Looks Can Be Deceiving: One Family's Mental Health Journey

Audrey Sulzberger
&
Lee Anne Sulzberger
IN THIS SESSION YOU WILL...

• hear about **one student’s experience** and how her conditions reached a crisis level before being discovered

• hear **one mother’s story** about what she learned while accessing critical and on-going care for her daughter

• leave with **easily accessible resources** to learn about and talk more comfortably about youth needing support with mental health
Audrey’s Story
Lee Anne’s Story-What I Knew

• First trained in crisis intervention in college
• Middle school teacher & youth leader
• Training in
  – Building Capable People
  – Active Listening
  – Suicide awareness and prevention

But, what I DIDN’T know...
What I Learned

• There are internalizers and externalizers
• Depression and anxiety in adolescents can look different than adult symptoms
• A 14 year old can give or withdraw consent for mental health treatment
• Not all facilities are created equal
• Chronic health issues are chronic health issues, mental or physical
Before a Crisis Hits

• Normalize, validate, and empathize
• Open the conversation
• Don’t try to “fix” things
• Know your community resources
  – Community Service Board (CSB)
  – Crisis response services by region
  – ER, police, private hospitals
What About a Crisis?

• Consider a crisis plan
• Recognize that everyone’s journey is different, but has common stages
  – Shock/denial/disbelief
  – Recognition/acceptance/loss
  – Coping/adapting
  – Advocacy
Web Resources

• Campaign for Children’s Mental Health – [www.1in5kids.org](http://www.1in5kids.org)

• Children’s Mental Health Resource Center – [www.mentalhealth4kids.org](http://www.mentalhealth4kids.org)


• You Matter (featuring blogs from youth living with mental health needs and links to crisis resources) [http://www.youmatter.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/](http://www.youmatter.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/)
Our Wishes

• to promote positive conversations around mental health
• To help people talk more comfortably about youth (or anyone!) needing support with mental health

Questions? We’re open!