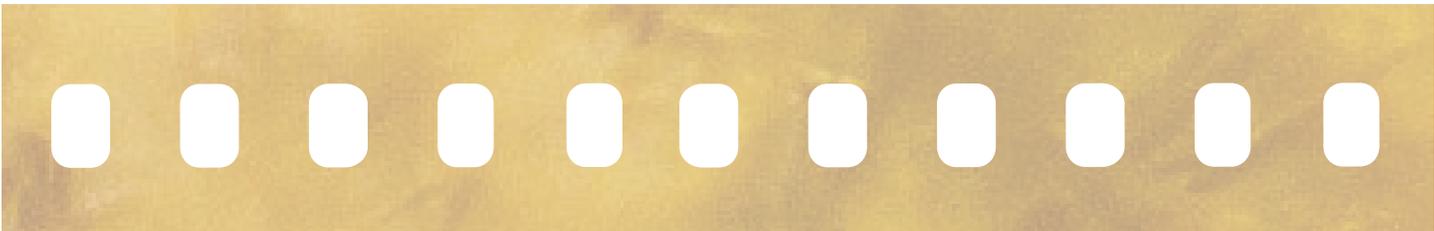


Films for the Future

Raising the Curtain on Mental Health

May 25, 2021



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About the Film

Kids in Crisis: You're Not Alone

Kids in Crisis: You're Not Alone is a documentary following four young Wisconsinites navigating mental health challenges. They've endured assault, bullying, incarceration, and discrimination - some thought about suicide. But through the pain, they found support from family, friends, and strangers. They found strength within themselves. They're sharing their stories to let others know they're not alone and that healing is possible.

The film is an extension of [USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin's Kids in Crisis series](#), which has uncovered rising suicide rates and gaps in mental health care in Wisconsin.

About the Students in the Film



TJ Esser - When he was 13, TJ told his family he was transgender. With support from his family and friends through his transition, he now feels comfortable being himself and dreaming of his future. At 16, he is sharing his story out of concern for his transgender peers, who don't experience as much acceptance, who experience higher levels of mental health challenges and suicidal thoughts.



Alex Hart-Upendo - This teen uses his creativity to cope with the difficult parts of his life, including homelessness and bullying. Alex has also turned his talent into a business, designing bow ties to help support his non-profit, Build-a-Bow.



Barrett Poetker - Now in her first year at college, Barrett is trying to put her high school years behind her, especially the emotional scars. For Barrett, high school was hard. She struggled with her parents' divorce, bullying, and diagnosis of OCD, anxiety and depression.



Reyna Saldana - Since the age of 4, Reyna grew up in the "system" - first bouncing between foster homes and then, due to her violent behavior, treatment facilities and detention centers. Her mental health issues are most likely the result of severe childhood trauma she experienced. Reyna's been diagnosed with depression, bipolar disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Thank You, Panelists

PANELISTS

David Garcia, MSW | *School Social Worker, Emily Griffith High School, Denver Public Schools*

David has worked as a Behavioral Specialist for the district, has been a Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Instructor for the past 11 years, is a trainer for Question Persuade Refer (Suicide Prevention), and has served as a member of the District Crisis Recovery Team in the past. He received his undergraduate degree from Metro State of Denver and his Master's from the University of Denver where he also earned an extra certificate in the area of Trauma Response. David is a former U.S. Marine, college wrestler, and proud father to three daughters.

Juanita Hurtado | *Junior, Thomas Jefferson High School, Denver Public Schools*

Juanita is an immigrant who came to the United States from Columbia with her family when she was 14 years old. A writer and a poet, Juanita is publishing her first poetry book this summer. Her favorite class is English as well as art and leadership. She loves to make high school as memorable as it can be and likes to be involved. She has participated in two internships with the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver and is passionate about mental health, feminism, activism and really likes the idea of using art to voice these passions.

Ellen Kelty, MA, NCSP | *Director of Student Equity and Opportunity, Denver Public Schools*

Ellen is a school psychologist who supports the Department of Social Work and Psychological Services, the District Crisis Recovery Team, suicide and threat prevention and our equitable discipline team. She has served on the Board of Directors for the Pupil Assistance Fund, Second Wind Fund and the Advisory Board of Colorado School Safety Resource Center. She serves on the City of Denver Equity Council for the COVID response. She is passionate about using culturally responsive practice to provide mental health interventions to students and eliminate suicide risk, targeted violence, bullying and cyberbullying. Ms. Kelty is interested in the intersection between race and disabilities for our students with disabilities. She is a proud DPS alumni (go Spartans) and a foster adoptive mom and had four children graduate from DPS.

