

Presidential Address

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- I am honored and privileged to have been elected as The President.
- I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the great performance of our past leaders Dr. Korada, Dr. P Raghurami Reddy, Dr. Sridhar Raju, Dr. M Uma Shanker and Dr. Keshava Rao who are the pioneers in shaping the IPS TSB
- I have an opportunity to work with Dr. Jagannath President elect ; Dr. Minhaj Hon secretary; Dr. Vishal Treasurer; Dr. Sai Krishna Hon Editor; and Dr. Erra Sridhar Raju, Dr. Naresh Vadlamani, Dr. Anitha, Dr. Vivaswan, Dr. Bharath Irala, Dr. Shiva Kumar as Executive Committee members.
- Thank you all our fellow members who have shown their confidence in me and for the tremendous support.
- With the holistic efforts of senior psychiatrists and enthusiasm of younger members, let's work together in unity.
- I welcome all the delegates to the Annual Conference 2019 in this Historical city known for its food and culture.
- This venue is a place filled with memories for most of us.
- Let's all cherish our old days during these 2 days and enjoy the academic feast.

Let's Acknowledge

- Not going to bore you all with the numerical statistics, intricately neuro biological networks, mystery of medicines,
- Being the president of this august association, I would like to talk about the need of the hour in the contemporary society and also strive to make a change in it.
- Its high time that we take a bigger responsibility to bring in a change in our society.

Is it really that serious??

According to latest available data from the National Crime Records Bureau, a student commits suicide every hour in India.

India, the world's second most populous country of over 1 billion, has one of the highest suicide rates among those aged 15 to 29.

75,000 students committed suicides in India between 2007 and 2016.

Maharashtra reported the most - 1,350 - student suicides in 2016, or four every day, followed by West Bengal (1,147) and Tamil Nadu (981).

India has one of the world's highest suicide rates for youth aged from 15 to 29, according to a 2012 Lancet report.

With Over 9000 Student Suicides in 2016, India Is Facing an Epidemic.

As reported in Factchecker, and a reply in the Lok Sabha by HG Ahir, Minister of State for Home Affairs, on January 2, 2018, 9,474 students committed suicide in 2016 – or a student suicide occurred every 55 minutes. The same story reports that student suicides have increased 52% from a suicide every 84 minutes in 2007 to the current rate.

Students in India are killing themselves at a fast rate, with 26 suicides reported every 24 hours.

Going by the latest data, 9,474 students committed suicide in 2016 — at a rate of more than one every hour.

Maharashtra and Bengal recorded the most suicides, while there was none reported in Lakshadweep. Overall, an average of three years — 2014 to 2016 — shows that the trend was similar with at least one student committing suicide every hour. The three years together saw 26,476 students take their own lives in the country.

Why adolescents

- Adolescence = To grow (Latin Adoloscere) To emerge, To achieve identity.
- Time of growing up from childhood to adulthood.
- Period of physical growth, time for maturing mind and behaviors as well.
- Independence from adult controls
- Exploration of social issues
- Increased focus on activities with peer group.
- Establishment of a basic sense of self identity
- The teen years are often very stressful, with a transition from carefree child to responsible adult.
- They are facing new social situations, which might include bullying, their first serious relationships, an exploration of sexuality, rejection, changes in friendships, and upheavals with family members.
- Add in constantly changing hormones, which might spark depression or similar issues, and they have a few tough years.
- Some teens might suffer from even more tenuous situations. This might include those who are dealing with the issues of body image, changes in social

circles, low self-esteem, and introductions to drugs or alcohol

- An immense pressure is put upon children by their parents to pursue a career that guarantees their financial future
- This constant and consistent pressure on kids to take up careers without considering the capacity and inherent ability of the child itself is causing students to feel completely out of place with their own needs and aspirations in life.
- Pressure from parents to perform well in exams can affect a child's mental health.
- Being bullied by other kids can act as a trigger.
- And the real reason behind a student's difficulties with concentration and learning may be ADHD.
- Mental concerns often manifest themselves as poor academic performance, lack of motivation, social interaction issues with peers or teachers, and even self-harm.
- And then, they have to contend with the beast of stigma attached to mental issues.
- In a world obsessed with material progress and economic success, the overall importance of personal choice and self-exploration neglected over the constant need to prove oneself in exams.
- These pressures will affect most of us to some extent, but for those struggling with mental health - they become debilitating.
- 'Many young people find it hard to even recognize or know that they have a difficulty they could get help for; others feel ashamed or stigmatized and so don't seek help.'

