

● 10th September, 2006

# World Suicide Prevention Day

"With understanding, new hope"

## SUICIDE PREVENTION

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● 10th September, 2006

# World Suicide Prevention Day

"With understanding, new hope"

## SCOPE

- ★ THE PROBLEM
- ★ CHALLENGES AND OBSTACLES
- ★ STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS

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DEATH BY SUICIDE IS A GLOBAL  
MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM  
YET  
ALMOST NO ONE SPEAKS  
ABOUT IT BECAUSE OF  
STIGMA, FEAR AND IGNORANCE

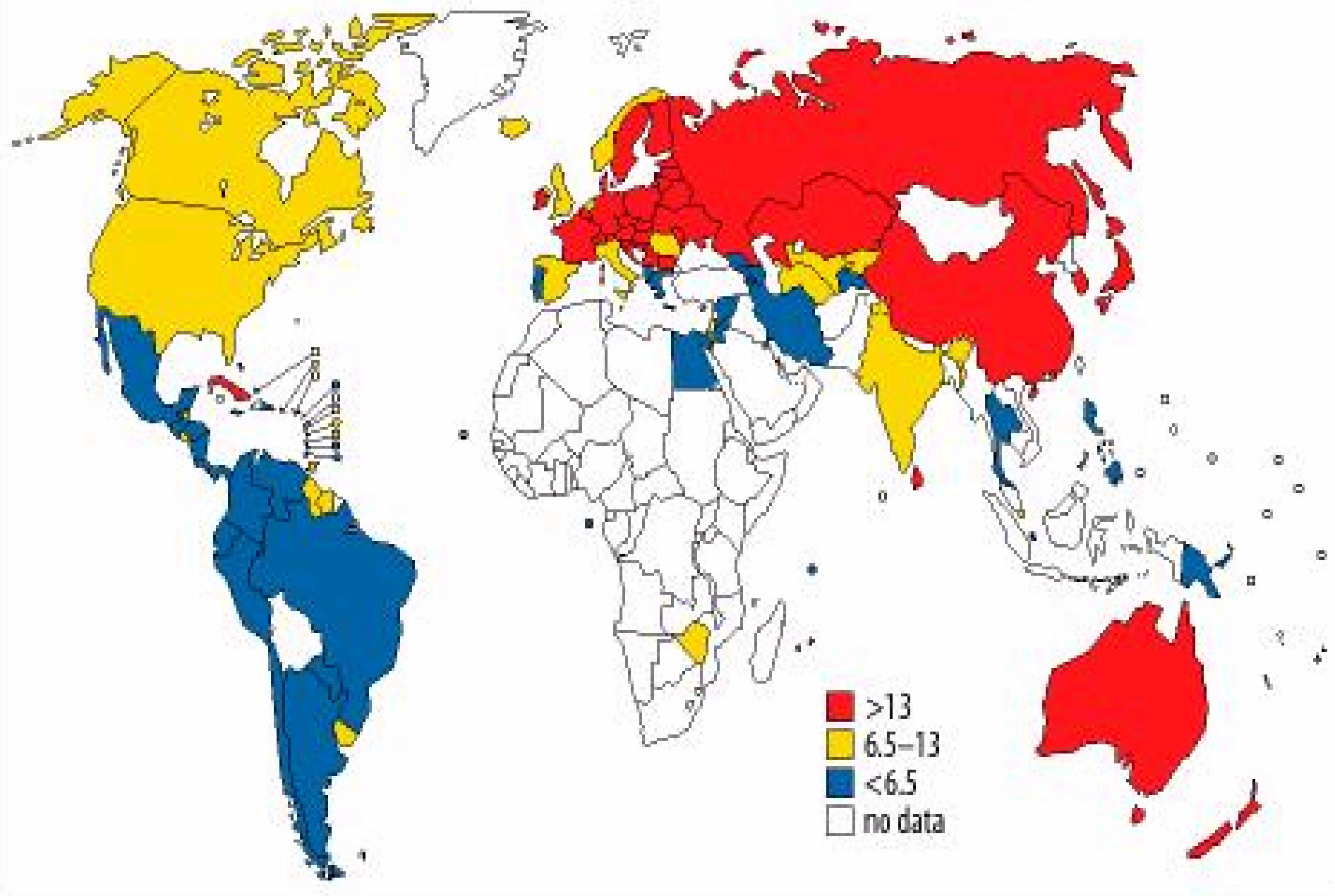
# SUICIDE: THE PROBLEM

- Year 2000 ~ 1 million people died from suicide (16: 100,000 or one death every 40 seconds)
- Last 45 years: suicide rates have increased by 60% worldwide (figures does not include suicide attempts – up to 20 times more frequent than completed suicide)

