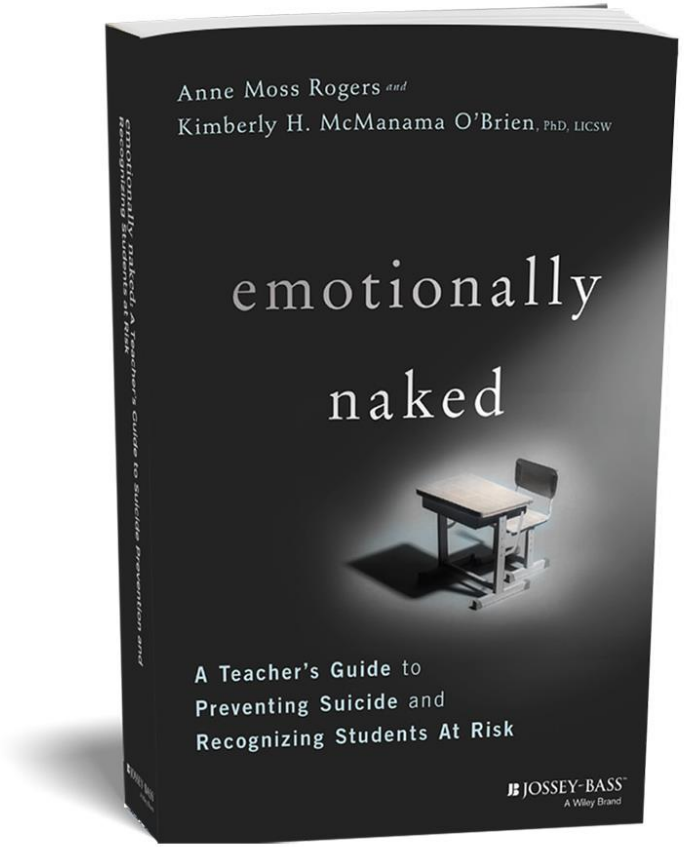

Educator Conversation with a Student who Might be Suicidal

Elementary Age Students

MentalHealthAwarenessEducation.com

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MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS EDUCATION

USA Suicide & Crisis Lifeline 988

USA & Canada Crisis Text Line 741-741

USA Crisis line LGBTQ Youth 1-866-488-7386

USA Crisis text line LGBTQ Youth 678-678

Trans lifeline
USA (877) 565-8860
Canada (877)-330-6366

MentalHealthAwarenessEducation.com

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS EDUCATION

While the following conversation is between a student and an educator, know that the tactics are similar with a co-worker.

Educators also struggle with thoughts of suicide, and we should be there for them, too.

See these posts on how to help a colleague

- To those who think, 'I'm not qualified to talk to someone who is suicidal'
- They said they're thinking of suicide? What now?

Case study:
Sebastian. 7 years old, 2nd grade

What's happening in his life?

- His grandmother with whom he was very close recently died

What's going on at school?

- He's been more dysregulated lately
- He gets angry and frustrated very quickly
- He's made remarks indicating low self esteem

Educator

“Sebastian. I have noticed you seem very sad. Can we talk about it?”

Child

“Nobody likes me.”

Educator

“Tell me why you think that.”

Child

“Because I’m ugly and stupid.”

Educator

“I am sorry you feel so bad about yourself. What do you think about when you are sad?”

Acknowledge the feeling. Don’t refute it as that would invalidate his feelings.

Child

“I think about being with grandma in heaven.”

Educator

“I see. So, are you thinking about making yourself dead?”

Child

“Yes. I would hold my breath until I was dead.”

Educator

“You must really hurt. Do you know what happens when someone dies?”

Ask questions with curiosity

Child

“They go to heaven where it’s very beautiful.”

Educator

“When someone dies, their heart stops beating, they stop breathing, and they can’t move. Have you ever seen a dead animal?”

Find out their level of understanding of death

Child

“I saw a dead cat in our road once.”

Educator

“I have seen that, too. It sometimes makes me sad to see a dead animal. What about you?”

Child

“Me, too.”

Educator

“What people, pets or things are important to you?”

Anchoring the conversation to life with a question

Child

“My dog. When I am sad, he cuddles up against me.”

Educator

“I bet that feels really good. If you died, what would happen to him?”

