# Study: Frequent Mental Health Visits Reduce Suicide Risk in Children

Children with disorders such as epilepsy and schizophrenia have higher rates of suicide, but consistent care reduces risk

The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

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#### **NEWS PACKAGE**

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SUGGESTED TEASE	SUICIDE RATES CONTINUE TO RISE AMONG CHILDREN. COMING UP, A NEW STUDY IDENTIFIES FACTORS THAT PUT KIDS AT RISK AND STEPS NEEDED TO SAVE LIVES.
ANCHOR LEAD	SUICIDE IS THE SECOND-LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH AMONG KIDS TEN AND OLDER <sup>1</sup> , AND WHILE THIS NATIONAL HEALTH CRISIS CONTINUES TO RISE, RESEARCHERS ARE WORKING TO BRING AWARENESS TO THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH CARE AND DEVELOP WAYS TO PREVENT TRAGEDIES.  BARB CONSIGLIO HAS THE DETAILS ON A NEW STUDY <sup>2</sup> THAT IDENTIFIES KIDS AT RISK AND INTERVENTIONS THAT SAVE LIVES.
(PACKAGE START)	(Nats - Sound) :02
CG: Courtesy: The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center :00 - :03  Shots of Kenzie in dorm	KENZIE BARKER IS A BUSY COLLEGE FRESHMAN LOOKING TOWARD A BRIGHT FUTURE, BUT A FEW YEARS AGO, SHE WAS BATTLING SEVERE DEPRESSION THAT LED HER TO MAKE A PLAN TO END HER LIFE. :09
CG: Kenzie Barker Experienced childhood depression	"My mom ended up finding the plan somehow, I'm not sure how. They ended up taking me to the hospital that day during school and from there I started getting treatment and things started getting better." :13
Shots of Kenzie studying  Shots of counseling session	KENZIE SAYS INTENSIVE THERAPY LIKELY SAVED HER LIFE, AND IT'S SOMETHING THAT NEEDS TO BE AVAILABLE TO KIDS WHEN THEY NEED IT. SUICIDE AMONG CHILDREN HAS GROWN BY THIRTY PERCENT OVER THE PAST TWO DECADES. AND EXPERTS SAY THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT

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THESE TRAGEDIES IS TO RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS. :15 CG: Cynthia Fontanella, PhD "It's important that you ask your child directly if they're **Ohio State Wexner Medical** having suicidal thoughts, suicidal ideation or if they're Center depressed.":10 TO BETTER UNDERSTAND FACTORS THAT PUT CERTAIN ADOLESCENTS AT A HIGHER RISK. Shots of Fontanella working CYNTHIA FONTANELLA AND HER TEAM AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER EXAMINED MEDICAID DATA OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD. THEY FOUND THAT THOSE WITH A HISTORY OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND THOSE DIAGNOSED WITH Graphic: DEPRESSION, BIPOLAR DISORDER AND Children at Increased Risk of Suicide: Substance abuse. SCHIZOPHRENIA HAD HIGHER RISKS OF SUICIDE. depression, bipolar disorder, AND THE HIGHEST RATE OF SUICIDE WAS AMONG schizophrenia, epilepsy CHILDREN DIAGNOSED WITH EPILEPSY. :23 "Having epilepsy increased the risk of the odds of Cynthia Fontanella (CG'd suicide by almost five times.":06 earlier) THE STUDY ALSO FOUND THAT FREQUENT MENTAL-HEALTH VISITS WITHIN A THIRTY DAY Shots of counseling session PERIOD LOWERED CHILDREN'S RISK.: 05 "If you have continuous care, preferably by the same provider, this can be a protective factor and reduce the Cynthia Fontanella (CG'd risk for suicide.":10 earlier) TO IDENTIFY CHILDREN WHO NEED THIS CARE, FONTANELLA SAYS SUICIDE RISK ASSESSMENTS Shots of teen in examination NEED TO BE IMPLEMENTED AT PRIMARY CARE VISITS AND OTHER HEALTH CARE SETTINGS. :09 "We certainly need to screen in high risk settings such Cynthia Fontanella (CG'd as the emergency room, inpatient hospitalization.":10 earlier) KENZIE HAS LEARNED HOW TO MANAGE HER DEPRESSION AND WANTS OTHER KIDS TO KNOW Shots of Kenzie studying THAT IT'S OKAY TO ASK FOR HELP.: 06 "Once you get out of it and you look back, you realize how much it helped you and how not scary it actually Kenzie Barker (CG'd earlier) was.":07 AT THE OHIO STATE WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER, Shots of Kenzie walking on THIS IS BARB CONSIGLIO REPORTING.:03 campus

# (PACKAGE END) -----ANCHOR TAG

EXPERTS SAY IMPLEMENTING UNIVERSAL SUICIDE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES HELP MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS DETERMINE THE RIGHT CARE PLAN FOR EACH CHILD TO HELP THEM FEEL SAFE AND SUPPORTED.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Share it! Suggested tweet:

A new study by researchers at <u>@OSUWexMed</u> identifies children at an increased risk of suicide and examines how mental health care saves lives. <a href="http://bit.ly/2ITcS7U">http://bit.ly/2ITcS7U</a>

Suggested post:

As suicide deaths continue to rise among children, researchers at <u>The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center</u> are examining how these tragedies can be prevented. A new study identifies which kids are at increased risk and how mental health care saves lives. <a href="http://bit.ly/2ITcS7U">http://bit.ly/2ITcS7U</a>

#### **EXTRA BITES**

Fontanella says tell your doctor about warning signs of suicide: "You should go to a mental health provider or even your primary care provider and talk to your provider about these warning signs, depression and get treatment." :12

CG: Cynthia Fontanella, PhD
Ohio State Wexner Medical Center

Fontanella states what the study found on youth suicide risk: "We found that kids that died by suicide were more likely to have depression, bipolar disorder, substance abuse, and schizophrenia and epilepsy." :14

Fontanella explains what to do if a risk assessment is positive: "If they turn out positive, you would do a safety plan, a further risk assessment and then go from there. Whether the child needs to be triaged to a higher level care or can go home with supports.":18

CG: Kenzie Barker Experienced childhood depression Kenzie says she's now able to work through depressions with coping skills:

"I learned healthy coping skills, which was a huge one because oftentimes when I would get into those depressive states it would be... I didn't know what to do with myself and this gave me skills to deal with that and start working through it.":14

Kenzie says she still deals with depression, but she's equipped to handle it:

"I would totally be lying if I said I didn't still deal with

# CG: Kenzie Barker Experienced childhood depression

depression and everything from time to time, but now I know how to deal with it, I know who to go to for help and stuff, and I also know what exactly to do when it gets bad.":14

Kenzie talks about battling depression in her teens: "It hit its peak around 16. That's when my depression was so bad that my focus was completely out the window and my grades were dropping. I wasn't keeping up with anything, I didn't want to talk to anybody.":13

#### References

<sup>1</sup>Death Rates Due to Suicide and Homicide Among Persons Aged 10–24: United States, 2000–2017, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, NCHS Data Brief No. 352, October 2019. Online: <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db352.htm">https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db352.htm</a>

<sup>2</sup>Clinical Profiles and Health Services Patterns of Medicaid-Enrolled Youths Who Died by Suicide, **JAMA Pediatrics, Volume 124, Issue 4, Mar 23, 2020**. Online:

https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/article-abstract/2762862

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