

# Not One More:

## A Mission to Eliminate Youth Suicide



### Implementation Packet

## From the Author

Hi, my name is Lynda C. I'm currently a 16-year-old student who is working towards the Girl Scout Gold Award. I am the creator of *Not One More: A Mission to Eliminate Youth Suicide*.

Since I was 13, I knew I wanted to make a suicide prevention program. At 10 years old, I began struggling with poor mental health. At one point I experienced suicidal ideation that resulted from an extreme desire to escape the situation I was in. It was horrifying and I felt that I had nowhere to turn. Luckily, support from family, friends, and an amazing nurse practitioner got me through to the healing process. When I began to process the trauma from that time, I made a resolution that no one would ever feel as helpless as I did.

Of course, life caught up to me, and I forgot about the resolution until last year. Last year, my family attended a funeral for one of my brother's friends. At the time, my brother was a senior in high school. His friend was the same age. His friend fell victim to the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for people ages 15-24: suicide.

Something had to happen, and something had to happen right then.

So, I began researching. How many children report feelings of poor mental health? How many children had gotten to the point of suicidal ideation? Made plans? Attempted? One specifically sickening point in my research was when I noticed that teen suicides in my home town had doubled from 14 in 2018 to 28 in 2019.

So what is missing from currently existing suicide prevention programs? What isn't there that is integral to preventing children from ending their own life? More research soon made this answer glaringly obvious: ***mental health was treated like a passing topic***. I understand that sometimes the only thing that a school can do is a seminar one time per year or a theme-week. Life is busy. I get it. I am not discounting that as an ineffective method to teach about mental health. But what I feel so many schools fail to realize is that it gets increasingly difficult to remember the presentation that was given in October when you are struggling with poor mental health in February.

I believe that mental health needs to be revisited throughout the school year. There must be a culture that destigmatizes discussions around mental health and asking for help. Students must know who their support system is and what to do when they feel that they are struggling. Schools can provide this to them. And I can provide it to the schools.

When I started I had no idea *how* I was going to accomplish that objective. All I had were some ideas floating around my head to serve as the *guiding principles* (or vision). I wrote them on a whiteboard and took a picture.



# Not One More: A Mission to Eliminate Youth Suicide

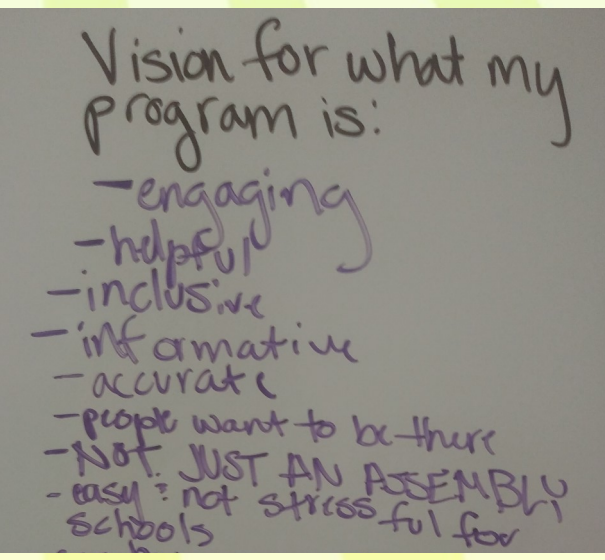
Thus, *Not One More: A Mission to Eliminate Youth Suicide* was born. This curriculum is intended to fit with any schedule and to be implemented by anyone. Busy teachers, ambitious students, and involved administration can perform any activity in this program. One of the best things about this project is that it's not treated as a one-size-fits-all effort to eliminate suicide. Does your class enjoy creating but have difficulty understanding that they're appreciated? Try out "Classroom Cities and Student Storefronts"! What about classes that are having trouble appreciating one another? Ok, "Love Bags" is perfect!

There are activities that lend themselves to spontaneous incorporation into unplanned downtime and times of heightened anxiety, as well as activities that can be incorporated into assignments, extra credit, announcements, assemblies, etc. I wanted to make this program incredibly easy to operate. All it needs is you – the person reading this letter – to get an idea from one of the pamphlets... *and take action.*

As the years progress, I hope the stigma around mental health will decrease, and self-confidence and community morale will increase.

Together, we can eliminate youth suicide.

