, with parents to make sure that there’s some accountability in this person’s thoughts. You’re not doing someone a favor by keeping this secret for them because it’s too much of a burden for one person to hold.”



“Spoken with truth, love, and wisdom.”



“You truly have a gift helping others. Our community is grateful for what you do.”



“Very wise lesson learned and shared.”



## MADELINE

BLUE VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

“I like to define resiliency with the analogy of the palm tree. During a hurricane or a storm, palm trees can bend almost horizontally to the ground. After the storm, they're able to spring back up. Scientists have proven that the trunk of a palm tree is actually stronger after a storm than it was before. I like to think of resiliency as encountering difficult times and then growing from those experiences and becoming stronger — not necessarily reaching a place of complete happiness without struggle, but learning to battle through those struggles and become stronger. I used to think, I can't be resilient because I still struggle with so many things. I still have terrible days. I still get down in the dumps. But then I realized it's not about overcoming those bad days and mental health issues. It's learning to live with them and create something good out of them.

I've also learned through my battle with mental health and high school that one of the most important things you can find is a support system. I think finding a support system is one of the biggest things that you can do when you're working to be resilient because you can't do it alone.”



“Such wisdom! Thank you for living out loud. The world needs you!”



“Thank you for sharing your very wise outlook!”

## ZEN

SHAWNEE MISSION SCHOOL DISTRICT

“I had depression and anxiety. When I was 11 and moved to Kansas City, it was a change for me. It was hard for me to make friends. I did attempt suicide a couple of times and I’m extremely happy that it didn’t work. It’s sad to think that whatever I was going through, I thought suicide would be the answer, but it’s not at all.

A couple of years ago I met my best friend. I’m transgender and he was the one person who helped me through that. I just kept people like that in my life. I learned how to help others, too. I’m president of equality club. Our main goal is to let everyone know that we love you, we’re here for you and you are valid, no matter how you identify, no matter who you like, no matter who you are. Our sponsor is really great. I go to her for everything. It’s good to know that we have teachers and social workers out there who just make me forget that I’m different and forget all those things I thought when I was in middle school. It’s just nice to know there’s someone out there who is willing to learn and understand and listen to you.

There are #ZeroReasonsWhy you can’t be comfortable with who you are.”



“What an amazing best friend you have that didn’t care about anything except you. Soooo glad you are still here to share your story and your journey.”



“Be proud of who you are!! You are unique and special, as we all are.”



## MILES

OLATHE SCHOOL DISTRICT

“It was December and I was already really stressed out with finals. I didn’t know what to expect and we had just taken the PSAT practice and I didn’t get a score that I liked. Then I was afraid other students would make fun of me for getting a bad score. With PSAT score, everybody’s comparing. All of that was just so much stress that I couldn’t handle it.

I posted something on my Instagram, my little message of why I was going to kill myself. And then one person found out, then another person — that just had this big ripple effect and then it was like 45 minutes after I posted it, I had the school call. It had gotten that serious where the school was starting to get involved. I didn’t tell my parents because I thought that they might overreact, which I realized was not true. They were very helpful during the process and they were able to help me. My counselor and my principal, I had to talk with them. They’re very great people. They really know what they’re doing. And I’m glad to say that they have been the reasons why I’ve been able to get my mental health back up and they’ve been a big support, and my friends too. I have so many people to thank for helping me get my mental wellbeing back up.”



“Proud of you for getting the support you needed from family, friends, school professionals, etc. I hope you are proud of yourself, too!”



“So glad you got the support and help that could benefit you Miles! Thanks for sharing!”

I want to be  
someone in my  
school who  
someone can  
talk to.

— GRETCHEN, OLATHE



YOU'RE STILL YOU

FIONA, GARDNER EDGERTON



EVERYONE HAS A STORY

MATT, GARDNER EDGERTON



YOU'RE WORTH SO MUCH...  
YOU REALLY ARE.

ALIVIA, SPRING HILL



Suicide is an uncomfortable  
topic to talk about. The only  
way that we can decrease the  
numbers is making sure that  
there's resources out there for  
people to go get help and we  
have to talk about it.

— LANDRY, MILL VALLEY



Ending the stigma  
starts with leading the  
cause and being like,  
“Hey, I'm willing to talk  
about it, are you?”

— MARIA, SHAWNEE MISSION



The background features a solid yellow color with several overlapping, semi-transparent rectangular shapes in a lighter shade of yellow and orange, creating a layered, abstract geometric pattern.

# **Community Mobilization**

# Mobilizing the County



## **Community mobilization efforts focused on empowering community members to take action toward change.**

The campaign team furthered the strategic initiatives set forth by the Teen Council by facilitating or supporting action plans, programs, events and collaborative outreach efforts that created efficient ways for the community to come together and remove reasons why suicide would be an option for any teen.

The mobilization effort began with meetings with key stakeholders across the county to assess the work already being done, increase collaboration, improve communication, and reduce redundancies or blind spots.

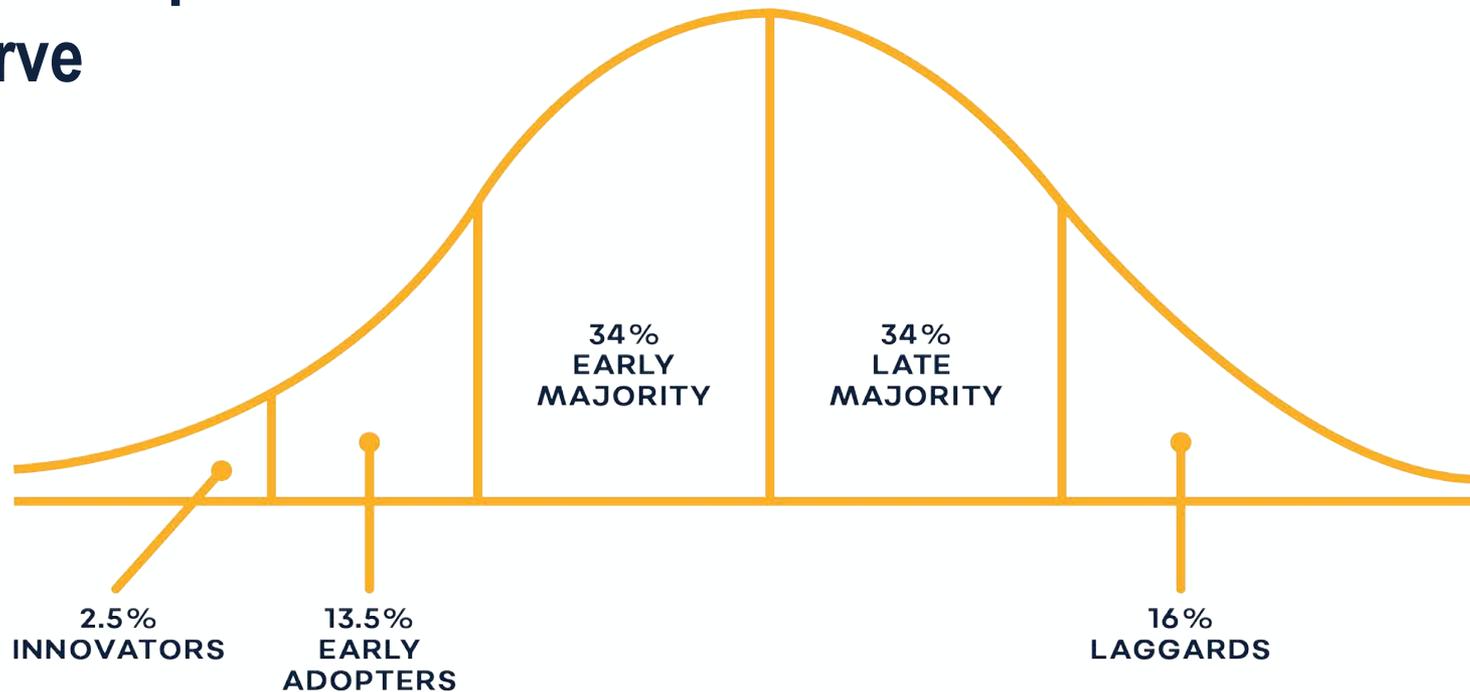
Participation in regular community meetings such as the Johnson County Suicide Prevention Coalition or the Mental Health Convening, as well as community events hosted throughout the county, was helpful in mobilizing the community and generating awareness.

