

Increasing Help-Seeking among Diverse Students

Pace University Counseling
Center

Richard Shadick, Ph.D.

Diversity Series

- Pace University's Diverse students
 - Located in Lower Manhattan-resident and commuter students
 - 80+ countries represented
 - Strong GLBTQQI presence on campus
 - Disability Service housed within the Center
 - Hate crimes-Muslim population

Research

- Scholarly journals
- Websites
- Centers of Service and Study-Phone calls to centers providing services to diverse individuals

Development and Production

- Culled data from the sources
- Spoke with experts
- Once the content was decided mock ups were made and disseminated to
 - Students, Staff, Faculty
 - Other Counseling Centers
 - Grantees at the 2007 Grantee meeting
- Feedback was incorporated and new mock ups were made and disseminated again
- Once complete, accompanying posters were made

The Result

➤ Series of 7 brochures representing major diverse student groups:

- Asian American
- African American
- Latino
- Muslim
- International
- Disabled
- GLBT

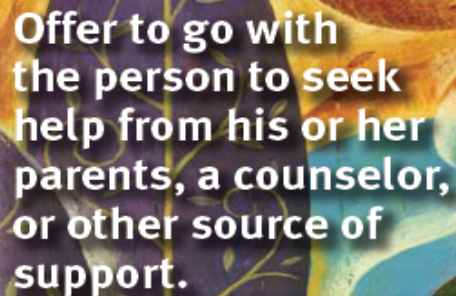
You Can Help

First and foremost, take suicide seriously. It is always better to over-react than under-react. Additionally, here are some other things you can do when someone you know is thinking about suicide:

- Seek support from others. Do not allow yourself to be sworn to secrecy.
- Listen and accept the other person's feelings. Try not to judge or argue.
- Be direct and listen. Don't act shocked by their plans.
- Never dare someone to kill themselves.
- Offer to go with the person to seek help from his or her parents, a counselor, or other source of support.
- If possible, never leave the person alone.

Find Someone Else Who Can Help

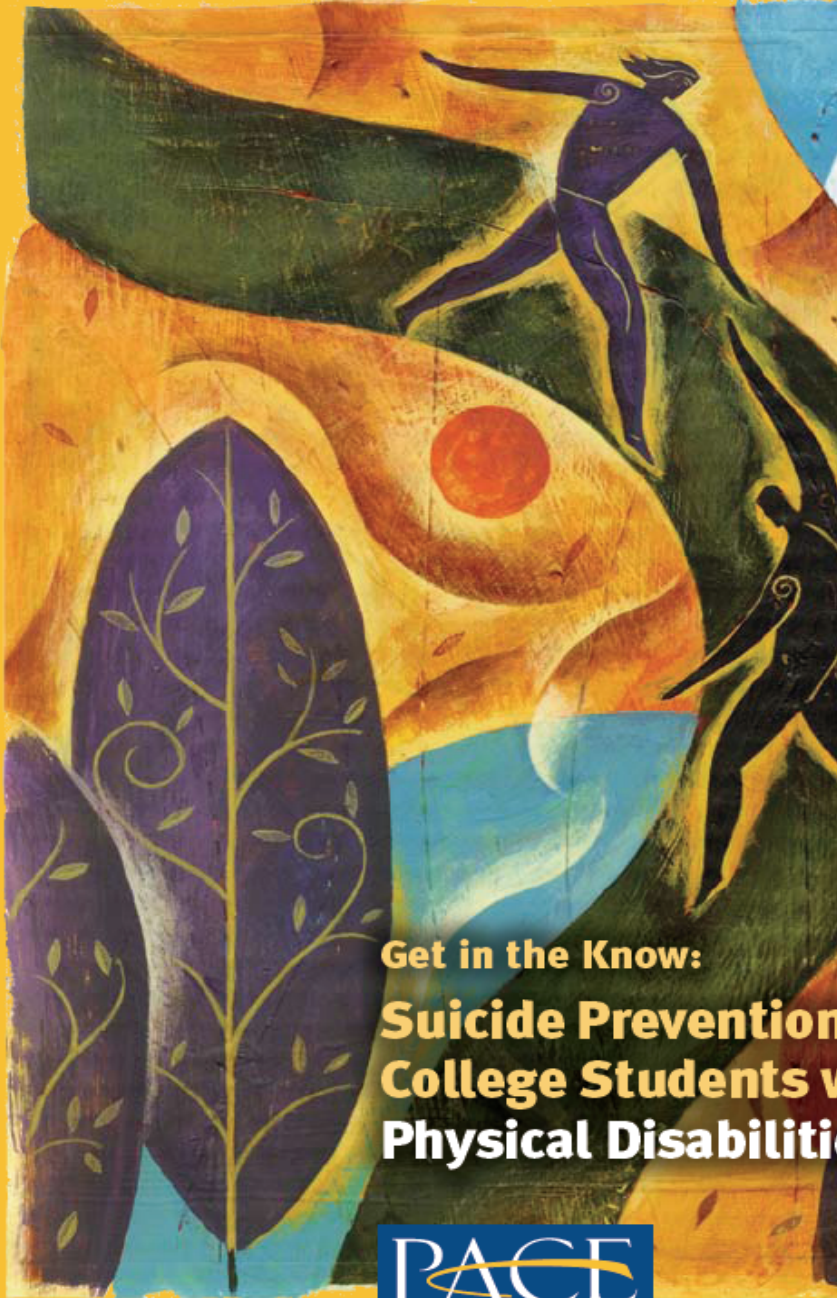
- The Counseling Center
- Resident advisers
- Campus Security
- Family or friends
- A religious or spiritual counselor