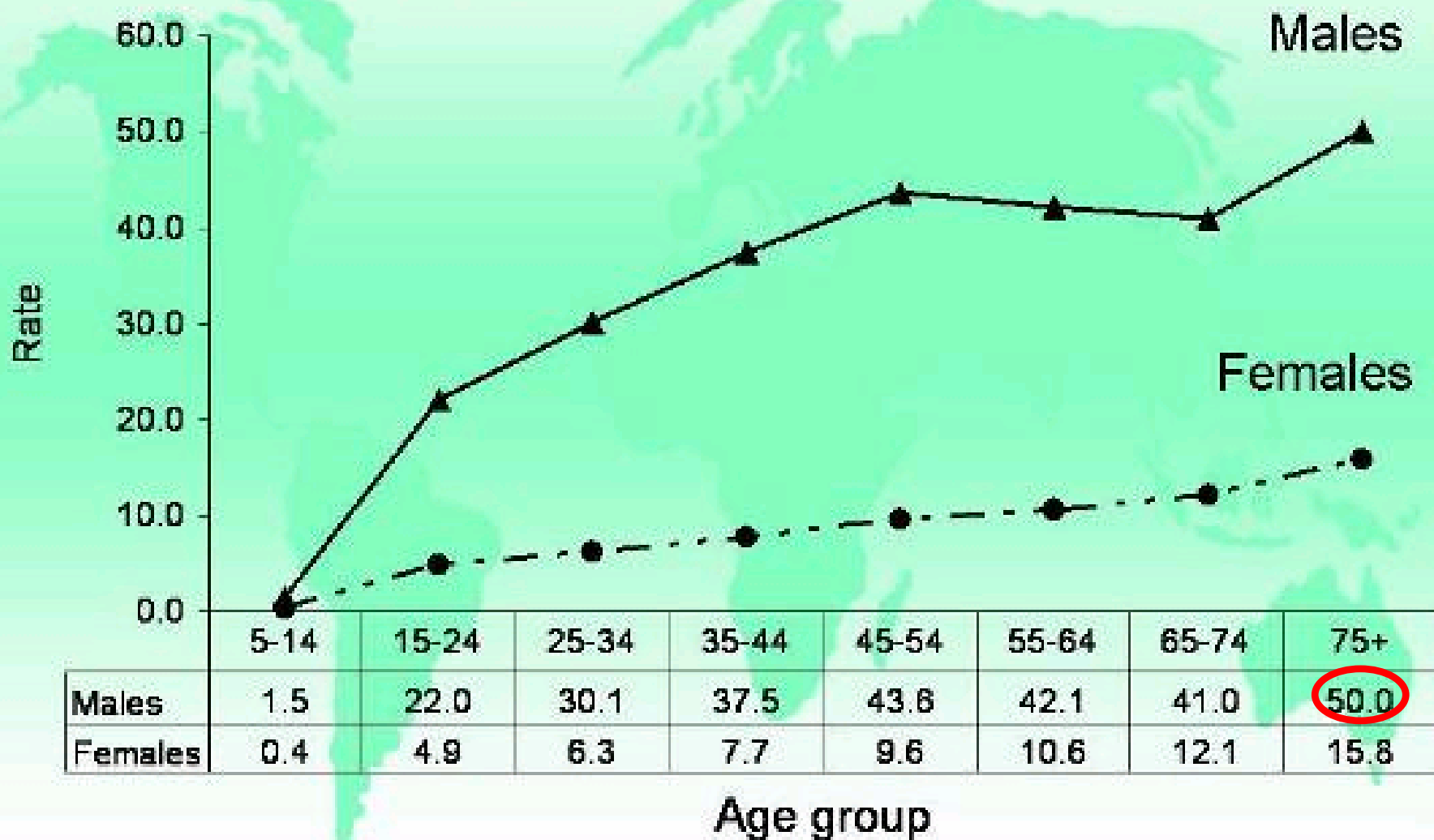
# SUICIDE: THE PROBLEM

- Mental disorders in particular depression and substance abuse, are associated with more than 90% of all cases of suicide
- Results from complex multiple sociocultural