

INTRODUCTION

Suicide is the **second leading cause of death among teens** 15 to 19 years old. The California cities of San Diego and **Palo Alto have had suicide clusters so traumatizing** that the State passed Assembly Bill 2246 in 2016 to **require districts to have suicide prevention programs** targeting high-risk groups and prevent future serial suicides (Calefati, 2016). Since suicide is very prevalent in Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD), it is important to **research suicides and how youth-driven wellness programs are performing to prevent them.**

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

- January 20, 2018** — **Distributed two surveys**
With the help of teacher facilitators, to Palo Alto High School's youth-driven mental health programs; one survey for program member, other survey for program president/facilitators
- February 5, 2018** — **Evaluated and coded data**
Identifying and marking appropriate phrases, passages and sentences according to my code
- March 5, 2018** — **Synthesized the data**
Grouping the codes into categories/themes with similarities
- April 9, 2018** — **Submitted findings**
Submitted to Project Safety Net to be incorporated into their Think Fund youth-driven program design



Image courtesy of Nura Mostaghimi

DISCUSSION, ANALYSIS, AND

Open-response answers:

- **36%** of all six questions answered by club/program participants considered to be **"careless" responses** (Figure 1)
- **100%** of all six questions answered by club/program facilitators/presidents considered to be **"well-thought out" responses**

Scale-reading answers:

- **38.9% are neutral** and **11.1% strongly disagree** in response to: I would recognize if a friend or family member was thinking about killing themselves (Figure 3)
- **44.4% are neutral, 22.2% disagree, 11.1% strongly disagree** in response to: Palo Alto High School students are open to talking about mental health (Figure 2)
- **27.8% are neutral** and **11.1% disagree** in response to the statement "I am satisfied with the youth-driven wellness program/club I am a part of."

DATA AND FINDINGS

Figure 1: Data collected and taken from participant survey

Q: What was one of largest challenges the program/club has faced? How did participants and facilitators overcome it?

