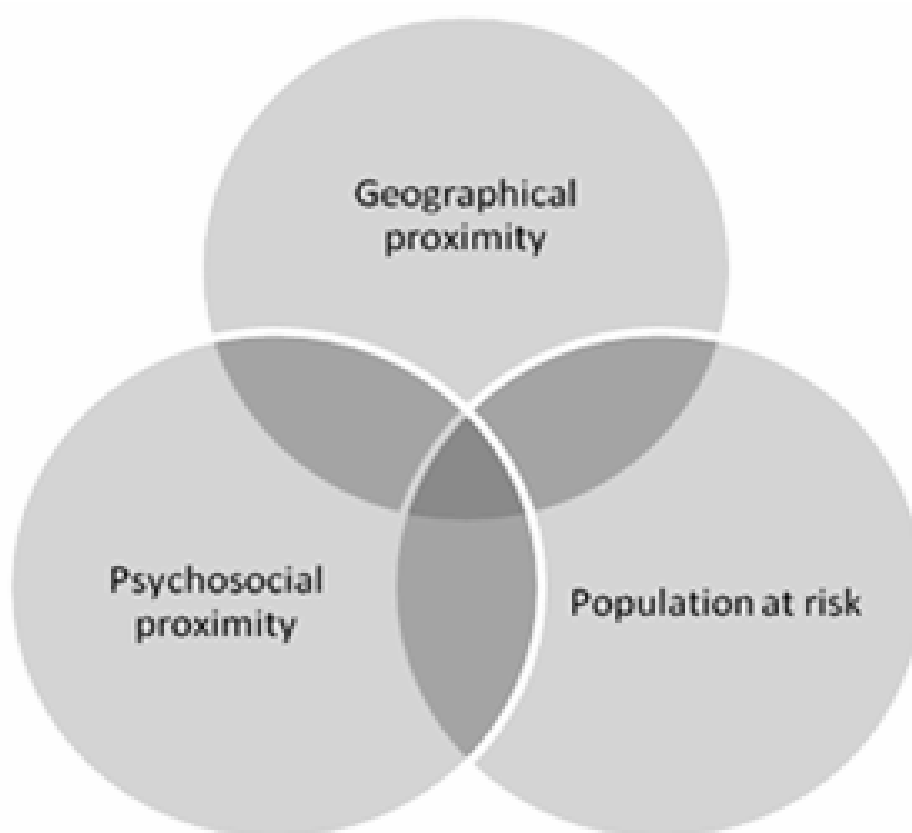


SCREENING USING CIRCLES OF VULNERABILITY

A MODEL FOR IDENTIFYING THOSE INDIVIDUALS POTENTIALLY AT RISK AFTER A DEATH BY SUICIDE

After a death by suicide (or a suicide attempt), those left behind (or impacted by the attempt) may also be at risk of developing a mental illness or engaging in suicidal behaviour. It is important that potentially at risk individuals are identified and screened and that grief support is put in place for the bereaved as necessary.

CPRS uses the Circles of Vulnerability model to identify those who may be potentially more at risk of suicide contagion than others. This model advocates screening those who were in geographical proximity to the deceased, psychosocial proximity to the deceased and a third general population at risk.



GEOGRAPHICAL PROXIMITY

- The physical distance a person is from the location of the incident
- Eyewitnesses
- Those discovering the body
- Those exposed to the immediate aftermath of the suicide
- Extensive and repetitive media coverage

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROXIMITY

The level of identification with the deceased e.g.:

- Victims of bullying
- Team members
- Class mates
- Other emo's
- At same school
- Same gang
- Perceive they are similar in some way to deceased

SOCIAL PROXIMITY

Relationship one has with deceased

- Family members
- Friends
- Romantic interests
- Ex-romantic interests
- Part of same social circle

Those most at risk tend not to be the best friends of the deceased

POPULATION AT RISK

Those with:

- Current mental illness
- A history of trauma exposure
- Prior suicidal behaviour
- Substance abuse
- Family conflict

- Family suicidal behaviour

THOSE MOST AT RISK

Those who:

- Witnessed the suicide or its aftermath (Geographical)
- Had a psychological or social connection to deceased (Psychosocial)
- Have pre-existing vulnerabilities (Population at risk)
- Helped the suicide occur

Other factors contributing to increased risk are those who:

- Failed to identify signs of suicidal intent
- Are feeling of responsibility of the death
- Have a sense of hopelessness/helplessness
- Have experienced recent significant losses or stressors
- Have limited social support

See also:

- CASA's CPRS Contagion and Adolescents
- CASA's CPRS Identifying Suicidal Concern in Children and Adolescents

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