

# TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE: Suicide Prevention

## QUESTION 1 - TRUE or FALSE:

**People who attempt suicide may or may not have a mental illness.**

*TRUE - A mental illness does increase one's risk; however, many people have attempted and completed suicide who did not have a mental illness or diagnosis.*

**Additional Fact:** The frontal cortex of the brain does not fully develop until one is about 26 years old. This part of the brain controls emotions, rational thinking and impulse behaviors.

## QUESTION 2 - TRUE or FALSE:

**Only counselors and principals can intervene and help a student who is suicidal.**

*FALSE - Anyone can intervene and help support someone who is suicidal. You need to listen and pay attention to the risk factors and warning signs.*

**Additional Fact:** Students usually talk to one another first then a trusted adult. Anyone can become aware of a student who is suicidal and take action – ANYONE.

## QUESTION 3 - TRUE or FALSE:

**Only one risk factor is ever known for each suicide attempter.**

*FALSE – There are typically multiple factors that are associated with an individual's suicide attempt.*

**Additional Facts:** Think about the risk factors and the ways many of them can be linked; such as:

**\*\* “Family Dysfunction” & “Substance Use/Addiction”:** A 11<sup>th</sup> grade male – parents are divorcing and he is blindsided by this. He has broken into his father's liquor cabinet each night for the past two and a half weeks. And he is now smoking marijuana.

**\*\* “Loss or Suicide of a Loved One” & “Lack of Purpose or Self-worth” & “Social Challenges”:** A 7<sup>th</sup> grade female – sister (8<sup>th</sup> grade) died as an innocent victim in a drunk driving accident. She and her sister were involved in many of the same friend groups and extra-curricular activities; of which now she no longer wants to participate.

**QUESTION 4 - TRUE or FALSE:**

**You can be a protective factor for someone if you encourage and model help seeking behaviors.**

*TRUE – People around us can be a protective factor by role modeling that we all need help at times and there are resources and experts who can help.*

**Additional Facts:**

\*\* There are free posters and print materials available from Alabama Department of Public Health which feature the Suicide Hotline. These can be posted around schools.

\*\* Utilize student programs to share reducing risk factors... Anti-bullying, drugs and alcohol.