



After Suicides of Parkland Survivors, Here's What Educators Should Know About Supporting Students

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News Type: Weekly Spark, Weekly Spark News

[Education Week](#) [1]

In the aftermath of recent suicide deaths, experts are sharing guidance on how to support young people at risk. Students who are struggling can benefit from a caring conversation, said Christine Moutier, chief medical officer of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Teachers can play an important role in supporting these students by opening up a dialogue, validating their feelings, and reminding them that they are not alone. Students who have experienced traumatic events, such as mass shootings, may be especially vulnerable to suicide risk—but youth can also be affected by traumatic events they have not experienced directly. Families should limit children's access to guns and other means of suicide, according to Michael Anestis, associate psychology professor at the University of Southern Mississippi. Schools that have lost students to gun violence can help connect members of the school community with resources and support. "One of the things that a community needs to do is to make sure that everybody knows they can have access [to counseling and support], and that what they're feeling is valid and something that they can get help with," Anestis said.

Spark Extra! Visit the [Disaster Distress Helpline](#) [2] and its [Strength After](#) [3] project.

Populations: Youth, Children Ages 12 and Younger, Adolescents
Settings: Schools, Communities
Strategies: Identify and Assist, Reduce Access to Means, Connectedness

Links within this resource

[1] http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/rulesforengagement/2019/03/after_suicides_of_parkland_survivors_heres_what_educators_should_know_about_supporting_students.html

[2] <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline>

[3] <https://strengthafterdisaster.org/>

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