Each event or meeting presented new opportunities for sharing the work of the campaign and finding new partners, and offered chances for additional collaboration, storytelling and resource mapping.

Mobilization of the community began with the initial strategic planning efforts, followed by the tactical implementation, partnership development and grassroots engagement to provide increased impact and greater reach.

Three main categories define mobilization activities: meetings and events, strategic efforts and public relations.

## Idea Adoption Curve



Idea adoption is an individual action, and when an idea is adopted by an individual is directly related to their personal beliefs, not necessarily the organization or movement. Individuals who adopt an idea then influence others to do the same. There are five types of people who adopted #ZeroReasonsWhy at various times across the social system of Johnson County, Kansas. The illustration above shows the idea adoption curve over time.

# Mobilization

## Innovators

Individuals who recognized the problem and took immediate action to explore change. Willing to question organizational standards, eager to prototype and test something new. Innovators of #ZeroReasonsWhy were personally impacted by teen suicide, recognized the increasing numbers and identified the overall need for action.

- Superintendents of Johnson County school districts
- Mental health practitioners (Johnson County Mental Health Center, KidsTLC, AdventHealth, Children's Mercy, Responsive Centers for Psychology and Learning)
- Faith leaders (Church of Resurrection, Jewish Family Services)
- Johnson County District Attorney
- Inaugural Teen Council members

## Early Adopters

Largely motivated by the potential of a teen-led campaign, this group expressed early support for the campaign and helped create the first wave of activity by using their influence to garner support through promoting, sponsoring or advocating on behalf of the campaign. Shared characteristics of #ZeroReasonsWhy early adopters:

- Believed in allowing teens to lead
- Believed teen stories were necessary to build empathy, connection and a better understanding of the issue
- Believed teen suicide is not just a school issue, but a community issue
- Believed it should include parents, educators and health practitioners
- Believed a broader community plan should be implemented, alongside mental health programs and services

## Early Majority

A more pragmatic group, these individuals provided the next wave of support once the campaign had more exposure. They expanded the campaign's visibility to a larger, metro-wide audience. They observed the momentum and wanted to be a part of it. Examples of those in the early majority:

- Local news media outlets (KSHB, FOX4, KMBC, KCPT, KCUR, 98.1 KMBZ, The Kansas City Star, The Shawnee Mission Post)
- Retailers and community businesses (Oak Park Mall, local coffee shops)
- Large corporate donors & initiatives (AT&T Believe KC)

# Mobilization

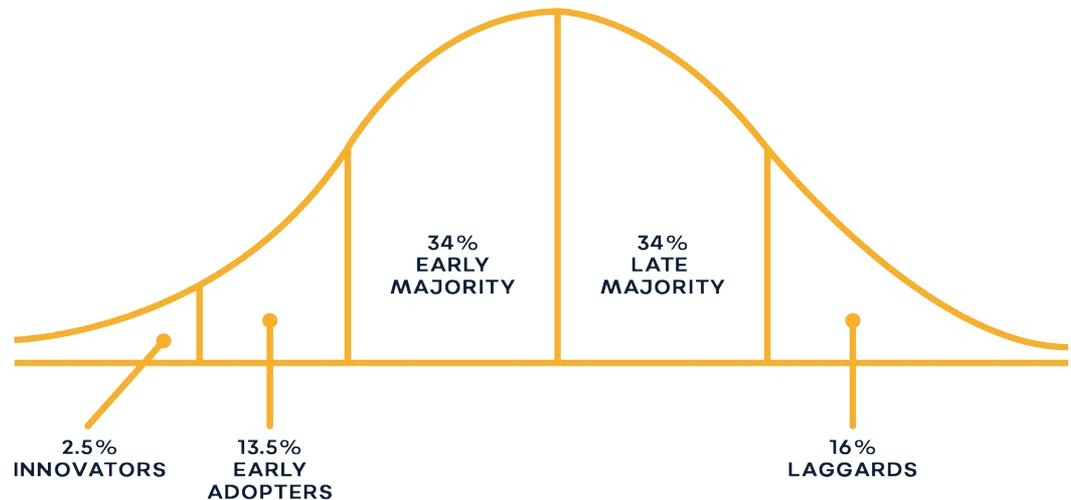
## Late Majority

A more cautious group of traditional thinkers who will only adopt the campaign after the average community member paves the way. They want to see demonstrable results and need reassurance of little risk in becoming a part of the movement. Characteristics that could cause delayed adoption by the late majority:

- Believe that talking about suicide will put ideas in someone's head
- Believe "teens today" just aren't "tough enough"
- Believe there is one singular reason causing the problem (i.e. social media)
- Only willing to adopt scientific research-based or evidence-based programs
- Uncomfortable with losing control and allowing teens to voice their viewpoints

## Laggards

A more cynical group that is resistant to change. This group only adopts new ideas if forced to do so. They are a smaller audience and not an outreach focus for this campaign



## Mobilization Activities

### Meetings and Events

- Establishing and managing Teen Council meetings
- Formalizing and supporting Mental Health Convening meetings
- Conducting one-on-one meetings with community stakeholders
- Planning and/or promoting large community events (i.e. March + Rally, Let's Connect Symposium)
- Attending and/or promoting meetings or small events with campaign collateral (i.e. school events, advocacy days)

### Strategic Efforts

- Supporting, informing, co-developing the Teen Council strategic plan
- Co-implementation and management of the Teen Council's strategic plan with the deployment and implementation teams
- Development of community partnerships and collaborative activities

### Public Relations

- Establishing and maintaining an online campaign ecosystem (i.e. website, social media channels, community mobilization portal)
- Conducting news media relations and press release distribution
- Supporting and informing the efforts of the story campaign and field journalism efforts
- Developing campaign messaging and collateral materials



## Event: Teen Council Meetings

### Facilitating the Teen Council

A key function of the mobilization effort is equipping and empowering the Teen Council. This includes facilitation of the monthly teen meetings and ongoing oversight of the Teen Council and Student Ambassador groups.

Monthly in-person or virtual meetings are intended as a time to make campaign progress and provide updates on strategic initiatives. In addition, online communication and group messaging apps are used to provide Teen Council members and Student Ambassadors with other

opportunities as they arise for public appearances, speaking engagements or activities where a #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign presence is requested.

Teen Council meetings are open to any teen who is interested in being a part of the campaign. The Teen Council representatives felt strongly that no teen should be excluded from playing a role in the campaign efforts, despite the need for a core group to function as the Executive Board for the campaign.

At each Teen Council meeting, the teens meet with the campaign team along with additional community partners, non-profit organizations and mental health representatives who attend to either observe or present a specific topic or opportunity to the group.

A sample Teen Council meeting agenda and teen role description documents are available on the following pages.