Offer to go with the person to seek help from his or her parents, a counselor, or other source of support.

We are here to help.

Counseling Center
156 William Street
12th floor
New York, NY 10038
(212) 346-1526
www.pace.edu/counseling



**Get in the Know:
Suicide Prevention
College Students with
Physical Disabilities**



College Students with Physical Disabilities, Depression, and Suicide

Students with physical disabilities make up approximately 5 percent of the college population, yet their specific risk factors are often overlooked. Similar to other students during their college years, students with physical disabilities are learning to become increasingly self-sufficient. Living without the presence of caretakers may become overwhelming, thus putting some students at increased risk for depression and suicide. The severity and visibility of a disability as well as whether the disability is acquired may contribute to depression and possibly suicide. Research has shown that a disabled person's risk for suicide is higher if the disability is less visible.

Risk factors for suicide within the physically disabled community

- A history of abuse
- Denial of the disability
- Persistent beliefs of achieving full health and/or ability
- A family history of depression and/or suicide
- An inability to integrate the disability into one's identity
- Easy access to firearms or other lethal methods
- Impulsive or aggressive inclinations
- Conflicts with friends, roommates, or peers
- Having made a previous suicide attempt or having had previous thoughts of suicide
- Having experienced a recent loss (e.g., death or break-up)
- Unwillingness to seek help because of stigma associated with seeking mental health services

Know the Warning Signs

Although individuals may vary in how they respond to suicidal thoughts, there are common warning signs that may suggest an individual is considering suicide. In particular, it is important to notice and follow up when someone you know is acting out of character. An individual may be at risk for suicide if he or she:

- Reports feeling very depressed
- Talks about wanting to commit suicide
- Experiences anxiety and/or stress
- Is focused on death and dying
- Writes poems, letters, or stories about death and/or suicide
- Is having academic problems
- Starts giving away possessions
- Withdraws from friends and activities he or she once enjoyed
- Prepares for death by making out a will
- Says things like, "I don't deserve to be here," "I wish I was dead," "I am going to kill myself," or "I want to die"
- Experiences feelings of hopelessness and helplessness
- Increases use of alcohol and/or other drugs
- Engages in reckless behaviors
- Experiences a decline in health and/or physical ability

Suicide prevention starts with understanding depression.

What Is Depression?

Depression is a condition that affects people of all abilities, ages, races, genders, and sexual orientations. Contrary to what many believe, a person with depression cannot "get over it" or "snap out of it" any more than someone with a medical problem can get over their illness. When someone is depressed he or she typically feels sadness that lasts longer than a few days or weeks. Depression can be passed from one generation to the next; sometimes stress or other life events trigger depression, or depression may result from a combination of factors. Like many other conditions, depression can be treated. This brochure is intended to provide education to help you better understand depression and know how and when to seek help when you or someone you know is experiencing depression.

