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A Closer Look: College Students' Exposure to Suicide and Intention to Intervene

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## A Closer Look: College Students' Exposure to Suicide and Intention to Intervene

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## Abstract

To examine college students' exposure to suicide (i.e., knowing someone who attempted or died by suicide) and intention to intervene, 769 completed an online survey. A majority of the sample (69%) were exposed to suicide. When exposure was examined alone using an Independent Samples t-test there was not a statistical difference in overall intention to intervene. Suicide experience, sex, race, and age were considered in addition to suicide exposure in a one-way Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). The overall model was significant. Follow-up tests indicated that previous suicide exposure and previous personal suicide attempts did not affect one's intention to intervene. However, prior suicide intervention experience, sex, and race did have a statistically significant impact on intention to intervene. Additionally, individual intervention behaviors were examined to better understand what specific actions individuals intend to perform related to suicide exposure. The Multiple Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) results suggested a general trend that women, white individuals, and those with previous intervention experience were likely to perform four intervention behaviors: 1) *tell someone who is suicidal I am concerned about him or her*, 2) *I would intervene in some way*, 3) *Encourage the person who is suicidal to seek help from a professional*, and 4) *Tell the person to stop being dramatic* (reverse coded).

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