

ABSTRACT

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Title: ACCESS TO SCHOOL-BASED SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS:
A RETROSPECTIVE STUDY OF COLLEGE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

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The United States is currently facing a suicide epidemic. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for people ages 15-to-24-years-old (AACAP, 2018). “In 2017, there were 47 percent more suicides among people aged 15 to 19 than in the year 2000” (Frazee & Morales, 2019). Information about the factors that may assist in its prevention is worthy of further examination. The purpose of this research was to explore the two environmental factors that may alter these dim statistics; school-wide prevention activities and parental support. The subjects of this study were college students enrolled in a social work program at a public university in Connecticut who were surveyed about their recollection of their level of exposure to suicide prevention activities while attending middle school, high school, and college. And whether or not they had a conversation with their parents about suicide during their adolescence. The data revealed that students were minimally exposed to prevention activities while attending middle and high school, but had increased exposure during college. However, they reported having had minimal mandatory suicide prevention activities sponsored by their school. Moreover, a high percentage of participants reported having no conversations about suicide with a parent during their adolescence. Study results should catalyze an increased awareness about the need to increase parental and school response as they are vital in decreasing the loss of life caused by suicide.