## Campaign Executive Team Teen Council Agenda

4:00 **Welcome: Meet & Greet**

4:15 **Suicide Prevention Background & Campaign Intro**

- A. Government, Health & Education Suicide Prevention Efforts  
School Districts, Cities, County & State
- B. #ZeroReasonsWhy Story Campaign & Community Mobilization  
Executive, Implementation & Deployment Teams
- C. Implementation Team: Mental Health Convening Group  
Superintendents, JOCO Mental Health, JOCO District Attorney, Shawnee Mission  
Health, Children's Mercy, KidsTLC, Responsive Centers for Psychology & Learning
- D. Deployment Team: Student Ambassadors, Parent Groups, Educator Advocates  
& Practitioners

4:45 **Teen Council Working Session**

- A. Your Personal Priorities & Expectations
- B. Campaign Intent, Obstacles & Outcomes
- C. Core Themes Imagined
- D. Strategic Action: One Immediate Victory

5:45 **Future Meetings, Events & Convenings**

- A. Next Teen Council Meetings (Dec - Apr)
- B. Student & Parent Reverse Hacks  
NOV 1 - Spring Hill Parent Reverse Hack  
DEC 5 - Gardner Edgerton Student Reverse Hack
- C. #ZeroReasonsWhy Rally & Celebration  
APR 29/30, 2019 @ Overland Park Convention Center

6:00 **Meeting Adjourned**

Get Ideas Adopted  
[www.overflowstory.com](http://www.overflowstory.com)

10000 Marshall Drive Lenexa, KS 66215  
844-442-2537



Johnson County Teen Council  
2019-2020

### Teen & Parent Approval/ Release Form

I hereby agree to participate in the #ZeroReasonsWhy Campaign, and grant permission to the rights of my image, likeness and the sound of my voice as recorded on audio or video without payment or any other consideration. I understand the sensitive nature of this campaign, and understand my image may be edited, copied, exhibited, published or distributed. I hereby waive the right to inspect or approve the finished product wherein my likeness appears. Additionally, I waive any right to royalties or other compensation arising or related to the use of my image or recording. I also understand this material may be used in diverse educational and professional settings within an unrestricted geographic area.

Photographic, audio or video recordings may be used for the following purposes:

- Professional, conference, educational, or informational presentations
- Promotional, marketing, or fundraising

I will be consulted about the use of the photographs or video recording for any purpose other than those listed above.

There is no time limit on the validity of this release nor is there any geographic limitations on where these materials may be distributed.

By signing this release, I understand this permission signifies that photographic or video recordings of me may be electronically displayed via the Internet or in a public setting. I acknowledge I have completely read and fully understand the above release and agree to be bound thereby. I hereby release any and all claims against any person or organization utilizing this material for educational purposes.

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address/P.O. Box \_\_\_\_\_

State/Postal Code/Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School District \_\_\_\_\_ School Name \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

If under the age of 19, a parent or legal guardian is also required.

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Get Ideas Adopted  
[www.overflowstory.com](http://www.overflowstory.com) | [www.zeroreasonswhy.org](http://www.zeroreasonswhy.org)

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844-442-2537

*\*Note: this document does not constitute legal advice. All information is intended for general purposes only. Consult a professional attorney for assistance in creating legal documents.*



**Campaign FAQ**  
**Teen Council & Student Ambassador**  
 Updated: February 17, 2020

Question: I'm thinking about becoming a Teen Council Member or Student Ambassador. What is the difference between the two roles?

	Teen Council	Student Ambassador
<b>Responsibilities</b>	Represents the campaign in the community Responsible for strategic plan	Represents the campaign in their high school <i>Recommended:</i> Represent the campaign in the community
<b>Number of Representatives</b>	Large Districts: 4 Members Small Districts: 2 Members Private Schools: 1 Member <i>Note - Preference may be given to former Student Ambassadors</i>	Minimum of 1 Student Ambassador Per High School No maximum
<b>Year in School</b>	Large Districts: 2 Junior and 2 Senior Small Districts: 1 Junior and 1 Senior Private Schools: I Senior <i>Note - Selected annually</i>	All years recommended <i>Note - Open sign-up</i>
<b>Time Requirements</b>	1 Summer Orientation per Year 9 Teen Council Meeting per Year 4 Community Convenings per Year 1 March & Rally per Year Min. of 1 Community Event per Quarter	Organize monthly meetings and quarterly events at high school 1 Summer Orientation Per year <i>Recommended:</i> Attend Teen Council Meetings, Community Convenings, and Community Events
<b>Qualifications</b>	Dedicated to the cause Willing to speak publicly about the campaign and mental health Involved in school Approachable Willing to keep other Teen Council members accountable Willing to recruit students	Dedicated to the cause Willing to speak publicly about the campaign and mental health Involved in school Approachable Willing to organize and recruit students in their school

Get Ideas Adopted  
[www.overflowstory.com](http://www.overflowstory.com) | [www.zeroreasonswhy.org](http://www.zeroreasonswhy.org)

10000 Marshall Drive, Lenexa, KS 66215

Question: I'd like to join the campaign. How do I sign up?

**Step One:** Visit [www.zeroreasonswhy.org](http://www.zeroreasonswhy.org) / Teen Sign-up and submit the sign-up form by March 30th

- Your Name and Year in School
- Your School District and High School Name
- Why you are passionate about the topic
- What you hope will result from the campaign

**Step Two:** Attend the April Teen Council Meeting to meet the teens of #ZeroReasonsWhy and speak about why you want to join the campaign.

**Step Three:** The next year's slate of Teen Council and Student Ambassadors will be announced by the middle of May. All individuals expressing an interest in serving as a Student Ambassador will be asked to be part of the next year's group. Due to the limited number of Teen Council positions, those individuals not asked to serve as a Teen Council member will be asked to serve as a Student Ambassador.

Question: I've joined the campaign. What are the next steps?

**Release Form:** Please complete the Teen Council or Student Ambassador media release form, have your parents sign it and then email it back to [PublicAffairs@overflowco.com](mailto:PublicAffairs@overflowco.com).

**GroupMe:** As soon as the campaign receives the signed form back along with your mobile number, we will add you to GroupMe and to the Portal. GroupMe includes a calendar feature and is our main form of communication for #ZRW events and opportunities.

**Orientation:** On annual on annual basis, summer orientation will be held to set expectations for the coming year, review roles and responsibilities and messaging, and receive training from the Johnson County Mental Health Center.

**Teen Council Meetings:** Also, please mark your calendar for our monthly Teen Council meetings:

**Location:** Plexpod Lenexa: 10000 Marshall Drive, Lenexa, KS 66215

**Date/Time:** Third Monday of the Month from 5:00 - 7:00 pm

It is asked that Teen Council members attend each monthly Teen Council Meeting. And it is recommended Student Ambassadors attend at least one (if not more) Teen Council meetings to get oriented to the campaign and to start making connections with other teens on the campaign.

**Tell your story:** Once the campaign has received your release form, we'd encourage you to tell your story and why you support the campaign. Please contact Cindy Knudsen, our photojournalist who can get your photograph and help you tell your story ([Cindy.Knudsen@overflowco.com](mailto:Cindy.Knudsen@overflowco.com)).

Question: How do I learn more about the campaign and become involved?

**Learn More:** Check out the [Community Plan on the #ZRW website](#). If you are interested in helping act on an initiative or tactic, let us know!

**Attend the Community Convenings:** Community Convening's are held four times a year. The first Convening of 2020 was held January 22<sup>nd</sup>. The next will be held on April 22<sup>nd</sup> (or 24<sup>th</sup>).

**Join our portal:** The portal is a great way to keep updated with the campaign. Subscribe at [main+subscribe@ZeroReasonsWhy.groups.io](mailto:main+subscribe@ZeroReasonsWhy.groups.io)

**Follow #ZRW on Social Media:** All events and volunteer opportunities will be announced on social media, so please follow #ZRW on your favorite channel: [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#)

Get Ideas Adopted  
[www.overflowstory.com](http://www.overflowstory.com) | [www.zeroreasonswhy.org](http://www.zeroreasonswhy.org)

10000 Marshall Drive, Lenexa, KS 66215

## Event: Mental Health Convening

### Quarterly Convenings

#ZeroReasonsWhy facilitates quarterly Community Mental Health Convening meetings for all stakeholders to come together to learn about what is happening in the community and hear campaign-specific updates from the Teen Council. The events provide a place for the entire community to connect, while informing and increasing action for the #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign strategy initiatives and tactics.

The Teen Council provides updated information about the work being done in each of the three strategic

pillars of the campaign and encourages community members to volunteer to help where needed.

The events also give partner organizations, health providers and nonprofits a chance to report on the activities of their respective organizations to reduce duplicated efforts and encourage collaboration across sectors.

This reduces the work happening in silos and aligns efforts under a common framework. The unifying nature of the convenings provides a window into the positive progress happening in the community and spurs movement and action toward true change.

Following each convening, a survey is sent to all participants to gather feedback and implement changes based on community input. This ensures that the events are meeting the needs of participants and promoting more active engagement by incorporating their feedback into meeting structure and format.





