Strong Schools against Suicide and Self-Injurious Behaviors (4S)
- A gatekeeper workshop for school staff

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Prevalence NSSI in school-settings

53 studies, average lifetime prevalence: 18%
Average prevalence of NSSI in a classroom
Prevalence direct self-injurious behavior – SEYLE Study

Prevalence of DSIB in Europe

- Austria: 28.9%
- Estonia: 32.9%
- France: 38.5%
- Germany: 35.1%
- Hungary: 12.3%
- Ireland: 4.6%
- Israel: 10.1%
- Italy: 4.7%
- Romania: 20.6%
- Slovenia: 8.9%
- Spain: 7.6%
- Overall: 27.6%

1x NSSI in lifetime
Repetitive NSSI

Brunner et al., 2014
Prevalence suicidality in Germany

Lifetime prevalence in adolescents from representative and school samples

• Suicidal ideation: 35.9%
• Suicide plans: 6.5%
• Suicide attempts: 6.5-9%

Donath et al., 2013; Brunner et al., 2007, Plener et al., 2009
School staffs’ experiences with NSSI/suicidality

- 81%-99% of school staff report at least one contact with students presenting with self-harming behaviors

- Teachers are often the first to be approached by adolescents about NSSI

- Negative first reactions can lead to a decreased likelihood of adolescents seeking professional help

Roberts-Dobie & Donatelle, 2007; Robinson et al., 2008; Duggan et al., 2011; McAllister et al., 2002; Fortune et al., 2008
School staffs‘ experiences with NSSI/suicidality

- 80% of teachers report the need for more knowledge on NSSI/suicidality
- 28.4% feel highly confident in dealing with students‘ self-harm
- 60% found the thought of NSSI to be horrifying
- 30% rated NSSI to be a purely attention seeking behavior
- 18% thought NSSI to be a purely manipulative behavior

Heath et al., 2011, Heath et al., 2006; Robinson et al., 2008
Gatekeeper programs

- Gatekeeper programs can be effective to
  - Reduce negative attitudes
  - Increase knowledge
  - Increase confidence
  in school staff

- No gatekeeper programs in Germany available

Robinson et al. 2013
4S Program

Gatekeeper Workshop

Information on website

Strong School against Suicidality and Self-injurious behavior

School Policy

Help-Hotline
• 2-day workshop
• Free of charge
• Voluntary
• Max. 25 participants
• Aimed at school-social workers, teachers, school-psychologists
• Usually 1-2 participants per school
• Workshops in different towns in the state of Baden-Württemberg
Day 1

- Differentiation of NSSI and suicidality
- Epidemiology of NSSI and suicidality
- Aetiology, functions and reactions to NSSI
- Working with parents
- Therapeutic Assessment
- Stress-Tolerance-Skills
Day 2

- Risk assessment for suicidality
- Assessing suicidality
- Legal issues
- Implementing a school policy for NSSI and suicidality
- Open discussion (Q&A)

Videos

Role-plays

Presentations

Case vignettes
Participants of 16 workshops

N=236 school-staff
- 61% school social workers
- 23% teachers
- 9% school psychologists
- 6% ‘other’

- 82% female
- 91% more than one year professional experience
- 83% contact with student with NSSI
- 71% contact with student with suicidality
Assessment

Pre, post, and 6-month follow-up:
• Multiple-choice knowledge test
• Self-assessment of perceived knowledge, confidence, and attitudes

Post:
• Satisfaction with the workshop

Follow-up:
• Behavioral changes
Knowledge before workshop

- On average, 42% correct answers on facts about NSSI/suicidality (out of 17 questions)
- 50% think it is too risky to ask a student about suicidality
Confidence before workshop

Confidence in dealing with NSSI/Suicidality

Confidence in dealing with NSSI

Confidence in dealing with suicidality

Very good  Good  Medium  Little  Very Little
NSSI is horrifying: 30%
NSSI is purely attention seeking behavior: 3%
NSSI is purely manipulative: 3%
Satisfaction with the workshop
Results perceived knowledge / confidence

Changes in perceived knowledge/confidence from pre to post to follow-up

- Pre Workshop
- Post Workshop
- 6-months-follow-up

Perceived knowledge: [Green line]
Confidence: [Blue line]

Significance levels:
- p < .001
- p > .05
Results attitudes

Changes in attitudes from pre to post to follow-up

- Pre Workshop
- Post Workshop
- 6-months-follow-up

p<.05
Behavioral changes at 6 month follow up

„I am very motivated to use contents of the workshop“: M=4.5, SD=.76

Use of workshop contents on a day-to-day basis: M=3.6, SD=.57

Implementing changes on school level: M=3.2, SD=.75

Main obstacles:
- lack of resources
- lack of support from school administration

Scale 1=not at all to 5=very much
Conclusions

• A two-day workshop can significantly improve knowledge, perceived knowledge and confidence in school-staff

• Results still significant at 6-month follow-up

• Actual changes in behavior on individual or school level are at a medium level

• Main obstacles are lack of resources and support from school administration
Possible improvements

- Ongoing on-site supervision or follow-up sessions
- Actively involving school administration
- Different workshops for different professions
Thank you for your attention!
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