factors that most likely to occur during crisis situations : socioeconomic, individual or family

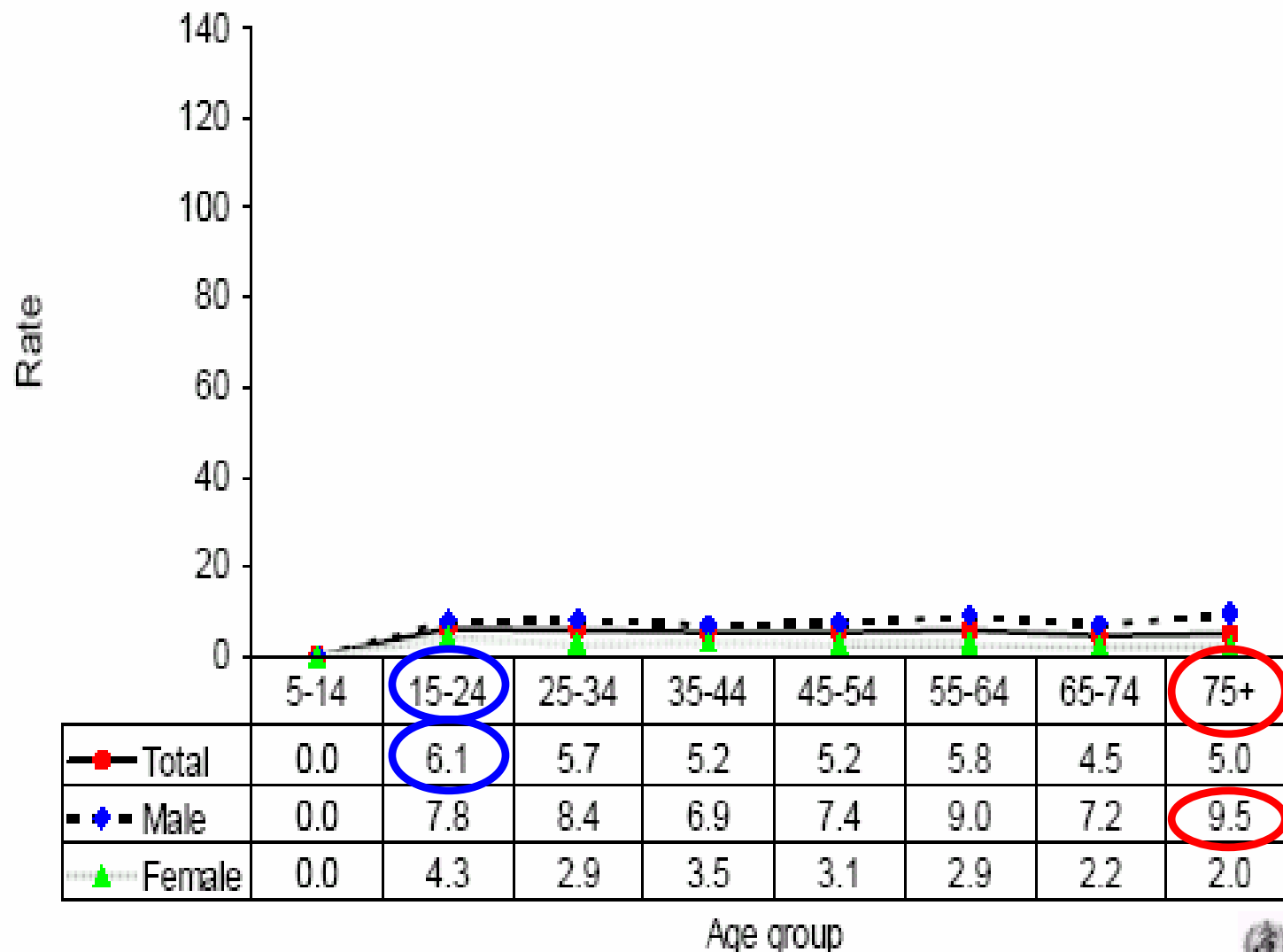
**Map of suicide rates**  
(per 100 000; most recent year available as of March 2002)