## Community Convening Event July 29, 2020 Virtual Event Agenda

- 3:45 p.m. – Zoom Meeting Space Opens/Virtual Waiting Room
- 4:00 p.m. – VIDEO: Teen Response to Quarterly Question/Theme
- 4:03 p.m. – Welcome Message by Teen Council Emcee
  - Polling Questions
- 4:06 p.m. – Local Teen Story
- 4:09 p.m. – Current State of Community Mental Health
  - Tim DeWeese, Johnson County Mental Health Director
- 4:13 p.m. – VIDEO: Community Action Plan Overview
- 4:17 p.m. – Community Shout-Outs
  - *Pillar 1: End the Stigma*
    - Telemundo KC Director
    - Polling Question
  - *Pillar 2: Build Community Support*
    - Spring Hill Superintendent Wayne Burke
    - Polling Question
  - *Pillar 3: Commit to Education*
    - BlueKC Representative
    - Polling Question
- 4:32 p.m. – VIDEO: Teen Council & Student Ambassador Update
- 4:36 p.m. – Teen Talk Panel
  - Panel of four teens answer pre-submitted questions, moderated by Emcee
- 4:47 p.m. – VIDEO: New Beginnings - #ZRW on College Campuses
- 4:49 p.m. – Narrative Playbook Launch
- 4:57 p.m. – Community Member Story
- 5:00 p.m. – Closing & Thank You

## Community Convening Survey Questions

1. How likely are you to recommend the #ZRW Community Convening to a friend or colleague?
  - a. Highly likely
  - b. Likely
  - c. Neutral
  - d. Unlikely
  - e. Highly unlikely
2. Two hours was just the right amount of time for the Community Convening.
  - a. Strongly agree
  - b. Agree
  - c. Neutral
  - d. Disagree
  - e. Strongly disagree
3. The purpose and backstory of the event were understood.
  - a. Strongly agree
  - b. Agree
  - c. Neutral
  - d. Disagree
  - e. Strongly disagree
4. The content presented was valuable to me.
  - a. Strongly agree
  - b. Agree
  - c. Neutral
  - d. Disagree
  - e. Strongly disagree
5. The exercises included were understood and meaningful to me.
  - a. Strongly agree
  - b. Agree
  - c. Neutral
  - d. Disagree
  - e. Strongly disagree
6. The production value was appropriate for the event (venue, lights, sound, video).
  - a. Strongly agree
  - b. Agree
  - c. Neutral
  - d. Disagree
  - e. Strongly disagree
7. Please rank the following in order of what you enjoyed the most:
  - a. Teen/Parent Stories
  - b. Strategic Priorities
  - c. Panel Discussion
  - d. Community Shout-outs
  - e. Take Action Section
8. What ideas would you like the #ZRW Campaign Team to consider for the next Community Convening?

## Event: March + Rally

### 2019 March + Rally

In September 2019, during Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month, the campaign held its second annual #ZeroReasonsWhy March + Rally, an event in the Kansas City metro area for the community to join the movement and find out more about the campaign. The March + Rally was co-sponsored by the Johnson County Mental Health Center and AT&T's Believe Kansas City campaign, which named #ZeroReasonsWhy as one of the initiatives they would support as part of their effort to support organizations involved in youth mental health.

The March + Rally was held at Mill Creek Park in Kansas City, MO, a well-known location for cause-based activism. Attendees were asked to fill in the blank (“There are #ZeroReasonsWhy \_\_\_\_\_.”) from their perspective to hold during the march. The signs were then repurposed as yard signs for residences across the region. Teen voice was elevated at the rally, giving them a chance to directly address the public to help reduce stigma and build community support. In addition, parents, community representatives and mental health professionals spoke at the rally to help educate the public on the topic and highlight the work of the campaign.



# #ZeroReasonsWhy Campaign Teens Invite Their Peers from Kansas City Metro to Join the Sept. 29 March + Rally on the Plaza

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
Monday, September 23, 2019**

(JOHNSON COUNTY, KANSAS) September 23, 2019 – The teens of #ZeroReasonsWhy are inviting all of their peers and everyone in Kansas City to join them for a March + Rally event from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 29 at Mill Creek Park on the Country Club Plaza.

"This is the movement of our time, making mental health equal to physical health, and we need everyone from across the Greater Kansas City Metropolitan Area to get involved," Pooja Jain, #ZeroReasonsWhy Teen Council member and senior at Blue Valley West High School, said. "We're disrupting the rise in teen suicides and changing the conversation around mental health."

Entering its second academic year, #ZeroReasonsWhy is a story campaign and community mobilization effort led by teens who are telling their stories and taking action. What started in Johnson County, Kansas is now increasingly supported by teens, adults, and organizations from across the Kansas City area who wish to address the social and emotional wellbeing of teens. The campaign provides a framework for how the community can work together to create a continuum of care and remove the reasons why suicide would be an option for any teen.

"#ZeroReasonsWhy is mobilizing teen, parent, educator and practitioner stories around a community standard of care and prevention," Johnson County Mental Health Center Director Tim DeWeese said. "We are focused on empowering community members to take action toward change through collaborative events like this. To turn the tide on the increase in teen suicides, we need to invest in community-wide initiatives like these."

The #ZeroReasonsWhy teens invite all to come hear from teen speakers, make personalized signs, and join the movement. Event participants will gather near the JC Nichols Memorial Fountain at the corner of West 47th St. (Cleaver II Blvd.) and JC Nichols Pkwy. on the Plaza.

**BACKGROUND:** Nationally, 60 percent of people personally know someone who has died by suicide. For youth between the ages of 10 and 24, suicide is the second leading cause of death. Suicide rates among teens and young adults have reached their highest point in nearly two decades. Suicide rates for 15- to 19-year-olds and those between 20 and 24 are at their highest level since 2000. For every one suicide, an estimated 25 people attempt suicide. Teen death by suicide nearly doubled in Johnson County, Kansas in the first six months of 2018, and within a 13-month time period across the 2017-2018 academic year, there were 15 teen suicides in the county.

## #ZEROREASONSWHY MARCH + RALLY – SPONSORS INFORMATION

**Johnson County Mental Health Center:** The #ZeroReasonsWhy Campaign in Johnson County is fiscally sponsored and managed by [Johnson County Mental Health Center](#) (JCMHC), whose mission is improving the quality of life for Johnson County residents by providing comprehensive mental health services driven by the needs of the persons served, as well as providing services of the highest possible quality that are easily accessible to all residents. As part of its mission, JCMHC is incorporating the #ZeroReasonsWhy Campaign as a collective impact project into its portfolio of initiatives and programming geared toward reducing, and ultimately ending, instances of teen suicides in Johnson County.

**AT&T and Believe Kansas City:** AT&T provided financial support for the March + Rally as part of its Believe Kansas City initiative. Believe Kansas City is a grassroots, employee-driven campaign focused on supporting youth suicide prevention and mental wellness efforts through technology, innovation, and partnerships in the Greater Kansas City Metropolitan Area. Believe Kansas City is part of AT&T's ongoing commitment to create positive change in local communities where its employees live, work and serve. The Believe Kansas City mission is to use technology, innovation, and partnerships to help increase awareness around mental wellness, reduce stigma in our community, and support suicide prevention efforts focused on youth in the Greater Kansas City Metropolitan Area.

## Strategic Effort: Mall Storefront

### Oak Park Mall

The #ZeroReasonsWhy Teen Council and campaign team approached Oak Park Mall leadership with a simple question – can #ZeroReasonsWhy hang signage or use displays in the mall to promote the campaign’s message? Mall leadership came back with a proposal beyond expectation: a rent-free storefront space at the center of mall traffic. The mall built out the space at no cost, with some painting help from Teen Council and Student Ambassadors.

The space opened during Suicide Prevention and Awareness Week in September 2019 with a public ribbon-cutting. The space features the #ZeroReasonsWhy mission, a screen playing a campaign PSA, an interactive wall where community members leave encouraging notes, campaign materials and mental health resources from Johnson County Mental Health.

