

To whom it may concern:

This is the information I promised to forward to you during the 2-hour workshop Carnarvon-Geraldton.

I hope it is of some assistance.

Re.: Student Awareness Programs:

When I lectured at Uni of Tasmania (1994-1997), Launceston, I organized throughout the state high school suicide seminars for students. Beforehand I was at Penn State University, USA.

The program was very much the same every time (1995-1997):

I would arrive at the school at 9 am.

With me arrived 4-5 university students, aged 18-20.

The day would follow app. This format:

Welcome and appreciation for their attendance

A 10 min. outline of the day

10 minutes about suicide issues and how a friend of mine died when I was 17 and my feelings about it.

Group work:

Split the large group into 3-4 small ones with butcher paper and one of the Uni students served as scribe.

In a separate room the high school students would address THEIR reasons for suicidality and ideation;

The Uni student recorded their perceptions on butcher paper.

The group met after app. 1 hour. Of all 4 groups, in each group, one person spoke about the groups' statements.

Thereafter, the same groups went back into their separate rooms and discussed how they would

change the reasons leading to suicide.

Again, the student returned after 1 hour and presented their results.

A general discussion ensued about HOW these ideas could be implemented by them, the school, and community members.

I informed Southern Cross, ABC and WIN TV. Camera and interview teams arrived to interview me but I handed that over to the students. It was their day. The students selected a speaker who was aired, esp. with ABC on prime time news at 7 pm for up to 5 minutes, others were interviewed on ABC radio.

I took the butcher papers with me, recorded the students' statements and ideas and returned all materials to the specific students.

(Reasons: Family violence, hopelessness, self-esteem problems, lack of support, sexual-physical-emotional abuse, helplessness, lack of future guidance; lack of adequate sex education/drug and alcohol education in school and at home; hormonal problems, at that time also the issue of sexual identity, esp. among boys homosexuality which was still prohibited in TAS)

Most schools or rather the students started discussion and self-help groups on abuse, eating disorders etc.

Many groups were operant for several years but as I did not continue the seminars and the students left school and moved on to other pastures, the momentum eventually slowed down and then the programs faltered.

In 1996 I was also asked by a few schools (via the students) to provide seminars as those on suicidality also on abuse with a few schools. This I did.

There came about a very active art scene in TAS. The former Premier Jim Bacon and then also the young and energetic Launceston Major (whose name I forgot at the moment) were interested to foster art activities. These gave young people an impetus to become pro-active and a lot of talk about suicide abated in the later 1990s. Many young people on their own became pro active, developed groups and looked for mentors (I became one with Arts Alive which branched into dance, theatre, painting, and more...). Many art groups are still ongoing and have expanded their work to include also "older people" or emerging artists.

A colleague and I published a few papers in national and international journals about the suicide prevention seminars with the high school students. I was involved in the TAS suicide prevention task force and for a few years on the national level until app. 1998.

I left the lecturing in 1997 and research at the U of T in 2000. I developed my own businesses in holistic lifestyle counselling until we left in 2006. When we moved from TAS to WA I threw away all journals in which I published to lower the transport (1 car and a trailer; after 3 garage sales we sold everything else with the 5-bedroom house), If you are interested, I can dig up the publications from one of my vitaes.

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