Child

“I don’t know. I think my daddy would take care of him.”

Educator

“I see. Do you think your dog would miss you?”

Child

“I think so. He loves me. I know he does.”

Educator

“So, he doesn’t hate you. And I don’t hate you either. Can I introduce you to someone I like?”

Child

“Who?”

Educator

“He is our school counselor, and he helps people who feel sad.”

Child

“OK”

Educator

“Thank you for talking with me and being really honest.”

Older children

“Are you thinking of suicide?”

Younger children

“Are you thinking of making yourself dead?”

Soundbites on conversation about death with a young child under 10

- What does it mean to be alive?
- How can you tell if something is alive?
- Is this doll alive?
- What do you think it means if you are dead?
- Can people die?
- Could you die?
- What do you think causes a person to die?
- When a person is dead can they hear sounds? Can they talk?
- Do you know someone who has died?

Summary of what to do

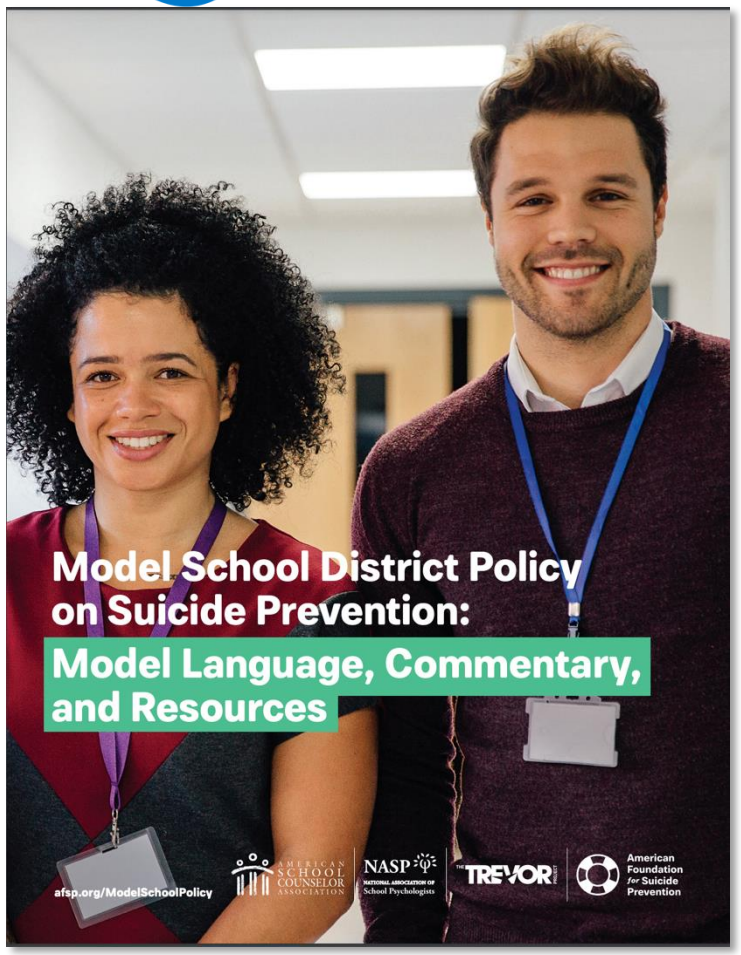
1. Engage in private conversation

2. Listen w/ empathy, no “fixing”

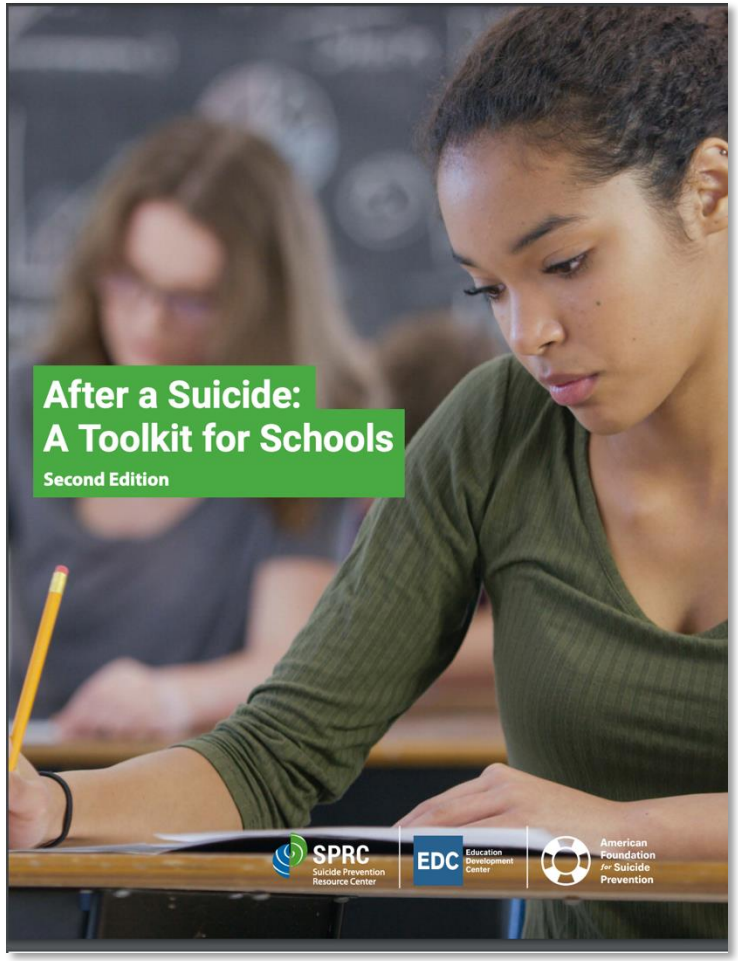
3. Ask, “Are you thinking of making yourself dead?”

4. Connect child w/ help (Do not send them alone!)

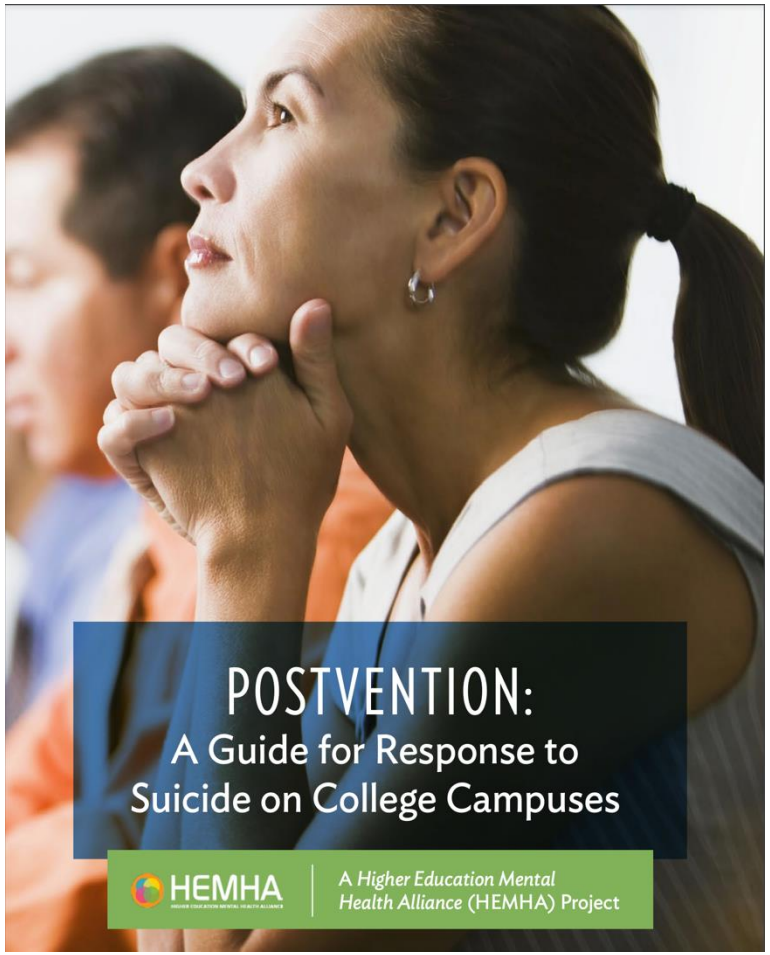
MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS EDUCATION



[Model School Policy]



[After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools], K-12



[Postvention: A Guide for Response to Suicide on College Campuses]

Suicide Prevention: What Teachers Can Do

Click the title to listen to the one-hour podcast

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EmotionallyNaked.com

UNC-Chapel Hill alumna, lives in Richmond, VA.