The space supports all three strategic pillars of the campaign:

- **Reduces stigma** around mental health by encouraging open dialogue and participation with the topic in a public setting
- **Builds community support** by bringing the topic to the public in such a prominent and interactive way, reaching an audience who may not have participated in the campaign otherwise
- **Commits to education** by giving mall patrons easy access to mental health resources



# Media Alert: #ZeroReasonsWhy Opens their Spot Inside Oak Park Mall Saturday

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
September 4, 2019

(JOHNSON COUNTY, KANSAS) Oak Park Mall has partnered with #ZeroReasonsWhy, a teen suicide prevention campaign led by teens in Johnson County, Kansas, and supported by teens across the Greater Kansas City Metropolitan Area. #ZeroReasonsWhy is a story campaign and community mobilization effort that brings together teens, parents, educators, healthcare providers, and other community members, to take action toward change and address the social and emotional health of teens. It also aids to advance mental wellness strategies, programs, events, and more.

As part of the partnership, Oak Park has given #ZeroReasonsWhy a space inside the shopping center, where volunteers can educate shoppers about the campaign, provide mental health assistance and create an interactive experience where shoppers can share their reasons to encourage all to live life to the fullest. Teens and volunteers will host a ribbon cutting commemorating their space.

## When/Where:

Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup> at Noon  
Location: 2<sup>nd</sup> Level by the Carousel, Oak Park Mall  
11149 W. 95<sup>th</sup> Street Overland Park, KS 66214

## Visuals/Interview Opportunities:

- Capture teens and volunteers cut the ribbon to their new #ZeroReasonsWhy Spot
- Hear stories about why this campaign is important to the teens
- Learn more about why this partnership is important to Oak Park Mall and the community

## About Oak Park

Oak Park is conveniently located in Overland Park, Kansas, just off of Highway 69 at West 95<sup>th</sup> Street. The shopping center is the exclusive home in the Kansas City metro area to Disney Store, Oakley, LUSH, Microsoft, Swarovski, and more than 185 specialty stores, boutiques and eateries. Oak Park also is home to Kansas City's only American Girl store. Oak Park Mall is owned and managed by CBL & Associates Properties, Inc.

## About #ZeroReasonsWhy

#ZeroReasonsWhy is a teen suicide prevention campaign. It is a story campaign and community mobilization effort. Sparked by a Superintendent-led Mental Health Convening Group in Johnson

County Kansas to address the social and emotional wellbeing of teens, the campaign seeks to mobilize teen, parent, educator, and practitioner stories around a community standard of care and prevention. Focused on empowering community members to take action toward change, the campaign is organizing, facilitating, and supporting teens, parents, educators, and practitioners in implementing action plans, programs, events, and collaborative outreach efforts. The community is coming together to remove the reasons why suicide would be an option for any teen.

## About Johnson County Mental Health Center

#ZeroReasonsWhy is fiscally sponsored and managed by Johnson County Mental Health Center (JCMHC), whose mission is improving the quality of life for Johnson County residents by providing comprehensive mental health services driven by the needs of the persons served, as well as providing services of the highest possible quality that are easily accessible to all residents. As part of its mission, JCMHC is incorporating the #ZeroReasonsWhy Campaign as a Collective Impact Project into its portfolio of initiatives and programming geared toward reducing, and ultimately ending, instances of teen suicides in Johnson County.

## Strategic Effort: Mental Health Advocacy Day

### Political Advocacy

#ZeroReasonsWhy participated as an exhibitor at Mental Health Advocacy Day at the Kansas State Capitol. The Teen Council hosted a resource table to expand the campaign's reach. The Advocacy Day agenda included a rally with a keynote address by Governor Laura Kelly, sessions of both the Kansas House of Representatives and the Kansas Senate, legislative committee meetings, and individual appointments with legislators. In those discussions, the Teen Council presented the campaign, its pillars,

and the mental health challenges of teens in the state. The Teen Council was able to give feedback and advocate for for policy change that would affect mental health initiatives and programs in the state.

In addition to the annual Mental Health Advocacy Day, #ZeroReasonsWhy teens have also been involved in other statewide efforts, such as those facilitated by the Kansas Attorney General. A Suicide Prevention Task Force was created to help the state address the issue. From those efforts, the state's first Youth Suicide Prevention Coordinator was appointed by the Attorney General in May 2019.



## Strategic Effort: AT&T Believes

### AT&T #BelieveKC Initiative

As part of their AT&T Believes<sup>SM</sup> initiative, Kansas City area AT&T leaders chose #ZeroReasonsWhy as a project to support in their effort to increase awareness around mental health topics in the community.

Believe Kansas City is centered on using technology, innovation and partnerships to raise awareness, reduce stigma surrounding mental health and support youth suicide prevention efforts. As part of their #BelieveKC effort, AT&T sponsored an expansion of #ZeroReasonsWhy efforts throughout six counties in the

Kansas City metro region. Believe Kansas City was announced at a public press conference in September of 2019, which featured #ZeroReasonsWhy and other community organizations as beneficiaries of AT&T's initiative.

The efforts included additional Story Days in all six counties, gathering stories from over 65 high schools across the geographic area. A traveling GIF booth placed in public areas and at special events increased public awareness and generated interaction. AT&T retail stores participated through #BelieveKC store displays. Employees volunteered and attended campaign activities, such as the March and Rally. AT&T also sponsored the production of a "How Would You Respond" teen crisis video series, where teens were given scenarios to respond to with the assistance of a mental health professional, in order to educate other teens on how to respond to their peers in crisis.



# Public Relations: Increasing Awareness

## PR and News Coverage

As part of ongoing community mobilization efforts, the campaign distributed news releases to local media outlets to keep the public informed on events, campaign developments and opportunities for the public to engage with the campaign.

Local television, radio and print media covered campaign activities regularly, which led to a broader community understanding of the campaign and helped further the strategic pillars.

## In Johnson County, suicides dip after parents and teens team up on prevention effort

BY THE KANSAS CITY STAR EDITORIAL BOARD

JANUARY 31, 2020 05:00 AM



'Zero Reasons Why' suicide prevention campaign hopes to expand in new school year

MENTAL HEALTH

Teens' mental health is as important as physical health, say #ZeroReasonsWhy student leaders

LEARN HANDELIN | JANUARY 23, 2020 AT 10 AM



Panel members discuss holding conversations with their teens and adults working in mental health about their perspectives on the continuum of care during the Mental Health Learning on Wednesday afternoon.



HELPING HANDS

#ZeroReasonsWhy Campaign: A Disruptive County Wide Effort to Prevent Teen Suicide in Johnson County Kansas

By HERLIFE Magazine



Teens start Zero Reasons Why campaign

## Johnson County students march to end teen suicide through 'Zero Reasons Why' campaign

POSTED 10:40 PM, APRIL 27, 2019, BY REGAN PORTER, UPDATED AT 10:27PM, APRIL 27, 2019

## Public Relations: Grassroots Efforts

### School-led Activities

True adoption of the campaign is evidenced by #ZeroReasonsWhy events that are not campaign-led or organized. These types of events are most likely to occur within school buildings or school districts, who have taken on the campaign's identity and purpose across their entire student and staff population. Some of the more centralized, smaller communities in the county also adopted the campaign city-wide to show broad community support for teens and their mental wellbeing.

### #ZeroReasonsWhy Game Night

Gardner Edgerton High School declared the the first home basketball game #ZeroReasonsWhy night. Players, cheerleaders, coaches and fans wore school-provided #ZeroReasonsWhy t-shirts. Players gave campaign wristbands to the opposing team's players.



### Community #ZeroReasonsWhy Day

In Spring Hill, the school district organized a city-wide #ZeroReasonsWhy Day, where local businesses and community leaders wore campaign shirts and passed out campaign materials.



### Mental Health Week

Many high schools in the county have student-organized mental health weeks, sometimes around midterms or finals week. The focus is on stress relieving activities, positive messaging and mental health resources for students.



