

Rising Stars



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e-mail: rising@bdonline.com

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"David had no idea what he was doing when he first picked the gun up. His eyes and cheek were still burning from the hot tears that had spilled not so long ago. But then a bang lit up the night sky. And David was no more." These lines have been taken from the diary of a young girl trying to cope with her best friends' suicide. David Morris is just one of the millions of teenagers who take their lives in our world today in the act of suicide. Yet those of us who are left behind can only grieve and ask ourselves 'why.' But as we near the dawn of the 21st century doctors, scientist and experts are bringing this situation out into the open. And hope is finally here.

Our world is covered in a thick layer of violence. The good news is that the murder rate has dropped and homicide is no longer the top causes of death. The bad news is it's been replaced by something even worse. Yes, suicide. Suicide is the fifth leading cause of death among 5- to 14-year-olds and the third leading cause of death for those ages 15 to 24. The one thing the government can protect its citizens from is replaced by one thing it can't? But sadly, the facts don't lie according to preliminary 1998 data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The government knows, as well as we do, that no one can protect us from ourselves. So are we are faced with a hopeless future for our teenagers? The concept of suicide and how serious it is has yet to be opened in Bangladesh. Families of our high and middle cultures believe that it's something "that can never happen to my teen!". Yet when it does, it's often too late.

Teens who are thinking about suicide often give very clear warning signals. Statistics are now showing that teens do indeed show signs of suicide before they finally attempt it. Lack of doing something one is most interested in is probably on top of the list. Suicidal teens often keep diaries or some sort of physical indication that they are reaching the edge. In the book, "Teenage Suicide" by Sandra

Gardener shows most teenagers confessed that they have been keeping a full record of the number of times they attempted suicide. Feelings of inadequacy and worthlessness are also major risk factors. Teens with repeated failures at school,

violence at home, isolated from peers or faces social difficulties are more likely to have such feelings (Ever seen that new kid in school standing all by her self during lunch?)

Understanding the hints and clues that are left behind for us are signals of them screaming for help.

A Journey to the Light?

By Naureen Islam

Picking them up is vital.

Educating the Bangladeshi public and teenagers about suicide is first of the many steps taken to prevent it. There have been plenty of well-known cases in the last few years where parents or peers were left nothing less than baffled about their teen's suicide! In fact, after one couple heard about their son's suicide, along with three of his friends, they said, "By all accounts they were normal youngsters at the threshold of manhood" (Times Magazine, November 1998). This makes us understand the confusion of parents and peers and the importance of catching loose signals. Yet, this is a fine example of why we should be educated or educate ourselves and prevent one more life from being taken.

Books have time and time again taken us to worlds we never thought existed. "About David", written by Susan Beth Pfeffer, is one of them. It tells a tragic tale of a head-strong seventeen year old girl named Lynn who's trying to go on with her life after her neighbour and life-long friend, David Morris, murdered his parents and killed himself. As a result, David had left her with a series of diaries full of hatred for his parents and love for his friends. Through out each and every chapter, we find out a little bit more about David and the person he wanted to be verses the person his parents were turning him into. Yet, at the end Lynn confronts her hopelessness of life after David and proves that the