What Does Depression Look Like?

Recognizing depression is a critical first step in getting yourself or a friend the help needed. It is important to keep in mind that friends or loved ones may not know how to ask for help, so understanding what to look for is important.

Common concerns among college students with physical disabilities and chronic physical health conditions who experience depression

- Relationship problems: Conflicts with roommates, parents, friends, partners, and/or professors, feelings of social isolation
- Engaging in risky behaviors: Violence, unprotected sexual practices, alcohol and other drug abuse, and/or driving under the influence
- Academic problems: Missing classes, not completing assignments, inattentiveness, and/or failing exams and courses

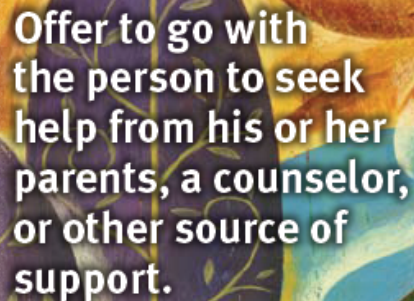
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- Be direct and listen. Don't act shocked by their plans.
- Never dare someone to kill themselves.
- Offer to go with the person to seek help from his or her parents, a counselor, or other source of support.
- If possible, never leave the person alone.

Find Someone Else Who Can Help

- Family or friends
- An imam or other religious leader
- The Counseling Center
- Resident advisers
- Campus Security



Offer to go with the person to seek help from his or her parents, a counselor, or other source of support.

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Get in the Know:
**Suicide Prevention
for Muslim
College Students**

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Muslim College Students, Depression, and Suicide

In Islam, as in other religions, committing suicide is considered a great sin. Consequently, little documentation regarding the prevalence of suicide within the Muslim community is available. However, this does not mean that depression and suicide do not affect the Muslim college student community.

Within some Islamic countries, suicide and attempted suicide are against the law. As a result, Muslim students who feel depressed or suicidal may be reluctant to seek help due to legal concerns and fears of stigmatization. Instead, they may tend to withdraw from others, thereby increasing their risk of suicide.

Risk factors for suicide within the Muslim student community

- Experiences with prejudice
- Conflicts between Muslim culture and other cultures
- Academic problems
- Preoccupation with suicide
- A family history of depression and/or suicide
- A history of abuse
- Access to firearms or other lethal methods
- Impulsive or aggressive inclinations
- Having made a previous suicide attempt or having had previous thoughts of killing oneself
- Conflicts with friends, roommates, or peers
- Fears of legal consequences for seeking help
- Having experienced a recent loss (e.g., death or break-up)

Know the Warning Signs

Although individuals may vary in how they respond to suicidal thoughts, there are common warning signs that may suggest an individual is considering suicide. In particular, it is important to notice and follow up when someone you know is acting out of character. An individual may be suicidal if he or she:

- Reports feeling very depressed
- Experiences anxiety and/or stress
- Has conflicts with friends, roommates, or peers
- Talks about wanting to commit suicide
- Experiences feelings of hopelessness and helplessness
- Is focused on death and dying
- Writes poems, letters, or stories about death and/or suicide
- Starts giving away possessions
- Withdraws from family, friends, and activities once enjoyed
- Prepares for death by making out a will
- Says things like, "I don't deserve to be here," "I wish I were dead," "I am going to kill myself," or "I want to die"
- Increases use of alcohol and/or other drugs
- Engages in reckless behaviors



Muslim students may be reluctant to seek help due to legal concerns and fears of stigmatization.

What Is Depression?

Depression is a condition that affects people of all ages, races, genders, and cultures. Contrary to what many believe, a person with depression cannot "get over it" or "snap out of it" any more than someone with a medical problem can get over an illness. Depression can be passed from one generation to the next; sometimes stress or other life events trigger depression, or depression results from a combination of factors. When someone is depressed he or she typically feels sadness that lasts longer than a few days or weeks and this can be accompanied by thoughts of wanting to hurt or kill oneself. Fortunately, depression can be treated. This brochure is intended to provide education to help you better understand depression and know how and when to seek help when you or someone you know is experiencing depression.

What Does Depression Look Like?