Risk factors

- The causes of suicide vary widely, but there are some risk factors that tend to be common among those who attempt suicide.
- According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, mental illness is often a major factor; specifically, depression is a major risk factor for suicide. Other major risk factors or causes include:

Immediate risk

- Some behaviors may indicate that a person is at immediate risk for suicide.
- The following three should prompt you to immediately consult a mental health professional.
 1. Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself
 2. Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online
 3. Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live

Serious risk

- Other behaviors may also indicate a serious risk—especially if the behavior is new; has increased;

and/or seems related to a painful event, loss, or change.

- 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

Feeling alone

Feelings of rejection or loneliness can increase the risk of suicide. This might be especially true after a serious breakup of a friendship or relationship, when feelings of isolation and loneliness can be combined with emotional upheaval.

Physical illness

Chronic and severe physical issues with no end in sight can be conducive to suicide. This might be especially true among those who have been diagnosed with a terminal illness, have dealt with a chronic illness that is progressively becoming worse, or are faced with chronic pain.

Exposure to those who have attempted or completed suicide

Imitative behavior plays a role in suicide. This might be true for those who have lost a close friend or family member to suicide. There has also been much discussion in recent years about how much the media might play a role in "copycat" suicides.

Suffering from substance abuse

A significant portion of those who die by suicide are suffering from substance abuse. In 30 percent of all suicides, alcoholism is a factor; the rate might be higher among those using illicit drugs.

A prior suicide attempt

If someone has tried to die by suicide before and they weren't just doing it for attention, they'll probably try again. Those who have tried to die by suicide in the past should be watched very closely if there is any concern about their mental well-being.

Family history of suicide

Exposure to someone who has tried or succeeded in death by suicide makes it more likely someone will do so to imitate behavior. There might also be a genetic component involved.

Family history of mental illness or substance abuse

Since mental illness and substance abuse are commonly found in those who die by suicide, and some mental illnesses and forms of substance abuse are genetic, a family history of suicide can create a higher risk of suicide in future generations.

Suffering from mental illness

The majority of those who die by suicide are suffering from mental illness. In fact, 90 percent of those who do are suffering from a diagnosable psychiatric disorder.

Victim of family violence and/or abuse

Victims of abuse often face isolation, depression, feelings of despair, and much more. Extreme pain, stress or anxiety with a feeling of hopelessness increases one's risk of suicide.

Being the victim of bullying**Being uncertain of sexual orientation****Warning signs****Talks about suicide**

Whether it's explicit "I'm going to go kill myself," implicit "I don't deserve to live," or more subtle "I'm constantly in pain," any discussion about suicide is a warning sign.

Drastic change in personality

Increased aggression, irritability, anxiety or feelings of sadness that are out of the ordinary for the person.

Pursuit of dangerous objects or supplies

An attempt to acquire items that could be used to end one's life (without an alternate explanation), such as poison, firearms or knives.

Apathy to the future

An abnormal level of indifference to the future, whether it be failing to plan ahead or lack of excitement for a pleasurable or positive future event.

Disposal of important possessions

Giving away, destroying or selling (for an unreasonably low price) objects that were once highly prized by the individual.

Increased or beginning use drugs or alcohol

A significant rise in the consumption of alcohol or drugs, or the use of such substances when the individual never took them before.

Reduced interest in activities commonly enjoyed

No longer engaging or participating in things once enjoyed. This can include ceasing long-term hobbies or other important causes.

Unusual level of calmness

An abnormal level of peace when one was usually or recently uptight, depressed, anxious or upset.

Isolation

Spending less time with friends, family, coworkers or other people whose company was previously enjoyed. New or increased desire to be left alone.

Organization and future planning of one's affairs

A sudden and unusual level of preparation of tasks such as writing a will, selling substantial assets or making arrangements for one's absence can be a signal of a potential suicide.

Increased reckless behavior

Taking risks that put themselves or others in danger, either at a higher frequency or in an uncharacteristic manner.

Change in sleeping habits

A substantial increase or decrease in sleeping patterns without a medical reason.

Saying goodbye

Telling friends, family and acquaintances goodbye for no apparent reason.

Previous suicide attempts

Depending on the reason and whether that reason still exists, a prior suicide attempt can be a strong indication that that the individual will try again.

Obsession with death or suicide

An unusual or increased level of fascination or respect for death or suicide. Can also include artistic expression of death, suicide or similar themes.

Self-hate

Unusual or unjustified feelings of low self-esteem, worthlessness, shame or guilt.

Pay attention not only to the overall behavior of the person, but to the "little things" that might be tell-tale signs of suicidal thoughts.

