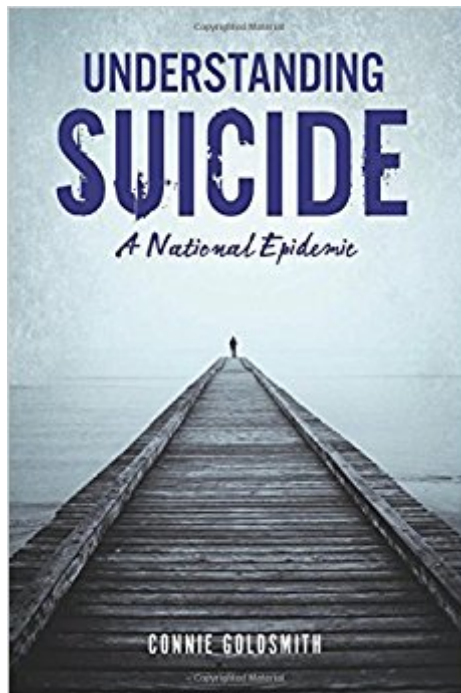




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Understanding Suicide: A National Epidemic



Synopsis

Suicide is among the top three causes of death for young people ages 15 to 24. In fact, this global epidemic claims 41,000 lives per year in the United States alone. Suicide touches people of all ages—from those who consider and attempt suicide to those who lose a loved one to suicide. Yet silence often surrounds these deaths and makes suicide difficult to understand. Looking beyond common myths and misconceptions, author Connie Goldsmith examines common risk factors and covers warning signs, ways to reach out to a suffering loved one, and precautions that can save lives. And survivors' personal stories offer honest examinations of both grief and hope.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 8 Up—Forty-one thousand Americans commit suicide each year. For every suicide there are 25 unsuccessful attempts and countless numbers of people who struggle with suicidal thoughts. Goldsmith, a nurse and health-care expert, investigates this epidemic, beginning with the emotional fallout that individuals who have experienced the loss of a loved one through suicide typically face. Subsequent chapters address risk factors for suicide such as poverty, mental illness, and substance abuse, as well as scientists' ongoing search to understand what chemical or physical factors contribute to depression. Particular demographics are covered, such as suicide in teens, the military, and the older adult population. Goldsmith includes information about the effectiveness of intervention and treatment options, as well as the complicated issue of physician-assisted suicide. Of particular interest to teens are the quotes and advice from influential YA authors. Chris Crutcher offers guidance in his capacity as a mental health specialist, Libba Bray speaks of living with

depression, and e.E. Charlton-Trujillo warns of the potentially devastating consequences of bullying. Photographs, graphs, and text boxes add necessary visual appeal. The source notes, selected bibliography, and resources for further information are extensive. VERDICT Edifying and thorough, this title will prove useful for students doing research or those interested in learning about this tragic phenomenon. —Ragan O'Malley, Saint Ann's School, Brooklyn

Connie Goldsmith writes books about history, health, and science for older children. An RN with a master's degree in health, Ms. Goldsmith lives near Sacramento, California.

Highly recommend. I continue to be a fan of this book's author and medical writer, Connie Goldsmith, RN. Connie presents challenging, well-researched topics with engaging and accessible texts. Easy to read, authoritative and compassionate, *Understanding Suicide* covers background info about suicide, statistics (increased to 41,000 a year in the US alone), touching family stories, effects on those left behind, identifying those at risk, including military veterans, and interventions for those that might take their lives by suicide. For 8th graders and up. Adults will appreciate it too. Good for adults and children to read and discuss together. I just purchased copies for our local schools and therapist friends. Some deaths by suicide can be prevented, along with the profound grief experienced by surviving family and friends. The more we all know about this heartbreaking issue, the more awareness there will be for those at risk, how to help, and options for treatment. Our response to suicide need not be shame, stigma and secrets, but rather compassion for an act of despair. Those suffering need our understanding and acceptance.