In-person & Virtual

Anne Moss Rogers is a suicide prevention champion. I had the pleasure of presenting with her at a national conference and she received a standing ovation... I have been to this pediatric conference for two decades and I have never seen ***any*** speaker receive a standing ovation. She was powerful. She was moving.

Lisa Horowitz, PhD, MPH, Psychologist, National Institute of Mental Health

TEDx · NIH National Institute of Mental Health · Kutztown University · Fairfax County Public Schools Engage • Inspire • Thrive · Utah Valley University · Lafayette School District

Keynote topics
- Turning pain into purpose
- Social Media, Search & Suicide
- Diary of a Broken Mind (addiction ed + coping skills)

Training
- The Emotionally Naked Truth About Suicide (1-2hrs)
- Youth Suicide: Prevention, Intervention, Postvention (half day)
- safeTALK training (certified trainer, half day)

Breakouts/Workshops
- The Emotionally Naked Truth About Suicide
- Anxiety Workshop
- Coping Strategies Workshop
- Coping Strategies for Grief & Loss

PD for Educators
- The Emotionally Naked Truth About Student Suicide (Can focus on: elementary kids, teens, young adults)

Emotionally Naked: A Teacher's Guide to Preventing Suicide and Recognizing Students at Risk

Diary of a Broken Mind: A Mother's Story, a Son's Suicide and the Haunting Lyrics he Left Behind

Bio

Anne Moss is her first name. It's a Southern thing. She is an author and an Emotionally Naked® professional speaker and trainer who uses storytelling to educate and help audiences find hope, healing and purpose. The author of two books, she has been featured in the New York Times and was first non-clinician invited to speak at the National Institute of Mental Health on youth suicide.

Despite her family's best efforts, her 20-year-old son, Charles, died by suicide June 5, 2015, after many years of struggle with anxiety, depression and addiction.

Audiences: educators, corporations, youth, clinicians & doctors, state depts, parents, military

