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THE DEFENSIVE LINE

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D-LINES WORKSHOP



THE   
DEFENSIVE  
 LINE

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@THEDEFENSIVELINE

WWW.THEDEFENSIVELINE.ORG









Courtesy: NY Jets













[Click Here to play video](#)

An aerial photograph of a coastline. The ocean is a deep, dark blue-green on the left, transitioning to a lighter, sandy brown as it meets the shore. White, frothy waves are crashing onto a wide, light-colored sandy beach. The sky is a pale, hazy yellow, suggesting a bright, sunny day. The overall scene is serene and natural.

**THIS STORY DEALS WITH SENSITIVE SUBJECT MATTER,  
INCLUDING MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE,  
THAT MAY BE TROUBLING FOR SOME VIEWERS.**





# PEER SUPPORT









**+54%**

**-17%**

**ADOLESCENT SUICIDE RATES SINCE 2018**





**SUICIDE RATES AMONG BLACK YOUTH**

**INCREASED + 144% SINCE**

**2007**



# VISION

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A WORLD WHERE NO YOUNG  
PERSON OF COLOR DIES BY  
SUICIDE

# MISSION

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TO END THE EPIDEMIC OF  
YOUTH SUICIDE, ESPECIALLY  
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE OF  
COLOR, BY TRANSFORMING  
THE WAY WE COMMUNICATE  
AND CONNECT ABOUT  
MENTAL HEALTH



# GOALS OF TDL

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## ➤ Goal 01

Reduce deaths by suicide in schools.

## ➤ Goal 02

Increase connection to mental health services.

## ➤ Goal 03

Broaden support for schools and teams.

## ➤ Goal 04

Increase use of best practices in a whole-systems suicide prevention model





# WHAT IS THE DEFENSIVE LINE?

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Ordinary people leading with personal experiences with suicide and mental health teaching others how to have meaningful conversations about suicide and mental health





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**DISCLAIMER\*:** We are not mental health experts,  
we are experts in our own mental health



**WHAT DOES SUICIDE  
PREVENTION MEAN TO  
YOU?**



TO US, SUICIDE PREVENTION MEANS

HOPE





**“THERE COMES A POINT WHEN WE NEED TO STOP JUST PULLING PEOPLE OUT OF THE RIVER. WE NEED TO GO UPSTREAM AND FIND OUT WHY THEY’RE FALLING IN.”**

**-DESMOND TUTU**



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# D-LINES

## FOR MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS INTERVENTION

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- ↗ Don't ignore your gut
  - ↗ Listen to the signs
    - ↗ Interact
      - ↗ Name your concern
        - ↗ Evidence your concern
          - ↗ Supportive environment



DON'T  
IGNORE YOUR GUT



# CHANGE IN BEHAVIOR

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# LISTEN FOR THE SIGNS



# TALK

If a person talks about:

- Feeling hopeless
- Being a burden to others
- Having no reason to live
- Feeling trapped
- Killing themselves
- Unbearable pain



# BEHAVIOR

Especially around a painful event, loss, or change:

- Increase in alcohol/drug use
- Withdrawing from activities
- Isolating from friends/family
- Sleeping too much/too little
- Looking for a way to end their lives
- Neglect of self-care/hygiene
- Increase in recklessness
- Calling to say goodbye



# MOOD

One or more are displayed:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Loss of interest
- Irritability
- Humiliation/Shame
- Agitation/Anger
- Relief or sudden improvement of negative moods
- Extreme swings in mood





INTERACT



# THE IMPORTANCE OF ASKING

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# MYTH BUSTING :

**ASKING ABOUT SUICIDAL THOUGHTS DOES NOT  
CREATE THE IDEA OF ATTEMPTING SUICIDE.**



NAME

YOUR CONCERN





# EVIDENCE YOUR CONCERN



# THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPASSIONATE LISTENING

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# SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT



# UNCONSCIOUS OR IMPLICIT BIASES

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**WHAT ARE OUR OWN ASSUMPTIONS  
OF WHAT A MENTAL HEALTH  
CRISIS/CHALLENGE COULD LOOK  
LIKE?**





# MICROAGGRESSIONS

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# D-LINES

## FOR MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS INTERVENTION

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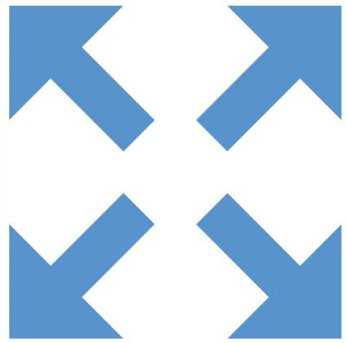
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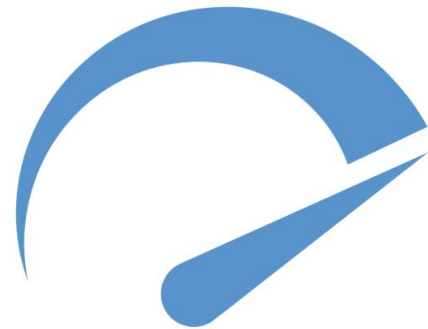
# TDL GAME PLAN

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↗ EXPAND



↗ ACCELERATE



↗ GROW



↗ PRESENT





# OUR “WHY” IS ELLA

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She was the brightest light in any room — bold, funny, charming, feisty, a brilliant woman and beautiful. Deeply loved and sorely missed, Ella’s loss has led the Thomas family to create The Defensive Line to help build a world in which no young person dies by suicide.





# CONNECT WITH THE DEFENSIVE LINE!



[@thedefensiveline](https://www.instagram.com/thedefensiveline)



[The Defensive Line](https://www.facebook.com/TheDefensiveLine)



[@TDefensiveLine](https://twitter.com/TDefensiveLine)



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-defensive-line/>



# D-LINES!

## HOW ARE YOU TAKING ACTION?

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great laugh

Animal  
lover

loved  
harder  
than  
she  
could  
brea

A  
best  
friend

contagious  
smile

Tough

Made  
life  
GO

# THANK YOU!

Ela

A light of  
life

