FACTED

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
COMPLIANCE TECHNOLOGY

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According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide was the tenth leading cause of death for all ages in 2013. There were 41,149 suicides in 2013 at a rate of 12.6 per 100,000. That accounts to a suicide every 13 minutes.

Suicide is the third leading cause of death for persons in the 10-14-year-old age group, second among persons 15 – 34 years of age.

In addition, 17% of all students seriously considered attempting suicide in the previous 12 months. That number includes not only attempting a non-fatal suicide attempt, but also suicidal ideation or thinking about, considering, or planning suicide.

Suicide in children and teenagers often follows a stressful life event. What a young person sees as insurmountable may seem minor to an adult. In some cases, a child may feel suicidal due to certain life circumstances that he or she may not want to talk about. These causes could be:

Possible Causes

 • Having a psychiatric disorder, including depression
 • Loss or conflict with close friends or family members
 • History of physical or sexual abuse
 • Problems with alcohol or drugs
 • Physical or medical issues, for example, becoming pregnant or having a sexually transmitted infection
 • Being the victim of bullying
 • Being uncertain of sexual orientation
 • Reading or hearing an account of suicide or knowing a peer who died by suicide.

What is so unfortunate is how many times suicide comes as such a shock and we hear comments like "If I would have only known." Or "I had no idea….".

The warning signs may have been there but overlooked. Individually, the warning signs seem insignificant or minor. But if individual warning signs were compiled, a trend toward depression, loss of hope, futility, and or eventually suicide may be noticeable.

Social Media has become a part of life for teens. Twitter has been the predominant means of sharing. Personal sites such as Instagram have seen an increase over Facebook for middle school students. More recently, social media sites such as Snapchat, Flickr and Tumbler have all have found their place. Social media has become part of our lives.

According to the Megan Meier Foundation, 95% of all teens ages 12-17 are now online and 80% of online teens are users of social media. With the use of social media comes an opportunity for social media to be misused.

The use, or abuse, of social media sites provides a unique opportunity to identify trends that may be useful in comparing warning signs of an individual or individuals that may eventually lead to suicide or a

suicide attempt. Instead of looking at warning signs as an individual event, comparing them over time may help identify a negative trend.

Cyberbullying has seen an increase. Approximately 43% of student's report experiencing cyberbullying during their lifetime. The National Center for Education Statistics for School Year 2014-2015 reports 20.8% of student's report being bullied during the school year and 11.5% or 579,000 students report being bullied on-line or by text.

It is not clear to what extent cyberbullying increases suicide risk. What is clear is that cyberbullying has a negative effect on a victim; lowering their self-esteem, increasing their depression, and producing feelings of powerlessness.

The following actions are possible warning signs for suicide:

Serious Risk Warning Signs

• Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
• Talking about being a burden to others
• Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
• Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
• Sleeping too little or too much
• Withdrawing or feeling isolated
• Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
• Displaying extreme mood swings

Immediate Risk Warning Signs

• Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself
• Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or obtaining a gun
• Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to

Many of the same risk factors for suicide may also be present for someone contemplating homicide or murder-suicide.

Coupled with these warning signs, additional influences may trigger the event to escalate. These could include:

• End of a relationship or marriage
• Death of a loved one
• An arrest
• Serious financial problems
• Bullying or cyberbullying

With social media being a prevalent means of communication and with so much information being shared, noticing trends, and capturing information helpful in changing procedures, working to modify behavior, preventing further abuse, or even curbing or preventing violence would be significant. The problem is extremely complex, and that is where FACTed can help.

FACTed captures and stores historical data which, when properly evaluated, can link trends, keywords, and phrases to provide alerts to specified personnel. Using a complex rules engine and patented algorithms, FACTed evaluation of customer defined keywords and other criteria provide a look in to the future of what may occur.

FACTed pre-event processing allows for decisions to be made to mitigate what could become a dangerous situation, before the event fully develops.

When used to identify someone that may be contemplating suicide or self-harm, FACTed will look for possible key words identified by the user as key watch words. With other determining factors defined in a risk-analysis evaluation with the user, actions defined in the evaluation can be implemented by the client.

When defining or identifying a suicide risk, historical data meeting the established criteria will be gathered and evaluated with alert levels sent to the identified personnel.

When used to monitor a homicidal risk, the need to notify personnel of an escalating situation quickly is important. In addition, notifying the proper people or groups, including first responders, to quickly mitigate a situation or to provide information allowing for a timelier lockdown is essential. The action could be a fight, a weapon, or even the threat of a shooter. The response could include notifying first responders, local desktop alerts, sending texts or emails, automatic lock activation, camera activation, activating signage, or providing voice announcements both inside and outside.

Although slightly different keywords and drastically different responses, FACTed can provide the above alerts based on criteria established during the risk analysis meeting with the client.

Following actions to mitigate the situation, FACTed maintains records for future evaluation and processing, providing a valuable look as to how and why and event occurred, what led to the escalation, and what steps were taken to de-escalate.

The safety of those under our watch is of utmost importance. Protecting the lives of students, staff or employees is our goal. Properly evaluating the risk and understanding options available to respond, minimize, or mitigate the risk helps to support this goal.

References:

- Suicide Prevention Resource Center
- CDC Center for Disease Control
- Nation Center for Education
- Megan Meier Foundation

* Patent pending