



Policy
Collaboratory

COVID-19 RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Supporting Adolescents with Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors

This study will develop and disseminate guidelines for school-based mental health professionals providing mental health care for students who are high risk for suicide—which is expected to be a significant group due to school closures and interrupted mental health care during the expected second wave of COVID-19 this fall. Dr. Marisa Marraccini is collaborating with Dr. Dana Griffin and Dr. Lauren Sartain.



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How did you become interested in this topic?

During my doctoral training, my experiences as a school psychology intern in a rural high school informed my awareness of the need to better support adolescents with mental health crises in school settings. I continued to appreciate the importance of the role of school professionals for preventing suicide during my postdoctoral training focused on suicide research with adolescents hospitalized for suicide-related crises. These experiences taught me the importance of communication between families, schools, and hospitals, and the critical need to support schools in delivering mental health interventions, particularly since most mental health services for adolescents with psychiatric disorders are provided in school settings (see Costello et al., 2014).

Any updates on your research?

We are preparing to disseminate surveys to adolescents previously hospitalized for suicide-related thoughts and behaviors and their parents, as well as school professionals across the state. We are also analyzing some of the data we had collected this past spring, when schools first closed. We are working as quickly as possible to share preliminary findings soon.