Your mom
idk man

Figure 2: Data collected and taken from participant survey

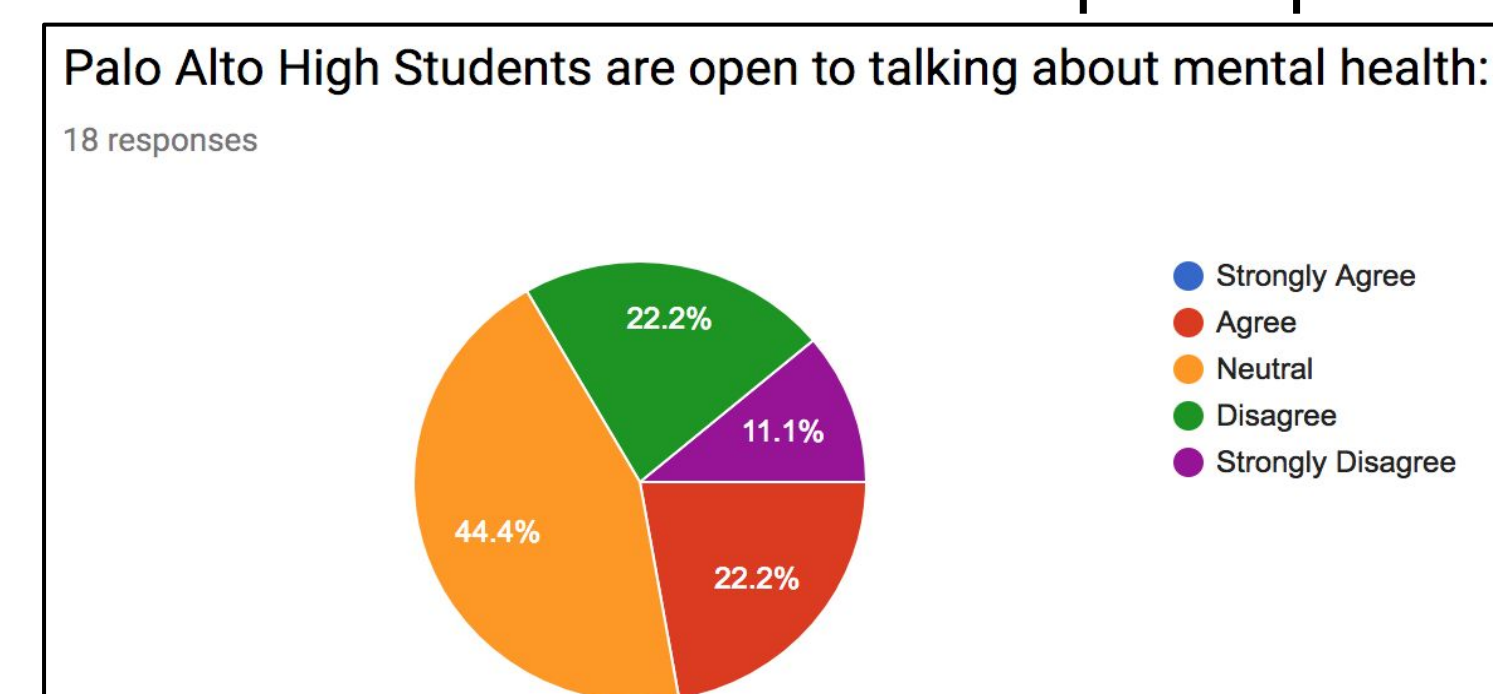


Figure 3: Data collected and taken from participant survey

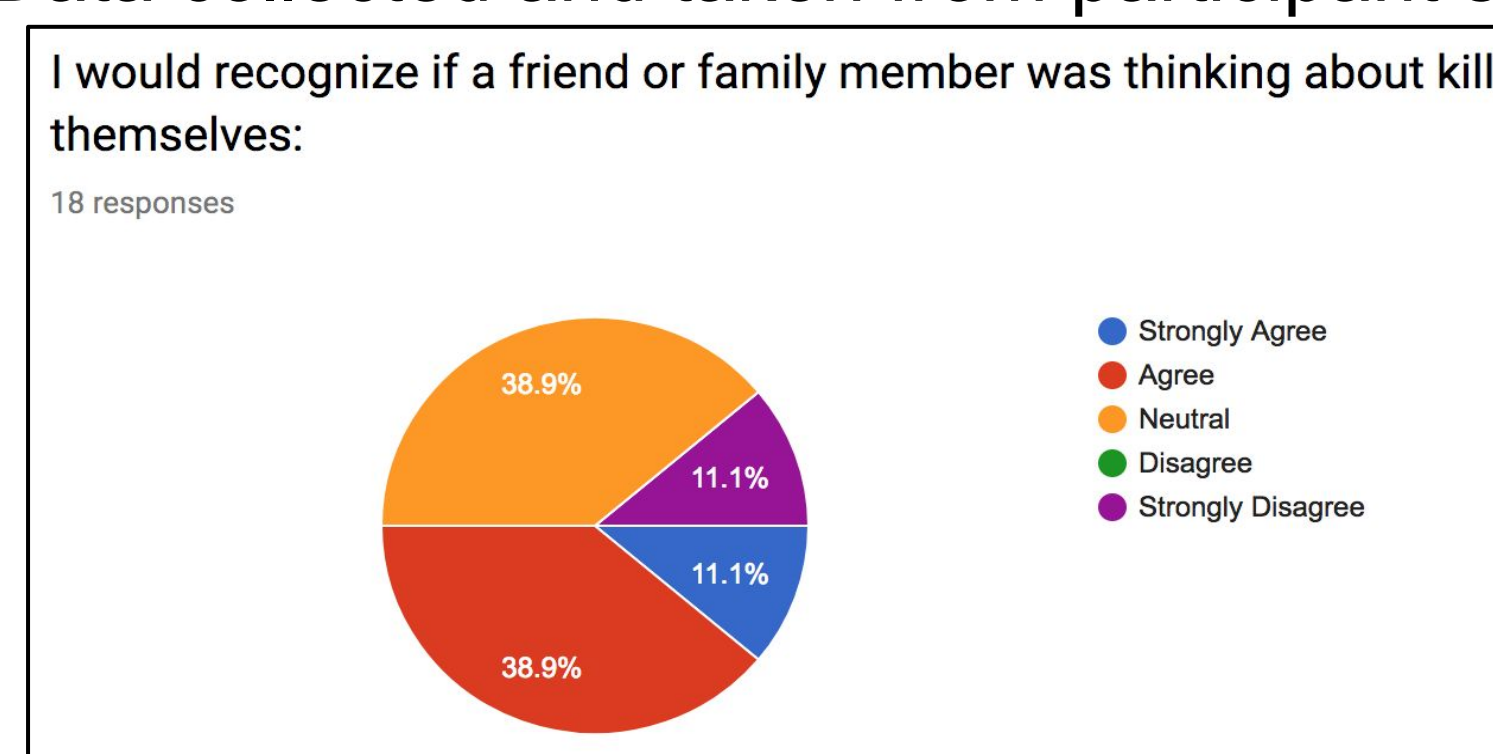


Image courtesy of Lia Salvatierra



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CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS

Conclusion:

- Those who facilitate/participate in youth-driven mental health programs, one would assume, would have motivation to meet the program's overarching goals
- **36%** of the responses being "careless"
 - Suggests that a portion of participants paid insufficient attention to the survey due to lack of personal interest
- **38.9% are neutral** and **11.1% strongly disagree** in response to: would recognize if a friend or family member was thinking about killing themselves
- Suggests that half of those who participate in these programs feel unsure if their love ones are suicidal/showing suicidal tendencies
 - As members of mental health programs, members should be aware of warning signs

Final Conclusion:

- Data suggests that a portion of youth-driven mental health program members do not have the same motivation to spread word to Palo Alto community and participate fully in the program
 - With assumption, a portion of members may be using these mental health programs to strengthen their academic record

Next Steps:

- Further research into participants' motivation to join youth-driven mental health programs to ensure members of these programs have a true concern about the issue

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

Special thanks to Mary Glonar and Erin Angell for making this project possible.

Works Cited:

- Calefati, J. (2016, December 21). Teen suicide clusters prompt mandate for California schools to confront taboo topic. Retrieved from CALmatters website: <https://calmatters.org/articles/teen-suicide-clusters-prompt-mandate-for-california-schools-to-confront-taboo-topic/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [Fact sheet]. (2014). Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/statistics/>