# AARON

GARDNER EDGERTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

“I came out gay when I was going into my freshman year. And the looks you get in the hallways, the mean comments some people leave. Looks say more than anything. You just feel excluded from everything. It really gets you down, but I feel like if you have those people, that little bit of hope is what hangs on. My youth pastor reached out and I started going to meetings with her. That helped so much, just knowing someone was there thinking about me or just sitting there to listen. Just listening. Sometimes you don't need a response, sometimes you just need to vent without being judged. And that was big.

Don't be afraid. Even if it doesn't seem like it, there's always some moment you're going to miss out on if you decide to take a route that you feel is the best option at that point. When I was going through my rough patch, I thought of my sister. I'm super tight with my sister. Why waste those memories and why waste any future memories? Just know that there is someone out there. I feel like that's what people need, is just someone to listen.”



“You are not alone!”



“I don't know him personally, but you can tell he's a fine young man.”



“So glad you are allowing yourself to be who you are. That takes bravery and courage! I'm glad you chose to stay.”



## SHANTICE

SHAWNEE MISSION SCHOOL DISTRICT

"It started when I got to middle school. I was in 7th grade and my anxiety had gotten a lot worse than it normally was. I didn't feel like I could trust anyone. I don't know why, because everyone was there for me, but your brain takes over and makes you feel and think things that aren't really happening. My sophomore year was when I hit my lowest point. I didn't feel like I fit in, and also grades and all the stress high school puts on you just amplified it.

Opening up helped a lot. I started opening up to my parents. I opened up more to my friends because I realized they're going through just as much as me. You don't realize the people you love and care about the most are going through the same things and they need someone just as much as you do.

I'm doing a lot better. I'm happy just to wake up and think about all the wonderful things I have in my life. When I do get stressed out and that anxiety pushes in on me, I have learned ways to control it and cope with it. You want to do more to fix it, but sometimes you just have to stand there, breathe for a minute, and it will change everything. Say something, ask for help. It's all you need to do -- just ask -- people are willing to help."



"Appreciate your vulnerability in sharing your story!"



"So glad you opened up and reached out for help. You are giving others hope!"

## FATEMEH

SHAWNEE MISSION SCHOOL DISTRICT

“My family and I immigrated to the U.S. when I was in 5th grade and that was a huge transition for all of us. I dealt with a lot of depression and anxiety. When I was younger, I felt very alone dealing with those things. In

October, I started having a lot of mental health problems again, just a lot of PTSD, anxiety and flashbacks. It was really hard for me to function and again, it got to that emergency point. It was then that I went into Johnson County Mental Health and they set me up with their student clinic. It was free and it was really helpful.

I think it’s important that we’re looking out for each other. We hear a lot of negative things in the news. There’s a lot of hate and division in general and I think, genuinely, the only way we can actively change anything and we can contribute is community - volunteer, help the people around you, make sure your neighbor is okay, check in on people you care about. Starting there and building up from there is how we make the bigger changes. I hope that as a society, we start moving towards that. And now, I can live a happy, healthy life and we can help others get there as well.”



“You are an amazing young woman!”



“Beautiful thoughts. So glad you reached out for help and are helping others.”



“I love what you have to say and can relate to the statement about helping those around us in order to combat all the negativity, hate, and division.”



## ABIGAIL

GARDNER EDGERTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

"I've suffered with depression and anxiety and I've had a suicide attempt myself. And a few years ago my brother committed suicide so it's a really big topic for me. I don't want people to feel like that's their only choice. I want them to feel like they have a voice and that there are other ways they can cope with this other than taking their own lives to solve it.

I have a therapist, so I've talked to them about it. Also, not try to over think it. I tell myself that -- if I wouldn't judge someone for something, they're not going to judge me.

I think about my brother and about how much his death hurt me and my family and how even if he didn't realize it -- and I wouldn't have realized it if I had taken my life -- how much impact it would have on the people around me.

It helped to talk about it and not keep it inside. Even if it's hard to talk about, you'll feel better once you share it with someone. You'll feel like you have more power over the situation if you are able to share it and control how you feel about it."



"I am so proud of you for being honest and open about your story. You are a light for all of us!"



"So happy to hear that you are still here, advocating for others!"



"Telling your story is so important ... for YOU and for so many others."

WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE  
IN OUR COMMUNITY.

— JULIA, BLUE VALLEY

You'll feel like you  
have more power over the  
situation if you are able to  
share it and control how  
you feel about it.

ABIGAIL, GARDNER EDGERTON



YOU DON'T HAVE  
TO DO IT ALONE.

MADDIE, MILL VALLEY

I WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW THAT THEY  
HAVE A PURPOSE IN THE WORLD.

— KYRA, SPRING HILL

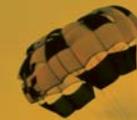
“I think the only way  
we can actively  
change anything  
is community.”

— FATEMEH, SHAWNEE MISSION



CHECK ON YOUR FRIENDS EVERY  
ONCE IN A WHILE AND SEE  
HOW THEY'RE DOING.

— DANIEL, GARDNER EDGERTON





# **Getting Started**

# Take Action: Mental Health Continuum of Care

**Every person has  
an important role  
to play along the  
continuum of care  
in their community.  
Where do you fit?**

## **All campaign efforts should drive improvements in a community's mental health continuum of care.**

The mental health continuum of care includes all of the resources, programs, organizations and efforts to support mental health needs within a community. The continuum starts with widespread awareness, continues with prevention initiatives and treatment options, and ends with recovery after treatment.

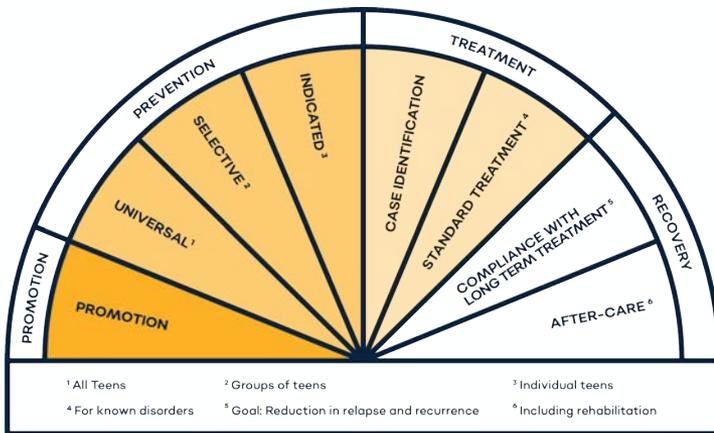
All #ZeroReasonsWhy efforts – whether in the story campaign or community mobilization activities – are centered around helping further progress and bring about innovation along the entire continuum of care to prevent teen suicide.

A crisis can occur anywhere on the mental health continuum of care, but with an effective and efficient community plan in place, crises can be addressed, and proper support provided at every stage.

By elevating teen voices in the community's suicide prevention conversation and focusing on the three pillars – remove the stigma, build community support and commit to education – a framework is provided for the entire community to take action. The efforts presented in this playbook are aimed at empowering all stakeholders to do so from their unique role in society.

Within the four primary campaign audiences – students, parents, educators and health professionals – there are action steps to start a #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign in your community. The steps on the following pages are organized by role as one of those four key stakeholders.

# Resource: Community Mapping



Use this worksheet to map the various resources and organizations in your community who are active in each category along the mental health continuum of care. This will help identify key groups to join campaign efforts and reduce duplication, as well as valuable resources your campaign can partner with for mental health promotion, prevention, treatment and recovery.

## PROMOTION

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## PREVENTION

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## TREATMENT

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## RECOVERY

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# I'm a Student

It starts with you and your peers. Your voices can bring the community together.

## STEPS 1-3: YOUR STORY, YOUR VOICE

1. **YOUR STORY.** Share your story with the #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign. Reach out by email or on social media. Share your perspective and the difference you want to make in your community (parent release forms are required).
2. **ASK PEERS.** Ask five other teens to join you and share their story. Include teens from other high schools or outside activities (a parent, coach or teacher can help, too).
3. **STRATEGY.** Set a teen meeting to discuss the campaign, playbook and strategic goals. Use the strategy map exercise on pages 48 - 53 to identify strategic objectives and priorities for your community as a group.