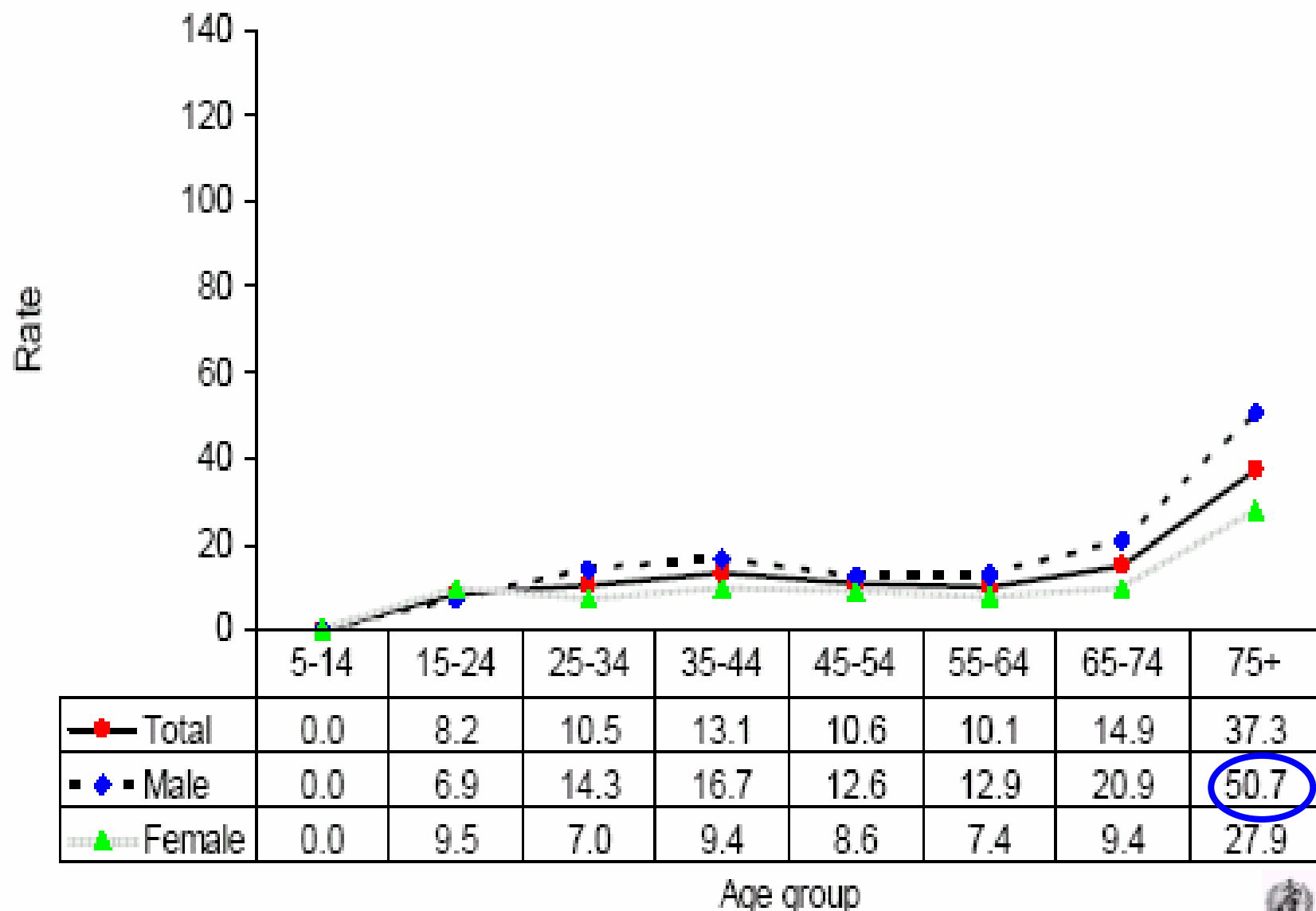
## Distribution of suicide rates (per 100,000) by gender and age, 2000