Why in today's world

- We are more estranged from each other with quick texts and social media messages replacing honest and good conversations.
- Our relationships are shakier and our close friendships are fewer.
- Sharing a filtered version of our lives has become integral to our social existence, particularly for students, who have grown up with this technology.
- We are a generation obsessed by the self-fashioned ego; i.e. we're too busy updating our Snapchat story to live in the moment.
- Unsurprisingly, there are endless studies which show how social media usage can worsen our overall mental wellbeing
- Influence of educational institutions also playing a role.

- They essentially look to exemplify a few professional choices over others due to overwhelming degree of economic stability associated with these professions.
- While certain environmental pressures have always existed for students - debt, exams, navigating a new social sphere - today there are arguably more than ever before.
- Once you've solved the existential riddle of deciding what you want to do with your life, you have to scavenge your way into a highly competitive job market,
- Evidently, the environment for students - and young people in general - has never felt so fractured.

How to handle

The solution lies in students, teachers and parents – all 3 playing an active part in ensuring mental well-being.

In India, parents often go into denial mode when it comes to their child's mental health, resorting to statements like, "My child has no such problems!"

This attitude must go. Parents must understand how fragile their children's mental well-being is and be proactive in assessing it.

What parents need to know

- Don't wait for your teen to come to you.
- If your teen is sad, anxious or appears to be struggling — ask what's wrong and offer your help.
- Pay attention.
- If your teen is thinking about suicide, he or she is likely displaying warning signs.
- Listen to what your child is saying and watch how he or she is acting.
- Never shrug off threats of suicide as teen melodrama.
- Encourage your teen to spend time with supportive friends and family.
- Encourage a healthy lifestyle. Help your teen eat well, exercise and get regular sleep.
- Also, encourage your teen to participate in activities that will help him or her rebuild confidence.
- Safely store firearms, alcohol and medications. Access to means can play a role if a teen is already suicidal.
- Parents also need to play their part by analyzing, closely, the behavior of their child and their likes, dislikes, opinions etc that they form over the years.
- All these parameters are closely linked to the upbringing of the child, where parents play a pivotal part.
- A deeper interaction between children and parents is the need of the hour.
- Remember, teen suicide is preventable. If you're worried about your teen, talk to him or her and seek help right away.

Role of teachers

- Teachers certainly need to be trained in identifying symptoms and patterns of mental issues.
- For example, before scolding a child for disruptive behavior, they could use these skills to analyze the reason for such behavior.
- Teachers also need to play their part and their motive should transform from merely imparting knowledge to rekindling the flame within every student.
- Once a student starts liking learning, he is destined to succeed.
- It is worrisome that many students share beliefs like the following: that revealing depression could negatively affect their professional advancement (Wimsatt et al., 2015);
- That if they were depressed their opinions would be respected less;
- That they would be considered unable to handle their responsibilities, and "less intelligent" (Schwenk et al., 2010).
- These issues need to be addressed carefully and extend assurance of academics etc would not be effected by opening up.

Role of students/ seniors

- Step in to prevent bullying.
- If your friend is being bullied, report it to parents and teachers, and to the authorities if necessary.
- Bullying is a serious problem that must be nipped in the bud before it is allowed to become any worse.
- Show support to each other
- Teenagers need support groups, to spend time with others, and to not be alone too often.
- Facilitate this by engaging in physical activity or sports with them, spend time talking to them, and engage in the things they like to do.

Work for change

- Yes it's brilliant, if not a little predictable, that we're seeing a surge of public interest surrounding mental health at the moment.
- But this is merely a small step in a marathon that lies ahead.
- Let's just hope that mental health awareness isn't the trend that falls out of fashion.

3 levels before the new arrives

1. Individual Attitudinal change.
2. Organizational structural change.
3. Societal value change.

Individual attitudinal change

- We will have to recognize that we do not function in isolation, that we have an impact on society and are in turn, impacted by it.
- Human kind has not woven the web of life. We are but a part of it.
- Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves,
- All things are bound together.

- All the things are connected.

Changes at School/ College

- First aid for mental health
- Several Awareness activities
- Incorporating Mentor-Mentee Program.
- Having a student counsellor.
- Display of Helpline numbers, Center names etc if students intend to seek help anonymously.