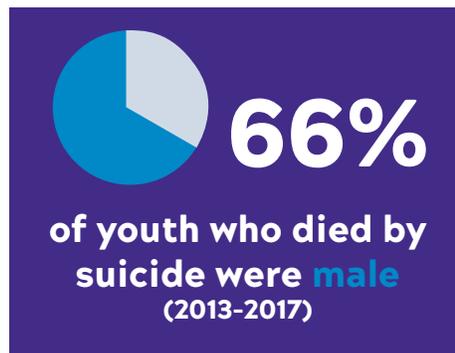
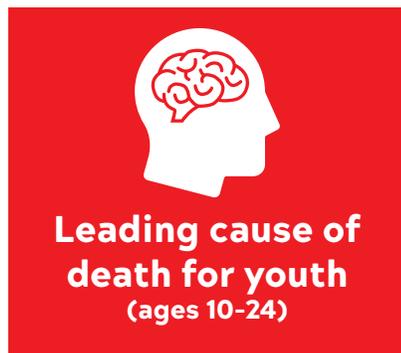
Dr. Jane Lineman, NCSP | *Student Safety Coordinator, Denver Public Schools*

Dr. Lineman supports the coordination of district suicide, threat, and self-injury prevention and response practices. She is a trainer in multiple curricula including the Question. Persuade. and Refer., a gatekeeper suicide prevention training for adults, and the NASP PREPaRE Workshop 2, a national model of crisis response practices. She serves on multiple committees including the Denver Metro-Crisis Team, Denver Child Fatality Review Board, and the Second Wind Fund Board. As a member of the National Association of School Psychologists, she serves as a NCSP Reviewer and Best Practices chapter editor. Dr. Lineman is passionate about student wellness and works to dismantle barriers to mental health resources for youth while building partnerships with parents, staff and community members.

Juanita Romero, MSW, LCSW | *School Social Worker, Johnson Elementary School, Denver Public Schools*

Juanita has served at Johnson for the past 14 years, is a member of the DPS Crisis Recovery Team, and is a trainer in the Question. Persuade. and Refer. model and the NASP PREPaRE Workshop 2. She has her 200 hour Yoga Teacher Training and is participating and engaging with the NASWNY Chapter to dismantle racist practices in the field of social work and social work programs to foster equity for youth and professionals. She is passionate about the safety of our youth and their overall well-being. She is also the proud mother of two children and three dogs.

Statistics on Suicide



Research indicates that suicide impacts all racial and ethnic populations with higher risk impacting our BIPOC youth, students with disabilities, and youth who identify as LGBTQ.

**Information provided by the DPS Office of Student Equity and Opportunity*

Denver Public Schools Mental Health Supports

- Social-emotional screening and programming
- Substance abuse and prevention programming
- Bully prevention
- Access to school mental health providers and community partners
- Extracurriculars such as clubs, sports, student groups, Gay Straight Alliances

In alignment with DPS crisis priorities, all schools have access to school-based mental health providers such as school psychologists, school social workers, school counselors and school nurses. Reach out to your school to learn more.

All DPS students and families have access to [18 school-based health care centers](#) that provide medical and mental health services at no cost.

Mental Health

Risk Factors

- Depression and other mental health disorders
- Medical conditions, chronic pain, impairment to functioning
- Prior suicide attempt or exposure to suicide death
- Loss of an interpersonal relationship
- Feeling bullied, harassed, or persecuted by others
- Exposure to violence (physical/sexual abuse)
- Substance use/abuse
- School disciplinary action or court involvement
- Access to means to harm self

Warning Signs

- Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness
- Feelings of anxiety, agitation, rage, uncontrolled anger
- Reckless behavior
- Onset of alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Reading or writing about death, interest in death
- Preparation or practice behaviors

Immediate Triggers

- Symptoms of a psychiatric disorder
- Interpersonal conflict
- Instability in the home
- Exposure to violence, abuse, or neglect
- Physical or medical condition
- Victimization of bullying/harassment
- Exposure to death by suicide
- Questioning gender or sexual orientation in the absence of safe and supportive friends/family

As you watch the film...

1. What are the key messages?
2. Are there individuals, scenes, and images or lines that stand out for any particular reason?
3. What feelings does the film bring up? Was anything surprising to you?

Notes

Additional Resources

[Colorado Crisis Services](#) | 1-844-493-8255

Call 1-844-493-8255 to connect with a trained crisis counselor or visit one of the walk-in clinics. Most centers are open 24/7 and offer confidential, in-person crisis support, information and referrals to anyone in need. You can also chat online or text “TALK” to 38255.

[Second Wind Fund of Denver](#)

When a child or teen, up to 19 years old, is at risk for suicide and faces a financial or social barrier to accessing mental health treatment, Second Wind Fund covers the cost of therapy. For families who are not facing a financial or social barrier and need help finding a quality provider, Second Wind Fund can provide navigation assistance.

[The Trevor Project](#) | 1-866-488-7386

For members of the LGBTQ community, connect with a trained counselor by calling 1-866-488-7386. You can also chat online or text “START” to 678678.

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) | 1-800-273-8255

The Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals. You can also chat online.

[Safe2Tell Colorado](#) | 1-877-542-7233

Safe2Tell Colorado gives YOU a safe, anonymous way to help someone who is struggling or hurting. No one will ask for your name or number. There is no caller ID, no call tracing, no call recording and no call forwarding. Safe2Tell only wants to hear your concern and try to help. To learn more, visit <https://safe2tell.org>. To make a report, call 1-877-542-7233 from anywhere, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Or download the mobile app.

Learn more about [Suicide Prevention Resources](#) from DPS’s Student Equity and Opportunity department.

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