# Suicide rates (per 100,000), by gender and age, Thailand, 1994.



# Suicide rates (per 100,000), by gender and age, Singapore, 2002.



# Deliberate self-harm cases Year 2005

(Total : 121 cases referred)

Age yrs	No (%)	Gender	No (%)	Race	No (%)	Method	No (%)
<18	17 (14%)	Male	46 (38)	Malay	32 (26.4)	Self-poisoning	91 (75.2)
19-34	94 (77.7)	Female	75 (62)	Chinese	43 (35.5)	Self-Injurious	30 (24.8)
55-65	7 (5.8)			Indian	42 (34.7)		
> 65	3 (2.5)			Others	4 (3.4)		

# Deliberate self-harm cases referred JAN-JUNE 2006 (Total : 69)

Age yrs	No (%)	Gender	No (%)	Race	No (%)	Method	No (%)
<18	13 (18.8%)	Male	17 (24.6)	Malay	16 (23.2)	Self-poisoning	65 (95.2)
19-34	52 (75.4)	Female	52 (75.4)	Chinese	24 (34.8)	Self-Injurious	4 (5.8)
55-65	3 (4.35)			Indian	25 (36.2)		
> 65	1 (1.4)			Others	4 (5.8)		

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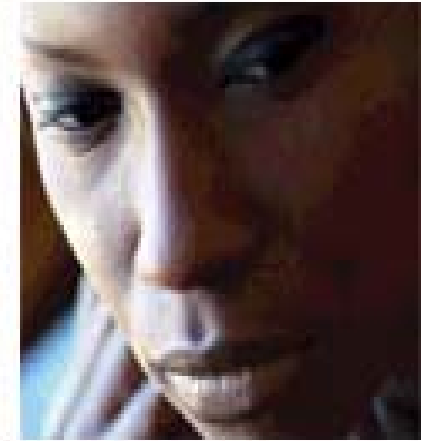
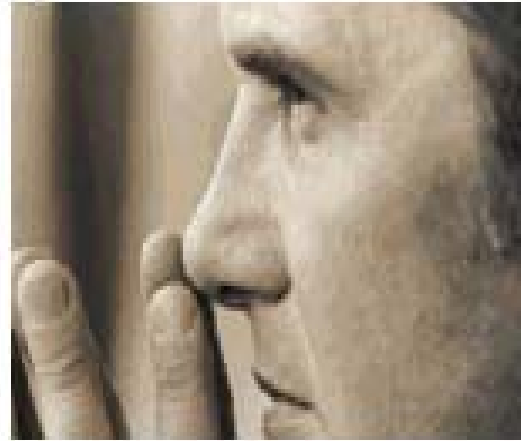
"With understanding, new hope"