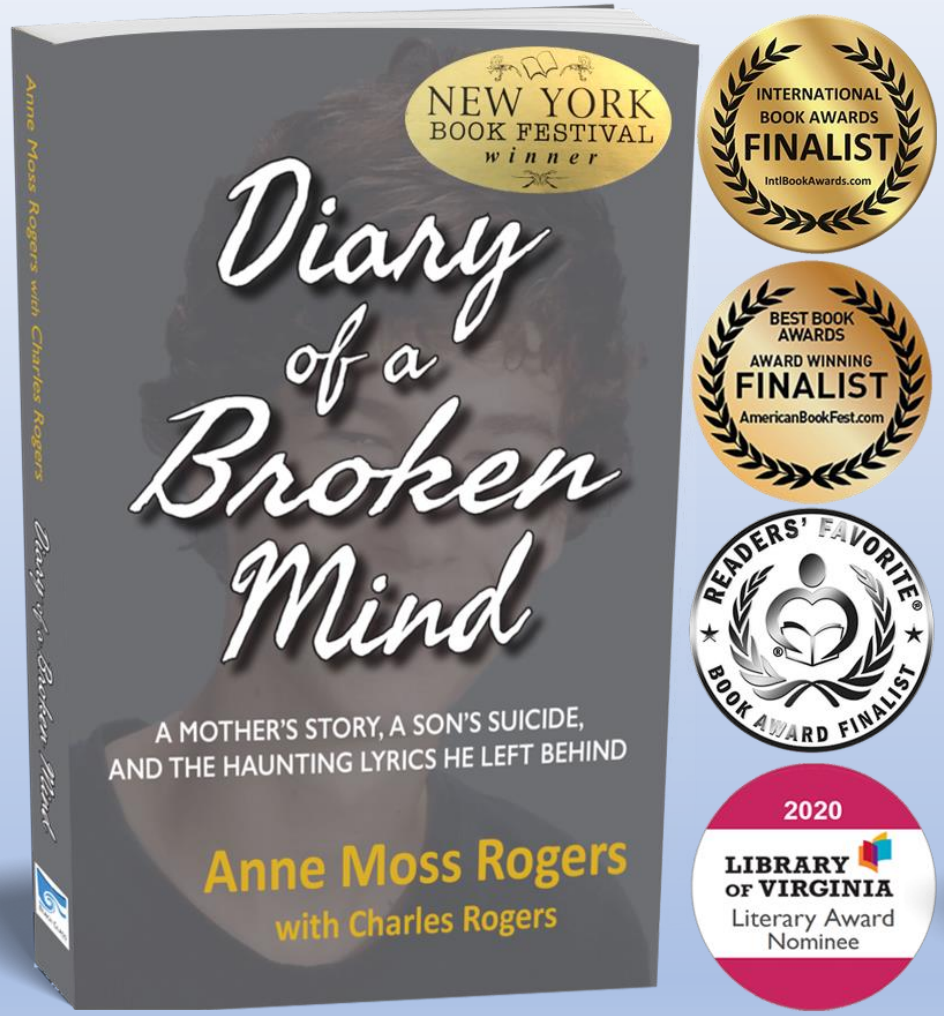
Training

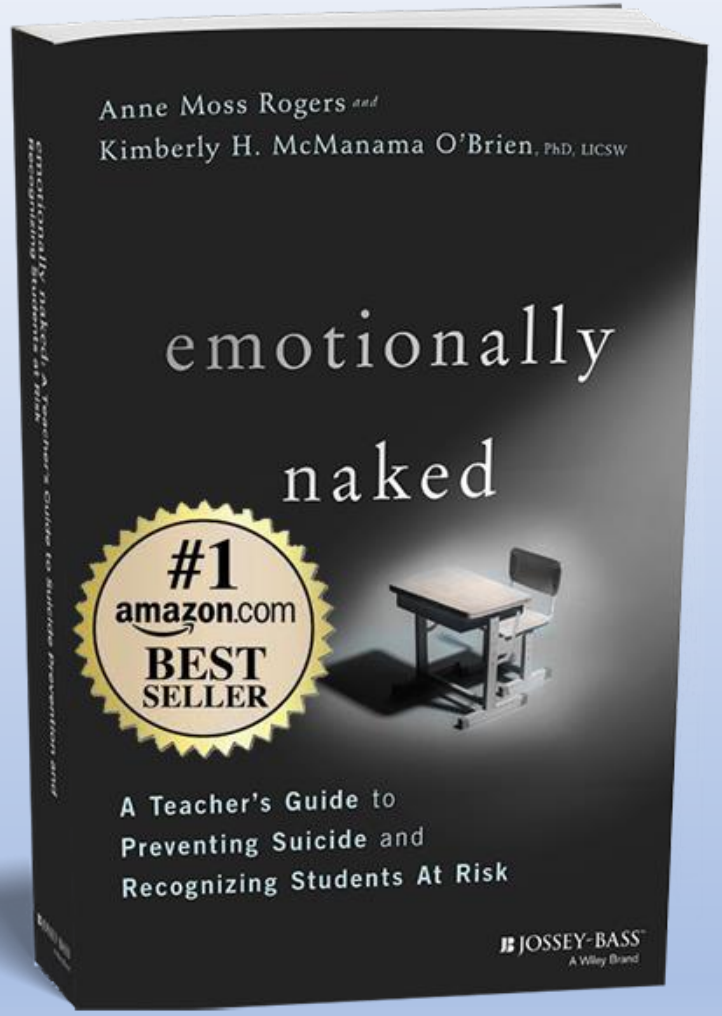
Anne Moss is trained in:
- **safeTALK**- Registered suicide prevention trainer
- **ASIST**– Applied Suicide Intervention Skills
- **ASK Workshop**-Identifying suicide risk in young kids 6-14
- **MHFA,YMFA**- Youth Mental Health First Aid
- **Preventure**– Personality-targeted life skills training for youth substance misuse prevention
- **DBT Steps-A in Schools**- DBT skills
- **Trauma-Informed Care Basics**
- **Suicide Survivor Peer Outreach**
- **Gym Neurocognitive Training for Addiction**

DEMO Video & TEDx
AnneMossRogers.com

- **Hire Anne Moss to Speak: Get Anne Moss's one sheet for educators**
- **Hire Anne Moss to do a PD or train staff email: am@annemoss.com**
- **Subscribe to the Educator Email List: Look for the large green button**

Subscribe to the Educator list





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