## STEPS 4-6: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

4. **MENTAL HEALTH CENTER.** Reach out to the community relations contact for your community's mental health center. Explain the campaign and share the playbook.
5. **MEET THE COMMUNITY.** Ask the mental health center to introduce you to active members of your community's mental health continuum of care. Ask those community members to share their story and get involved in the campaign.
6. **HOLD A CONVENING.** Lead a convening with students, parents, educators, mental health center and community members. Adults can organize or facilitate the event, but teens lead. Explain the campaign, share the playbook and voice what you want to happen. Seek next steps.

## SLOANE

SPRING HILL SCHOOL DISTRICT

“I've always been a very perfectionistic person. I really like to do things to the best of my ability, which has its perks but also has some downfalls. Going into my junior year, it was difficult for me to see anything about myself other than I'm an anxious, depressed person — instead of 'I'm Sloane, I'm a great student, I have lots of friends and I also struggle with this.' Now, I'm able to see past it and see the other aspects of myself.

I think the biggest thing that helped me was talking about it, because I was so ashamed to say, 'I have anxiety' or 'I have depression.' But now that the conversation is open, it doesn't hold the power on me anymore. I realize there are other people that go through the same thing, it's not just me. It helped me not to feel isolated. It's very beneficial to talk to a professional. It's not your fault, which is something that I think lots of people need to hear.

It took a really long time for me to realize that your mental health does not define you. You are not your mental health; you are not your mental illness. You are who you are despite the darkness that you go through.”



“How awesome you are to share and be an example to others who may be struggling with the same things.”



“Thank you for sharing your story, I KNOW others will feel the impact which will help them in return.”

# I'm a Parent

**Other parents share similar stories. Seek action together in support of teen-approved initiatives.**

## STEPS 1-3: YOUR STORY & SUPPORT

1. **YOUR STORY.** Share your story with the #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign. Reach out by email or on social media. Share your perspective as a parent and the difference you want to make in your community.
2. **ASK PEERS.** Ask five other parents to join you and share their story with us. Explain the campaign to them, share the playbook and discuss what you would like to accomplish.
3. **FORM PARENT GROUP.** Organize a group of parents who share your interest, especially those from multiple high schools in your area. Introduce them to the campaign, share the playbook and common interests.

## STEPS 4-5: PARENT IMPLEMENTATION

4. **GET STUDENTS INVOLVED.** Identify students interested in making a difference in mental health. See the "I'm a Student" page of the playbook. Help the students work through Steps 1-6.
5. **IMPLEMENTATION TEAM.** Help form an implementation team, including parents, educators, mental health professionals and community members. Organize action around teen priorities and be a vocal parent advocate for community change. Form multi-disciplinary sub-groups to implement initiatives and tactics across the community and recruit other parents to engage in implementation of tactics.

## RODNEY & SHANNON

PARENTS, OLATHE SCHOOL DISTRICT

“We've been through a journey with our daughter over the last three years. I've been trying to think of a way for us to help others so that they don't feel alone through this process. As a child, she was larger than life. And then in seventh grade, cold turkey, she didn't want to do anything. It just went downhill from there. You're trying to fight for resources, you're trying to find her help. It was a journey for us as much as it was her.

She didn't need to know how to fix it. She needed to know that we understood and that we heard her. There is not a quick fix, but there can be a happy ending once you've found the right resources and worked through it. She is back to being her larger than life, happy, remarkable self. To get there she had to work through her mental illness, and we as parents had to work through learning how to best support her. While our journey continues, we are happy to say we are walking it together as a family.”



“Thank you for spreading the word about mental health with our youth and supporting them, not judging them.”



“Thank you for standing up and sharing!”



“Hearing the parent perspective is so helpful. You guys are amazing!”

# I'm an Educator

**Mental health is not solely a school issue, but educators play a key role in mobilizing a community.**

## STEPS 1-3: YOUR STORY & SUPPORT

1. **YOUR STORY.** Share your story with the #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign. Reach out by email or on social media. Share your perspective as a parent and the difference you want to make in your community.
2. **ASK PEERS.** Identify three teachers and two school district administrators to join you and share their story with us. Explain the campaign to them, share the playbook and discuss what you would like to accomplish.
3. **MENTAL HEALTH CENTER.** Organize a diverse group of educators to meet with the community's Mental Health Center Director. Introduce them to the campaign, share the playbook and express your interest.

## STEPS 4-5: COMMUNITY ACTIVATION

4. **GET PARENTS & STUDENTS INVOLVED.** Identify parents and students interested in making a difference in mental health. See the "I'm a Parent" and "I'm a Student" pages of the playbook. Help parents & students work through their steps.
5. **IMPLEMENTATION TEAM.** Help teens form an Executive Council and form an implementation team, including parents, educators, mental health professionals and community members. Organize action around teen priorities and provide an educator's perspective and experience. Form multi-disciplinary sub-groups and recruit other educators to implement initiatives and tactics across the community.

## TONY

TEACHER, SHAWNEE MISSION SCHOOL DISTRICT

"It's important as teachers that we don't just sit there and focus on, 'Hey, what's your grade? How's your physical health?' We're going to take into account the entire child.

Mental health is important. You have to recognize that not everybody is in the same place. If we're trying to meet the educational needs of a variety of kids who learn in a variety of ways, we need to meet all of the mental health things that are going on.

We should all be approachable as teachers. If we're safe adults, they're going to respect us and talk to us. Teaching is important. 15 years from now, will a kid know how to do a cost curve from Econ class? Probably not. Are they going to know exactly how electoral college works? Maybe not. But will they be able to talk to me if they have a serious problem? Hopefully. That's what I'm hopeful for."



"Now, THIS is the teacher I would want for my children!"



"He gets it, the big picture, connecting with our teens. Thank you for all you do each day."

# I'm a Health Professional

**Your biggest role is to help mobilize the community to implement teen-approved initiatives and tactics.**

## STEPS 1-2: STORIES & SUPPORT

- 1. HOST A STORY DAY OR REVERSE HACK.** Host a story day or reverse hack in your community. Share invitations with your network and seek community partners to join. Introduce partners to the campaign, share the playbook and discuss what you hope to accomplish.
- 2. SEEK INVOLVEMENT.** Based on story day or reverse hack event attendance, identify students, parents and educators interested in mental health. Recruit other health professionals who want to do more. Explain the campaign to them, share the playbook and discuss what you all would like to accomplish.

## STEPS 3-4: COMMUNITY ACTIVATION

- 3. GET EDUCATORS, PARENTS & STUDENTS INVOLVED.** See the previous three pages in the Getting Started section of the playbook. Help educators, parents and students work through their steps.
- 4. MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUUM OF CARE.** Lay out a navigation map in alignment with the Mental Health Continuum of Care. Identify health providers by category and define the role they play in the community. Share this across the community of health professionals, as well as the parent and educator participants in the campaign.

# Story

## RENNIE

DIRECTOR OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, ADVENTHEALTH

“I worry that we all accept, 'I'm okay' [from others] way too easily . . . I think that many times, whether you're a professional or if you're just a caring individual, we have our own fear that runs interference with our ability to be direct. We're too worried about what the person might think. I want to remind people to take the intention off of ourselves and place it on the other individual. It's not about me feeling awkward or me being worried that you might get mad at me . . . it's not about me. This is about you and your current struggle, whatever that may be.

By laying that foundation, I think it opens up the dialogue to not just say, 'Are you okay?'. In order to make a difference, we have to push it to the next level: 'I am concerned you're not okay and here's what I'm seeing.'

I think the initiatives that are currently underway are so incredible . . . I'm very excited at this point in my career, there is so much momentum around talking about emotional struggles and being okay with the word suicide. We need to talk about it. It is real, it is happening. I think what the community has to do is to say, 'It's okay to talk about it. It's okay to address it.'”



“Really great advice about taking our questions to the next level when we have concerns.”



“Love the action this takes and direction to really invest in others.”