A silent epidemic is raging all around us, but most of us either choose to ignore it while others are unaware of the severity. The epidemic is none other than suicide. Seventeen-year-old Amy Caldwell "had been living with severe depression for at least two years," unwilling to discuss her problems with a therapist. Amy was receiving some help, heading to a day treatment program for teens in the afternoon. Her mother, Susan, knew something was up when Amy "didn't show up at her dad's house after school one January morning." She had attempted suicide once before and the attempt was a "real one," resulting in a commitment to a psych ward for a few months. Susan's fears weren't unfounded because when she arrived home she found a suicide note on the door — this time Amy didn't make it. The statistics are shocking because in Amy's age

group. “more than 10 percent of teen girls and just over 5 percent of teen boys in grades nine through twelve have attempted suicide” according to the CDC. When we think about the leading causes of death, we seldom think about suicide, but it’s one of them. In fact, it’s the “tenth-leading cause of death in the United States, claiming one individual “every thirteen minutes. It’s a silent epidemic we all need to know more about, especially if we want to prevent it. If you think people who are experiencing heart attacks or are injured in accidents are the only ones who head to the emergency rooms, think again because “nearly half a million Americans were treated in emergency rooms for self-inflicted injuries in 2013. Statistics aside, there are real people behind those numbers, people who were and are in pain. That pain is shared by many, many people because “suicide doesn’t happen in isolation. Each person who succeeds at committing suicide has a huge impact because it “affects at least six people – parents, children, siblings spouses, and good friends, like around five million. In this book you’ll read about what happens to those left behind, the pain and shock that they suffer after losing a loved one. They can become depressed and “common symptoms of grief-triggered depression include insomnia, loss of appetite, lack of energy, and intense sadness. Do you know someone who has committed suicide? If so, a book like this just may help you to understand your own feelings. There is help out there, but only if you know how to look for it. Speaking of the word “look, we all have to know how to see the signs. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) is just one of many organizations out there to help. For example, the “site offers a state-by-state listing of in-person support groups, as well as specialized online support groups. Every read any of Chris Crutcher’s YA fiction? If so, he’s a certified specialist who “offered support to survivors of those who commit suicide. There’s help needed for lots of people, from those who are considering suicide to those who are facing the fallout of the grief that hits hard when a loved one is lost. Want to learn? Want to help? Need help? This book is an excellent learning tool and resource for a wide variety of people, not just the intended audience. It was most certainly a sobering read, but a very educational one. I’ve read several of Connie Goldsmith’s books, all of them very well-researched and well-written. It’s in this type of book that we can all learn those sobering statistics, but also can become aware of the power we have to help. As I read, I

learned how I can not only help those around me suffering from a wide variety of issues from depression to substance abuse. The “facts” were sobering and most certainly eye-opening. Goldsmith not only goes into the risk factors, but also the groups at highest risk. As I mentioned, the teen risk is high, but also for those in the military as well as the elderly (surprisingly so). The layout of the book has photographs, infographic material, and numerous informative sidebars. For example, there is one section that gives tips to help young people deal with bullying. In the back of the book is an index, a glossary, expansive source notes, a selected bibliography, and additional recommended book, audio / video, and website resources to explore. Definitely a must read, must have book for everyone. Reading Level: 8 Interest Level: Grades 7 to 12 (including adults) This book courtesy of the publisher.

So many of us have been touched by suicide - that of a friend, a family member, or a friend's loved one. This book will speak to people who have survived a loved one's suicide, those who have contemplated suicide, and those who want to help someone who has suicidal thoughts. Connie Goldsmith has produced a work that covers all the important topics: the statistics, the risk factors, the behaviors to look for, the resources for prevention, the populations most at peril, and more. And she's done it in a way that makes it hard to put the book down. Much of the text is in the words of people she's interviewed. Some have endured a loved one's suicide, some have survived a suicide attempt, some have thought about taking their own lives, and some are mental health professionals who deal with these people. The stories, from people of all ages, are at times heartbreaking and at times inspirational. Ms. Goldstein's treatment of the subject is thorough and compassionate. This is a book that needs to be read by teens. It could save lives.

This book will save lives. It is a MUST read for teens, parents, teachers - and especially necessary for those who are in severe depression. Hand the person this book, sit with him/her, stay there. Connie Goldsmith writes with tenderness and compassion, citing statistics and treatments, but most tellingly, using the stories of those who have taken their own lives (or want to), and those who are left behind. Goldsmith's book not only helps the reader understand the why of suicide, but what to do instead of suicide. How to survive, how to come back from severe depression, how to live. Thank you, Connie Goldsmith, for this important book.

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