Recognizing depression is a critical first step in getting yourself or a friend the help needed. It is important to keep in mind that friends or loved ones may not know how to ask for help, so understanding what to look for is important.

Common concerns among Muslim college students who experience depression

- Academic problems: Missing classes, not completing assignments, inattentiveness, and/or failing exams and courses
- Relationship problems: Conflicts with roommates, family, friends, and/or partners, feelings of social isolation, feeling misunderstood
- Engaging in risky behaviors: Violence, unprotected sexual practices, alcohol and other drug abuse, and/or driving under the influence
- Spiritual disconnection: Loss of faith, alienation from religion due to suicide thoughts.

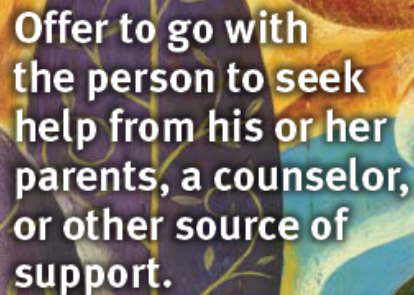
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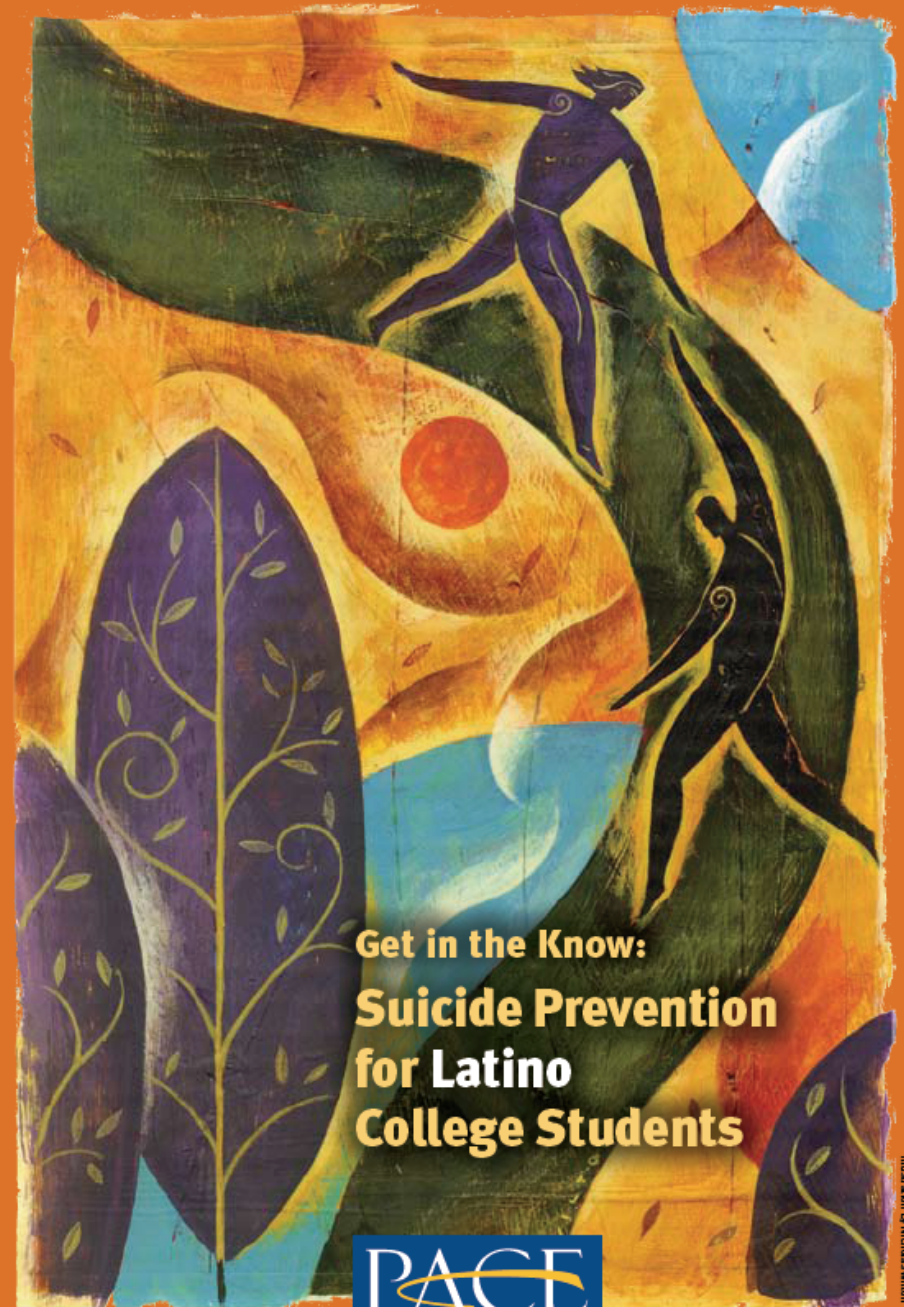
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Get in the Know:
**Suicide Prevention
for Latino
College Students**