## STRATEGY FOR EFFECTIVE SUICIDE PREVENTION?

# CHALLENGES AND OBSTACLES

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- Lack of public awareness that suicide is a major problem
- Stigma in many societies to discuss on this issue openly
- Few countries include suicide prevention among their priorities
- Reliability of suicide certification and reporting
- Suicide prevention requires multi-sectorial approach both health and non-health sectors: education, labour, police, justice, religion, law, politics, the media



**PREVENTION OF SUICIDAL  
BEHAVIOUR:  
A TASK  
FOR ALL**

# AIMS OF THE GOALS

- Prevent premature deaths due to suicide across life span
- Reduce the rates of other suicidal behaviour
- Reduce the harmful after-effects associated with suicidal behaviors and the traumatic impact of suicide on family and friends
- Promote opportunities and settings to enhance resiliency, resourcefulness and enhance network for individuals, families and communities

# Effective intervention, strategies involve...

1. Promote awareness that suicide is a Public Health problem and it is Preventable
2. Promote efforts to reduce access to lethal means and methods of self-harm
3. Develop and implement strategies to reduce the stigma associated with being a consumer of mental health, substance abuse and suicide prevention service

# SCREENING FOR MENTAL HEALTH

## Suicide Prevention Programs of SMH

### Students

- SOS Suicide Prevention Program
- National Depression Screening Day
- Year-round online screening

### Adults

- SOS Community Suicide Prevention Program
- National Depression Screening Day
- Year-round online screening
- Primary Care outreach
- Stop A Suicide, Today! Website

### Workplace/Healthcare

- SOS Workplace Suicide Prevention Program
- Workplace/Healthcare*Response*: Online & telephone screening

### Older Adults

- National Depression Screening Day

## SOS Suicide Prevention Program: School-based Program

- Teaches students how to identify **symptoms of depression and suicidality** in themselves or their friends
- Educates teens about the relationship between depression and suicide and **promotes help-seeking**
- A video-based education program with **depression screening**
- Implemented by **local school personnel** and/or community-based professionals
- Provides **resources for parents**

# Effective intervention, strategies involve...

4. Support and treatment of population at risk  
e.g. people with depression, bipolar mood disorder, elderly and youth
5. Implement training for recognition of at-risk behavior as well as promote effective clinical and professional practices
6. Improve reporting and portrayals of suicidal behavior, mental illness and substance abuse problems by the media professionals

# Effective intervention, strategies involve...

7. Support and strengthening of networks of survivors of suicide
8. Improve surveillance system on suicide and suicidal behaviour : need a team to assess and collect data; forensic, registration, public health and mental health depts
9. Promote and support research on suicide

# WHO

## (Dept of Mental Health and Substance Abuse)

Preventing suicide, resource materials for :

1. Working environment
2. Primary health care worker
3. General physicians
4. Councillors
5. Teachers and other school staff
6. Media professionals

# 1. Preventing suicide; a resource at work

- Recommendation that suicide prevention at work is best addressed through a combination of:
  1. organizational change aimed at preventing and reducing job stress
  2. Destigmatization of mental health problems and help-seeking
  3. Recognition and early detection of mental health problems/emotional difficulties
  4. Appropriate intervention and treatment through employee health assistance programmes linked to external community mental health resources

# 1. Preventing suicide; a resource at work

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# 2.Primary health care worker

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# 3. General physicians

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## 6. Media professionals

### The impact of media reporting on suicide

- Media – movies, television, radio, newspaper, magazines, books have powerful impact on perception of suicidal behavior
- Research indicates that the way suicide is reported can contribute to additional suicides or suicide attempts
- Reporting suicide in an appropriate, accurate and potentially helpful manner can prevent tragic loss of life by suicide

