Suicide Prevention in Australian Secondary Schools
UK Context

145 10-19 year olds took their own life between Jan 2014 - April 2015
102 (70%) were male

(2.1 per 100,000 population)

Accelerated risk from early to late adolescence

More females than males experience thoughts & attempts
Males display more externalising, risky behaviours

More likely to:

Use alcohol & drugs

Be aggressive & use violence

Choose more lethal methods
Welcome to headspace

We’re the national youth mental health foundation dedicated to improving the wellbeing of young Australians.

Get to know us  Find a centre  Talk to someone
Whole school approach to mental health

- Suicide postvention, prevention & early intervention
- Preparedness workshops
- Clinical support
- Education & gatekeeper training
- Online resources
Pilot Study

Pre-post test design - 8 week follow-up
Assessed immediately before and after
Specifically designed surveys and role-rehearsal for skills acquisition
Schools in Casey & Cardinia area of Melbourne, Victoria

All 41 schools were invited
107 participants from 29 schools attended 1 of 13 sessions
87 were eligible of which 84 consented
Received adapted 2-day STORM training
Assessment of Suicide Risk, Safety Planning, Postvention, Self-injury
Outcomes:

Increased confidence working with students at risk of suicide/self-harm
Increased perceived skills assessing & managing risk
Increased Knowledge of suicide/self-harm in young people
Improved attitudes towards students at risk
Increased skills in assessing suicide risk
Satisfaction with the training
Positive changes in practice

Questionnaires completed at T1 (pre) T2 (post) and T3 (8 weeks)
Filmed role-rehearsal at T1 & T2 (blind rated)
3 yr summary of STORM delivery by hSS
Key findings

Confidence & ability improved at T2 & remained constant at T3
Knowledge of deliberate self-harm improved at T2 & similar at T3
No change in attitudes towards children who self-harm
No change in attitudes towards suicide prevention

25 paired role-rehearsal interviews
Significant increase in asking specific suicide risk questions at T2
Suicide intent, degree & seriousness of intent
No significant changes in safety planning, except coping strategies
Number of School Staff Trained

3yr Totals:  Sessions: 153  Participants: 1322

*Jul - Oct 2016:  26 sessions across Australia not in data
hSS reached 163 Schools between June 2013 - Oct 2016

99.9% thought training worthwhile & would recommend to others

That is, all but 1 out of 1322 participants

Momentum to deliver training driven by schools

Overwhelmingly positive response

Excellent feedback on how to improve training
Participants often acknowledged:

Effective handling of sensitive content in a safe learning environment:

“A warm and supportive atmosphere - I think everyone felt "safe" contributing to the discussion on difficult topics.”

Empowering attendees:

“[The trainers] had a wealth of knowledge and [were] also able to involve participants in the experience. I highly recommend this training and will be suggesting that other key members of our well-being team attend in the near future. I now feel empowered and confident to deal with all necessary procedures and situations.”

Grouping schools for targeted training:

“It was great to do this training in a group specifically working in alternative school settings. Great to be able to problem solve specific issues-directly related to working in such environments.”
"Thank you for investing in us"
Dr Gill Green

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Paper:

Robinson, J & Green, G et al.

Impact and Acceptability of Delivering Skills-based Training On Risk Management (STORM) in Australian Secondary Schools

References