With Love,  
Lynda



(UPDATE: In April of 2021, CookChildren's Medical Center reported that 2020 was the first year ever that suicide was the leading cause of traumatic death at the Fort Worth hospital. Additionally, Cook Children's saw a record number of patients attempting suicide in 2020.  
<https://cookchildrens.org/joy/Pages/default.aspx>)

"The work of today is the history of tomorrow, and we are its makers."  
-Juliette Gordon Low




# Safety

Some overall guidelines to follow when doing the activities in the pamphlets are as follows:

- Establish a safe environment wherever these activities are being done. This helps students feel comfortable when participating, and encourages them to participate without holding something back out of fear of being teased or judged.
- In exercises where students write about each other or partake in a group setting it is imperative that the teacher maintain an active role to keep comments positive. Even small jokes can begin to turn the direction of comments towards a crowd behavior that spirals out of control. Students are affected by comments made towards them or about them, so the teacher should be aware of conversations that happen about what students have made.
- Should a student feel insecure about what they've created, or be resistant towards doing an activity, the teacher should encourage them to try, or build their confidence in regards to their reflection.
- During activities, the teacher should go around the classroom and begin conversations around what the students are creating. This (1) allows the teacher to see if any activities are becoming harmful to the students, (2) sparks excitement within students about doing activities, and (3) starts a positive conversation around improving mental health (thereby decreasing the stigma surrounding it)
- Should activities become too stressful on those completing them, the activity can be modified as needed. If the activity is still a source of stress, it may be abandoned altogether.
- THIS IS NOT A REPLACEMENT FOR THERAPY OR PROFESSIONAL HELP. THESE ACTIVITIES ARE LISTED TO PROVIDE EASY-TO-ACCESS RESOURCES THAT CAN BE USED TO LESSON FEELINGS OF ANXIETY. TRAUMA SHOULD NOT BE PROCESSED IN A CLASSROOM SETTING. PLEASE SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP IF SOMEONE IS SUSPECTED OF HAVING ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, PTSD, OR OTHER MENTAL ILLNESSES.

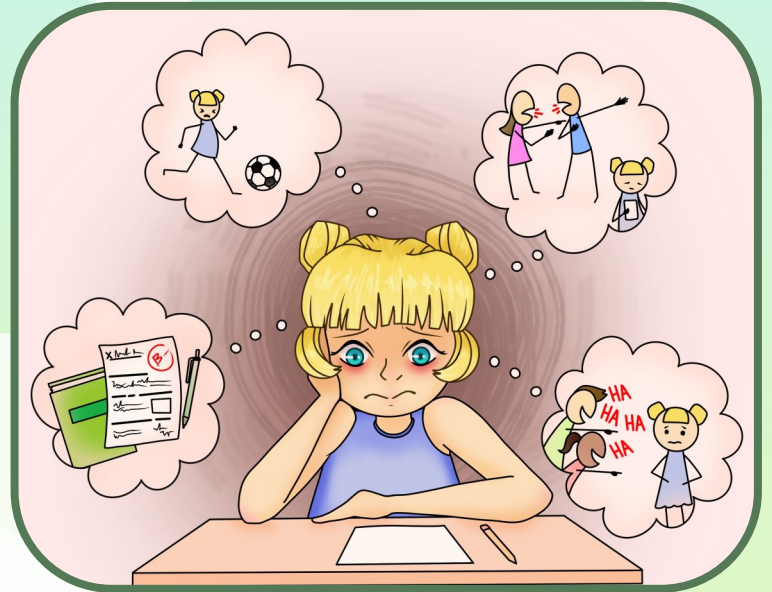




## Ways To Implement

### Random Opportunities

School is busy. Work is busy. Even playtime is busy. There is a lot of talk about study habits and work habits, but no one ever mentions Mental Health Habits... until now. The need for good mental health habits has never been greater. These habits can be established starting in elementary school and reinforced throughout a child's education. The great thing about mental health habits is that they don't always have to be structured. Life gives us random pauses. By recognizing the random opportunities that life gives us we can take a moment (or 4) to focus on our well-being.



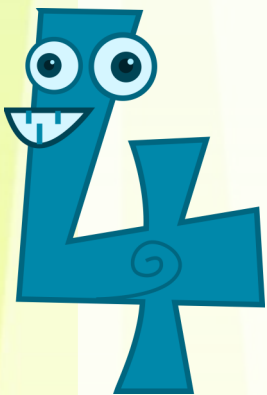
### Mental Health Moments

What is a *Mental Health Moment*? Any time there is extra time after the lesson has been completed when an exercise from one of the *Not One More* pamphlets can be discussed. Maybe it is the day after a big test. Maybe it's "that day" — you know, the day that nothing is going right and no one is listening.