## 6. Media professionals

### Summary recommendation on how to report on suicide

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#### WHAT TO DO

- ✓ Work closely with health authorities in presenting the facts
- ✓ Refer to suicide as completed suicide, not a successful one
- ✓ Present only relevant data, on the inside pages
- ✓ Provide information and helplines and community resources
- ✓ Publicize risk indicators and warning signs

## 6. Summary recommendation on how to report on suicide

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### WHAT NOT TO DO

- X Don't publish photographs or suicide notes
- X Don't report specific details of the method used (>> impact on method suicide adopted than frequency of suicide)
- X Don't give simplistic reason
- X Don't glorify or sensationalize suicide
- X Don't use religion or cultural stereotype

# ACT now to stop a suicide

*What to look for -- and what to do -- if you are concerned about someone*

*Tragically, suicide is a fatal response to a treatable illness, usually depression.*

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR

### Part I Suicide Risk Questionnaire



#### **Have you heard someone say:**

- Life isn't worth living
- My family would be better off without me
- Next time I'll take enough pills to do the job right
- Take my (prized collection, valuables)--I don't need this stuff anymore
- I won't be around to deal with that
- You'll be sorry when I'm gone
- I won't be in your way much longer
- I just can't deal with everything--life's too hard
- Nobody understands me--nobody feels the way I do
- There's nothing I can do to make it better
- I'd be better off dead
- I feel like there is no way out

#### **Have you observed:**

- Getting affairs in order (paying off debts, changing a will)
- Giving away articles of either personal or monetary value
- Signs of planning a suicide such as obtaining a weapon or writing a suicide note

## Part II Depression Risk Questionnaire

### Have you noticed the following signs of depression:

- Depressed mood
- Change in sleeping patterns (too much/little, disturbances)
- Change in weight or appetite
- Speaking and/or moving with unusual speed or slowness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in usual activities
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Diminished ability to think or concentrate, slowed thinking or indecisiveness
- Feelings of worthlessness, self-reproach, or guilt
- Thoughts of death, suicide, or wishes to be dead

### If depression seems possible, have you also noticed:

- Extreme anxiety, agitation, or enraged behavior
- Excessive drug and/or alcohol use or abuse
- Neglect of physical health
- Feelings of hopelessness or desperation

## Questionnaire interpretation

If you checked circles under:

- Part I only: Your friend may be at risk for suicide and should seek professional help immediately.
- Part II only: Your friend may be suffering from depression and should seek further evaluation with a mental health professional or his or her primary care physician.
- Parts I and II: The suicide risk is even higher: strongly encourage your friend to seek professional help immediately.



*Created by Screening for Mental Health, Inc. with educational facts adapted from material provided by National Depression Screening Day (NDSD) sponsors: the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, (AFSP) and the American College Health Association (ACHA). Consultants: Ross J. Baldessarini, MD and Kay R. Jamison, PhD. We thank everyone for their continued support.*

# WHAT TO DO if you suspect someone you care about is considering suicide

*ACT: Acknowledge, Care and find Treatment.*

## 1. Acknowledge

- **Do take it seriously.**  
70% of all people who commit suicide give some warning of their intentions to a friend or family member.
- **Do be willing to listen.**  
Even if professional help is needed, your friend or loved one will be more willing to seek help if you have listened to him or her.

## 2. Care

- **Do voice your concern.**  
Take the initiative to ask what is troubling your friend, co-worker or loved one, and attempt to overcome any reluctance on their part to talk about it.

## 3. Treatment

- **Do get professional help immediately.**

SSS

If you have lost someone to  
suicide:

1. Give yourself time to grieve
2. Get support

A Handbook for Survivors of Suicide

3. Don't blame yourself
4. Reach out to others

*by Jeffrey Jackson*



American Association  
of Suicidology

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Suicidal thoughts are temporary.

Suicide is permanent.

Don't give in to suicidal thoughts—  
you can overcome them

THANK YOU