## Additional Support & Resources



### Idea Adoption

Overflow LLC is a storytelling and strategy company based in the Kansas City area that specializes in idea adoption. The six school districts in Johnson County approached Overflow in the initial ideation stages as they were trying to formulate a plan to prevent teen suicide in the county. That relationship and those initial conversations led to what became the #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign, which the Overflow team has managed and helped execute with teen-led vision and direction.

The biggest problem with innovation today is not discovery – it's adoption. Overflow helps accelerate idea adoption through storytelling by launching strategy, propelling movements and shifting perception. A cross-disciplinary approach helps to diffuse ideas and create behavior change through strategy creation, story design, multimedia production and event execution.

The Overflow team is accessible and available to help your community implement a #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign in a variety of ways. This playbook should serve as a roadmap, but reach out if additional support, consulting or help executing a campaign is needed.

### Website

[www.zeroreasonswhy.org](http://www.zeroreasonswhy.org)

### Email

[publicaffairs@zeroreasonswhy.org](mailto:publicaffairs@zeroreasonswhy.org)

### Social Media



@zeroreasonswhy\_



/zeroreasonswhy



@zeroreasonswhy\_

## Acknowledgments

### Thank You

Thank you to the following organizations and individuals who were early partners of the #ZeroReasonsWhy campaign efforts:

- Blue Valley School District
- Former Superintendent Todd White
- Gardner Edgerton School District
- Superintendent Pam Stranathan
- Olathe School District
- Superintendent John Allison
- Shawnee Mission School District
- Superintendent Mike Fulton
- Spring Hill School District
- Superintendent Wayne Burke
- USD 232
- Superintendent Frank Harwood
- Johnson County Mental Health
- Johnson County District Attorney
- Johnson County Department of Health & Environment
- KidsTLC
- Responsive Centers for Psychology and Learning
- Children's Mercy
- AdventHealth Shawnee Mission
- HCA Midwest
- University of Kansas Health System Marillac Campus
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City
- BV Well
- The Tom Karlin Foundation
- Speak Up
- Keep The Spark Alive
- AT&T #BelieveKC
- You Matter Festival
- Representative Sharice Davids
- Oak Park Mall
- The Bean Coffee Co.
- InterUrban ArtHouse
- Youth Volunteer Corps
- Kansas City A Cappella
- Ocean & Sea
- Church of the Resurrection
- College Church of the Nazarene
- Sondra Wallace & Jewish Family Services

## Teen Council & Student Ambassadors

### 2018-2019 Teen Council

- Blake Burns
- Taylor Fergola
- Weston Curnow
- Drew Langston
- Mary Beth Karlin
- Bella Price
- Abby Hoepner
- Rory Swenson
- Courtney Costain

### 2019-2020 Teen Council

- Rory Swenson
- Pooja Jain
- Hanna Thomas
- Abigail Thomas
- Micah Borghese
- Malia Toomay
- Justine Helmuth
- Maria Heath
- Kyra Fuchs
- Sloane McKinney
- Hayley Moss
- Landry Haydock

### 2019-2020 Student Ambassadors

- Courtney Costain
- Julia Breidenthal
- Ian Gram
- Zoya Howard
- Vik Nandigama
- Caleb Nelson
- Julia Boepple
- Meghan Spann
- Abby Miller
- Avery Altman
- Kalie Hopkins
- Will Gurley
- Morgan Ramsey
- Nick Cochran

A big thing that helps with mental health is when teens see that their peers want them to succeed.

— CALEB, BLUE VALLEY



JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE CRACKED DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE BROKEN.

— MADI, SHAWNEE MISSION



We want to be advocates. Everyone has those moments where you feel like you're in the shadows.

— PHIL, ROCKHURST HIGH SCHOOL



Sometimes people just need a hug or need reassurance that it's going to be fine.

— CAROLINE, SHAWNEE MISSION



BE WILLING TO TALK ABOUT IT. LIFE IS WORTH IT.

— JOE, OLATHE



I found that being more open with everybody helped a lot.

— MARA, GARDNER EDGERTON



## CAROLINE

SHAWNEE MISSION SCHOOL DISTRICT

“I have ADHD and I definitely felt the stigma towards that. It was hard to be able to reach out to [my parents] and be like, ‘Hey, I actually do need some help.’ But I’m really glad that I did, because I was able to get some help. Being able to have the social worker is really good. I’m able to go and talk to her whenever I want. If I’m having a stressful day, I have the option to go and see her if I need to. It’s just really helpful knowing that you’re not alone all the time. Sometimes it’s hard to talk to your friends about certain things because maybe they don’t understand, or things are just different for them.

Sometimes people in today’s society are so wrapped up in themselves that they don’t even think about checking on their friends. Sometimes people just need a hug or need a reassurance that it’s going to be fine. I know you’re having a rough day, but it’s going to be good — tomorrow’s a new day and you’re going to get through this. I think it’s really important that people are checking on their friends.”

“So strong!!!”



“Thanks for sharing your story! All the best to you!”



“So proud of you for speaking up and speaking out, Caroline!”



# Story

## MATT

OLATHE SCHOOL DISTRICT

“Last November I lost a friend to suicide. It was tough, he was a member of my cross country team and we were all pretty shaken by it. I can still remember that day, exactly what happened. I’ve struggled with mental health from a young age. I know the feelings, and I want to be able to help anyone find their way out of it.

Going into Student Council, after being accepted, we talked to our sponsors about starting a mental health committee. We’ve worked along side the head counselor to help reduce stigma in our school because you can’t get any teaching done without stopping some of the stigma. If there’s stigma, no one is going to listen. My main goal this year is to educate teachers on mental health. I’m trying to get time at different Professional Development meetings and lead one of the breakout sessions, with the help of the head counselor. The biggest issue of people wanting to get help is being judged heavily when they are talking about it. If you were sick, you’d go to a doctor. If your mental health is not in check, why wouldn’t you go to someone? Allow people to feel open and that they can share their problems.”



“I totally agree that it seems to be the younger group of folks seeking and acting on answers they come up with.”



“Love these brave and courageous kids. It’s so inspiring to see them helping themselves and figuring out how to help others.”

## LINDSEY

GARDNER EDGERTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

“Currently, I’m doing a more personal project for Student Council. This year we didn’t have a club fair like in past years. I’m taking it upon myself to talk to all the sponsors of the clubs and get a pamphlet out for all of our freshmen, so they know how to get involved and how meet new people. Because that’s a big thing, people don’t know how to meet new people when they come into high school. When people feel like they belong somewhere, it’s easier for them to work out personal things and you’re creating a place where they can be themselves and have friends.

Keep pushing through. If you think you are alone, know there are probably thousands of people who are going through the same thing you are. You are not completely different from everyone else. Everyone else is struggling with these things too. Find that sense of community and find other people who will understand you and help.

There are #ZeroReasonsWhy I can’t take charge and be a part of my community.”



“You’re a wonderful advocate for helping people find their people. You’re a rock star in my book!”



“Wise beyond her years.”



# Story

## JULIA

BLUE VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

“During my freshman year I almost lost one of my best friends to suicide. It's very painful watching your friends struggle when you don't know how to help. You feel like you're letting them down and that you have responsibility to do more. I learned through the Tom Karlin Foundation that it's your responsibility to get your friend help, but it's not your responsibility to fix their problems. All you can do is connect them to the resources that they need and just let them know that they're loved and they're cared for.

I believe the best way for adults to help teenagers is to lead by example — by being the person that talks about how they feel, how they cope with stress, how they deal with difficult things when it comes into their life. We watch, we see it and I think that's how you can help them.

We have the choice to accept things as they are or work to change them. So by getting involved and educating myself and my peers and we can make a difference in our community.

There are #ZeroReasonsWhy I cannot change the world.”



“Well said!”



“Way to use your voice, Julia!”



“You are a wise young lady, Julia!”



**ZeroReasonsWhy.org**

A teen-led community mobilization and story campaign to prevent teen suicide.

**#ZeroReasonsWhy**



@zeroreasonswhy\_



/zeroreasonswhy



@zeroreasonswhy\_