### 4 Minutes For You

How is *4 Minutes for You* different from a *Mental Health Moment*? Think about a time when you were frazzled and had absolutely zero time for distractions or interruptions. You were B-U-S-Y. There was a deadline. And pressure. It's times like these that sometimes the best way to accomplish the task is to take a quick 4-minute break.

Some benefits that the class may experience after taking a small break are an increased ability to pay attention and improved problem-solving skills. Having an opportunity to shift their focus away from work allows for their brain to rest. Taking a mental break prevents fatigue that results from overworking oneself. Then, upon return to lecturing or working on an assignment, the brain has had time to regroup and re-energize. Time to stop focusing on school allows for fresh eyes upon return to work. Rest gives the brain the ability to look at a problem from a new perspective once it is revisited and come up with a solution it may not have seen earlier.





## Ways To Implement

### Curriculum Opportunities

Opportunities to integrate mental health into the every day curriculum are all around us. Mental health education and awareness is not another subject to be added to an already weighty class schedule. Nor is it the sole domain of Health Class. It's in every class... hiding in plain sight.

Geography teachers can offer extra credit to any student who completes the "Make a Country" activity. English teachers can substitute any of the writing activities for writing assignments. Civics classes can participate in the Classroom Cities and Student Storefronts. STEM classes can explore chemical reactions while cooking a Supper for Supporters. Art classes, dance classes, PE classes have a wealth of opportunities throughout the Not One More pamphlets. The opportunities are endless.

### Pick-A-Day!


The premise of Pick-A-Day! is that a teacher can pick a theme for their class and incorporate a mental health activity into the lesson plan on that day. Some theme ideas are listed in the sidebar, but they can be anything. Using the Pick-A-Day! method to incorporate *Not One More* provides structure and consistency to mental health education.

Administrators can get involved by creating their own Pick-A-Day activity. Maybe announcements on Thursday have an inspirational quote. Or assemblies on the 5th Friday have a mental health minute.

The benefits of implementing *Not One More* in this manner are that students have a consistent time for focusing on their mental health, and teachers are prepared to spend time on mental health. Pick-A-Day! also gives students something to look forward to. Knowing that there is a specific time during which mental health is prioritized can be reassuring to stressed students.

### Pick-A-Day Theme Ideas:

- Mental Health Monday
- Talk About It Tuesday
- Work on Yourself Wednesday
- Think About It Thursday
- Focus Friday
- Fifth Friday



## Ways to Implement



# EXTRA CREDIT

### Extra Credit

Sometimes it's not possible to consistently incorporate mental health activities into a class, or the teacher wants to make sure that students are focused on mental health outside of school. A way to incentivize students to work on mental health at home is to provide an extra credit opportunity for completion of *Not One More* activities.

Incorporating the curriculum through extra credit opportunities can help spread mental health education into the community. This different application of the program offers the students more freedom in how they complete their activity. Expanded the program beyond the walls of the school enables students to build relationships with neighbors. And, it allows students to use more materials than what may be provided to them by the teacher to create.



### Announcements

Implementing aspects of *Not One More* over morning and end-of-school announcements is a great way for a school's administration to become involved in the program. *Not One More* is a schoolwide initiative that not only involves participation from students and teachers, but also involves administration. By including aspects of the program into the announcements, it ensures that all students experience *Not One More* and it becomes a part of the school's culture. Integrating the program into the school's daily life through messages that reach everyone helps build excitement around focusing on mental health. This excitement is imperative in maintaining interest in schoolwide suicide prevention.



## Acknowledgements

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# Resources

## Resources:

Reasons to go on walks:

<https://thriveglobal.com/stories/how-walking-can-boost-your-mood-and-reduce-stress/>

Questions to calm the emotional mind:



Wise Mind  
Resources.pdf

Helping to understand the emotional mind:

<https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/wise-mind.pdf>

Reasons to go on walks:

<https://thriveglobal.com/stories/how-walking-can-boost-your-mood-and-reduce-stress/>

Research behind Butterfly Hugs:

<https://emdrfoundation.org/toolkit/butterfly-hug.pdf>

Understanding Bi-lateral movements for decreasing anxiety:

<https://anxietyreleaseapp.com/what-is-bilateral-stimulation/>

Furthering your knowledge of Square Breathing!



Square Breathing  
Explanation.pdf

Explanation of Wise Mind:

<https://cogbtherapy.com/cbt-blog/wise-mind-dbt>