First aid for mental health

- First aid for mental health should also become a part of the curriculum in schools and colleges.
- It is crucial that the youth, our change-makers, become the torchbearers in emphasizing its importance and indispensability in this age of sweeping reforms.
- Research shows that 50 per cent of mental, behavioral and psychological issues have their onset during adolescence.
- We need to therefore empower educators, parents and other primary care givers, who are regularly engaged with young people to be able to provide guidance in times of need.
- This will allow for timely help and intervention to anyone developing a mental issue, or experiencing aggravation of an existing concern.
- Knowledge of first aid for mental health can help red-flag common concerns like: depression, anxiety, eating disorders, substance abuse and psychosis.
- It can also help in crisis situations involving: suicide, self-harm, trauma and aggressive behaviors.
- And since it inherently creates awareness, first aid for mental health can also alleviate the stigma attached to mental health concerns.
- Fighting stigma is, after all, half the battle in a country like ours.

Awareness activities

- Creating awareness among various stakeholders like parents, school students, etc through innovative mediums like
- Nukkad naatak (street plays)
- Drama
- Short films
- Advertisements on annual gathering in schools like Sports Meet, Annual Function, etc.
- At regular intervals, and especially when a student suicide takes place in school, schools can show 5-minute documentaries showcasing case studies of people who emerged successful after initially having suicidal thoughts.
- The list of such personalities is long, including Martin Luther King Jr. Further
- Workshops and conferences can be organized especially in the aftermath of a tragedy.

- Such preventive methods will go a long way in solving this hazard.

School curriculum

- Attempt to include a topic in the school curriculum about increasing suicidal tendencies in students, how it is morally wrong, a cowardly step, and how talking and sharing problems with parents, teachers, and friends can help in coming out of depression.
- If we could overcome the taboo of speaking about sex and having sex education in school, talking about good touch and bad touch, Overcoming stigma of mental illness is also possible.

Community level change

- Self Help and Support Groups
- Increasing Awareness programs
- Training initiatives.
- SPARK Talks.

At the community level

- Discussions of healthy living are super-important.
- You don't have to study all the time.
- You don't want to get caught in the cycle of unabated and excessive substance use.
- Exercise is easy to go to the wayside but is hugely neuroprotective.
- All of these tidbits will be heard and internalized by students as they prepare to head to high school/college.

Self help and support groups

- They are an integral and indispensable part of the recovery process.
- Support groups rely on the concept of self-disclosure, which acts as a catharsis.
- Telling your stories and listening to others' can hasten the healing process
- They also insist on confidentiality, which allows for familiarity and mutual help without intrusion.
- Listening to others tell their stories of trauma and triumph, working together in an environment of mutual support, and forming definitive supportive relationships can be extremely therapeutic.
- Support groups can be very beneficial for not only for those who are suffering but for their caregivers as well.
- When someone suffers from a mental disorder, it's not only that person but the entire family that gets affected. Most of all, it takes a toll on the life and emotions of the primary caregiver - a parent, a child or a spouse.
- Support groups act as catalysts that can empower the caregivers and assist their well-being while they provide care.
- It is time for society to become one big support group.

Role of primary care physicians

- Patients who attempt suicide are more likely to have contact with their primary care provider than a mental health provider in the month before attempting suicide (Lake, 2008).
- Hence, it will often be up to medical personnel, beyond psychiatrists, to encounter suicide attempters.
- Regrettably, depression and the related risk for suicide are still largely underrecognized in primary care settings and emergency rooms (Lake, 2008).
- To improve diagnostic skills and competency in suicide ideation (SI) assessment, specific training is needed because it could greatly contribute to suicide prevention (Palmieri et al., 2008).
- Educational strategies to increase SI assessment performance should be available to all professions involved in general and psychosocial patient care.

Training sessions for different groups

Aim is to Increase knowledge in the following core competencies:

- Maintaining an effective attitude and approach,
- Collecting accurate assessment information,
- Formulating risk,
- Developing a treatment and services plan, and
- Managing care.

Benefits of training

- Increased willingness, confidence, and clarity in working with individuals at risk for suicide.
- Increased ability to identify how they can better care for individuals at risk for suicide.

Spark talks

- SPARK Talks are Short, Provocative, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Knowledgeable videos of leaders in suicide prevention.
- Each describes a new development or direction in the field that can have an impact on suicide and issues a call to action.

Suicide due to academic failure

- Suicide due to examination failure needs concerted efforts from not merely the students but also the teachers and parents.
- Students need to be taught that the first step to solve a problem is knowing that there exists one, and the examination system is a firm reminder that there exists a problem which is solvable.
- Bernard Branson said that “Rejection is an opportunity for your selection” and after a student fails, a counselling session can be arranged by the school for students, which needs to be mandatorily attended by parents and teachers – in the aftermath of which a re-examination provision could be adopted.

Thank You

Let's create ripples of change with each ripple strengthening than attenuating.