Latino College Students, Depression, and Suicide

Recent statistics indicate that Latino college-aged individuals are at a higher risk for attempting suicide than individuals from many other ethnic groups. Latino college-aged women report some of the highest rates of depression and Latino men under 25 are at an increased risk for committing suicide. Among Latino groups, research shows that Puerto Ricans, in particular, have disproportionately high rates of suicide. Additionally, problems related to school, including poor academic performance, have been shown to be correlated with those who commit suicide.

Risk factors for suicide within the Latino community

- A history of abuse
- Conflicts within family and/or lower levels of family attachment
- Isolation from spiritual community
- A family history of depression and/or suicide
- Experiences in same sex intimate relationships and/or questioning one's sexuality
- Easy access to firearms or other lethal methods
- Impulsive or aggressive inclinations
- Conflicts with friends, roommates, or peers
- Having made a previous suicide attempt or has had previous thoughts of killing oneself
- Having experienced a recent loss (e.g., death or break-up)
- Unwillingness to seek mental health services

Know the Warning Signs

Although individuals may vary in how they respond to suicidal thoughts, there are common warning signs that may suggest an individual is considering suicide. In particular, it is important to notice and follow up when someone you know is acting out of character. An individual may be at risk for suicide if he or she:

- Reports feeling very depressed
- Talks about wanting to commit suicide
- Experiences anxiety and/or stress
- Is focused on death and dying
- Writes poems, letters, or stories about death and/or suicide
- Starts giving away possessions
- Experiences feelings of hopelessness and helplessness
- Academic problems
- Withdraws from family, their community, or friends, and activities once enjoyed
- Prepares for death by making out a will
- Says things like, "I don't deserve to be here," "I wish I were dead," "I am going to kill myself," or "I want to die."
- Increases use of alcohol and/or other drugs
- Engages in reckless behaviors

Statistics indicate that Latino college-aged individuals are at a higher risk for attempting suicide than individuals from many other ethnic groups.

What Is Depression?

Depression is a condition that affects people of all ages, races, genders, and sexual orientations. Contrary to what many believe, a person with depression cannot "get over it" or "snap out of it" any more than someone with a medical problem can get over illness. When someone is depressed, he or she typically feels sadness that lasts longer than a few days or weeks. Depression can be passed from one generation to the next; sometimes stress or other life events trigger depression, or depression results from a combination of factors. Like other conditions, depression can be treated. This brochure is intended to provide education to help you better understand depression and know how and when to seek help when you or someone you know is experiencing depression.

What Does Depression Look Like?

Recognizing depression is a critical first step in getting yourself or a friend the help needed. It is important to keep in mind friends or loved ones may not know how to ask for help, so understanding what to look for is important.

Common concerns among Latino college students who experience depression.

- Engaging in risky behaviors: Violence, unprotected sexual practices, alcohol and other drug abuse, and/or driving under the influence
- Relationship problems: Conflicts with roommates, parents, friends, partners, and/or professors
- Academic problems: Missing classes, not completing assignments, inattentiveness, and/or failing exams and courses



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SUICIDE TRANSCENDS BOUNDARIES

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among college students.

There is strength in seeking help.

Don't wait until it's too late.

Get in touch.

24-Hour National
Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK

Did you know that...

African-Americans are less likely to disclose thoughts or feelings related to suicide?

Asian-Americans have one of the highest rates of suicide?

Caucasian male students commit suicide more frequently than Caucasian female students?

International students may experience culture shock and depression?

Latinos are at a higher risk for attempting suicide than individuals from many other ethnic groups?

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered students attempt suicide more often than their heterosexual peers?

Muslim students feeling depressed or suicidal may be reluctant to seek help due to legal concerns and fears of moral stigmatization?

Physically disabled students' risk for suicide is higher if the disability is less visible?

- Juan is a 19-year-old, gay, Puerto Rican American male who transferred to Pace from a small school in Massachusetts. This is his first semester at Pace and he has been having some trouble adjusting to the new school environment and city life. He moved to NYC hoping for a richer college life experience, but feels disconnected from other students and campus life. He feels very sad about having left his family in Massachusetts, but wants to prove that he can be independent. He talks to his family once in a while, but does not have as much contact with them as he used to when he was in Massachusetts. When he lived near his family, he would attend church with them regularly on Sundays, which has always been a big part of his life. Juan has not recently had the motivation to go the church during the week or weekends. He also doesn't know if the churches in the area will be accepting of his sexual orientation.
- You have noticed that Juan has been acting aloof lately and has not been attending the activities in the residence hall during Wellness Week. When you ask him how he is doing, he doesn't say much and appears sad. His roommate said that he has been cutting classes and has not been doing his homework. He failed a math exam last week even though math is usually his strongest subject. His roommate also said that he has been fighting with his dad on the phone about money. The arguments have become pretty heated and Juan got so angry the other day that he punched a hole in the wall.
- *Risk factors: isolation from spiritual community, academic problems, recent loss (move to NYC), stigma against sexuality*

-
- *Symptoms: conflict with father, missing class, not completing homework*

Training Vignette #1 for Residence Life Training

- Accompanying vignette training tool used for Resident Assistant training
- Role play format with audience
- Used after a more basic gatekeeper training is used

Vignette #2

- Miki is a 19-year-old female who came to the U.S. from Japan to pursue her studies in business. This is her second year at Pace and she seems to have made a lot of friends at school and in the city. She has been dating a few different males on and off since she came to the U.S., but has not found much satisfaction in these relationships. She feels that they do not understand her or her culture and she feels that these guys use her only for her body. She has been having sex with the guys she has dated and has not always used protection. Miki was raised mainly by her mother in Japan and does not have much contact with her father. Her parents separated when she was about 12 years old, but she does know that her father used to hit her with a bamboo stick when she misbehaved. Miki also remembers that her mother was very sad all the time when she was growing up and that her family has some unspoken history of depression.
- Miki has been talking recently about wanting to go home to be with her mother. She feels like summer break is too far away, but she doesn't have the money to make a trip back before then. Miki says she has not been sleeping well and you haven't seen her in the dining hall recently. Her roommate is concerned because she has not been attending classes in the past week and says she feels "weak" all the time. When you talk to her in the hallway, she doesn't seem to be paying attention or say much. Her roommate suggested talking to someone at the Counseling Center, but Miki got mad and said "You think I'm crazy??" After that suggestion, Miki took out a bottle of Tylenol and counted out 20 pills on the dresser. She asked her roommate how many pills are too many to take.
- *Risk factors: unwilling to seek help b/c of stigma in seeking help, homesickness, Asian values conflict with mainstream*
-
- *Symptoms: social withdrawal, feeling misunderstood, unprotected sexual practices*
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Diversity Public Service Announcements – 30 second version

- **Have you ever felt so hopeless that you did not want to wake up in the morning? Suicidal thoughts and feelings are not as uncommon as you might think.**
- In fact, did you know that African-Americans are less likely to disclose thoughts or feelings related to suicide?
- In fact, did you know that Asian-Americans have one of the highest rates of suicide?
- In fact, did you know that International students often experience culture shock and depression? Such Depression can
- In fact, did you know that Latinos are at higher risk for attempting suicide than individuals from many other ethnic groups?
- In fact, did you know that Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered students have more suicide attempts than their heterosexual peers?
- **If you are thinking of ending your life, caring, professional counselors are available at the Pace University Counseling Center. Please Contact us at 212-346-2526 or come by our office at 156 William St. 12th Floor. Don't suffer in silence.**