SUICIDE



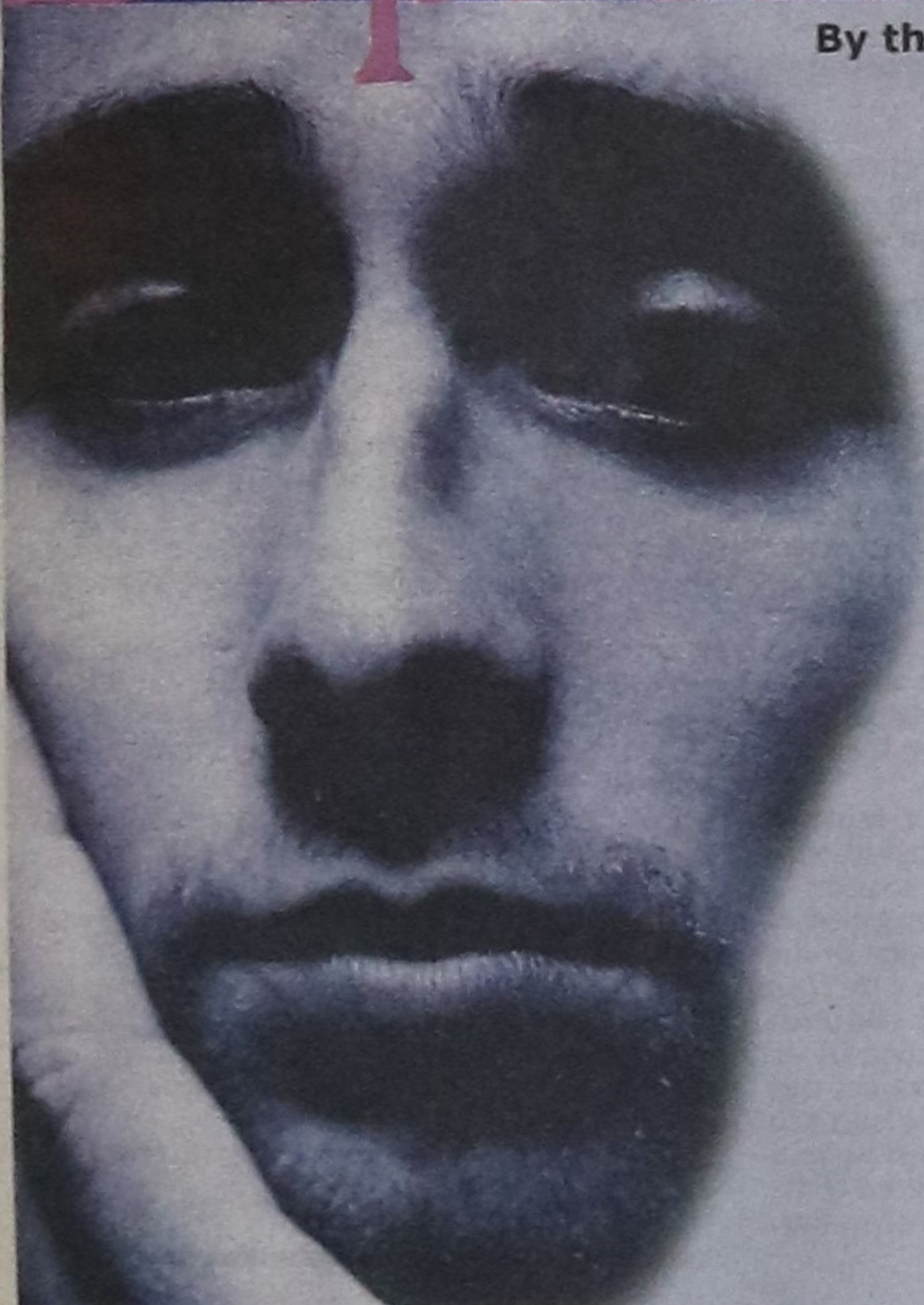
world has more to offer than he had thought. Thus, at the end of the book Lynn quotes, "I wish David peace. That's really all I wish for any of us. Just simple peace."

The essence of life is to hope and keep on living. Life is full of mystery and wonder and we fly from one minute to the next. Suicide takes all that away from us in an instance. It leaves even a bigger black hole

in those who are left behind. The only thing it has proved is hate. It conquers us in so many ways but one thing it will never take is hope. Hope has continued to encourage and inspire man time after time. Jonathan Davis, a 22-year old man who has survived suicide, told Time magazine in dedication to those who have brutally lost their lives in suicide, "Life's a journey, You just got to give it all you got".

Depression DISSECTED

By the Cheer-Up-Guy



Imran had had enough. His life seemed to be meaningless and as if nothing good was ever going to happen. His parents had just been divorced, and a question consistently nagged him: was it his fault? An acute financial crisis had gripped the household he now lived in. Nothing, absolutely nothing, seemed to be right. He constantly thought about death, felt like dying, and began thinking about committing suicide. Imran's sadness became chronic, and he had lost his appetite for all the activities he would enjoy doing before. What is the point, he thought, things aren't going to get better, why don't I just jump off, and end it all? Self-guilt and pessimism began to dominate his thoughts. Three days later Imran took a short journey down a 5 storey building.....It was a pity that he had made such a disastrously bad decision.

Imran is a fictitious character, and the story told above is made up too. It just depicts an extreme and rare response to a serious

physiological disorder--depression. No, things are not ever as bad as they sound, and depression is treatable. Most people who are depressed do not commit suicide. However depression increases the risk for suicide or suicide attempts. Depression is a serious illness that can affect anybody, including teenagers. It can affect your thoughts, feelings, behavior, and overall health. A depressive disorder is not the same as a passing blue mood. It is not a sign of personal weakness or a condition that can be willed or wished away. People with a depressive illness cannot merely "pull themselves together" and get better. With treatment depression can disappear even within 3 weeks. However, most depressed people never get the help they need. And, when depression isn't treated, it can get worse, last longer, and prevent you from getting the most out of your life. Remember, you're only a teenager once.

When you are depressed.. You

feel sad or cry a lot and it doesn't go away.

You feel guilty for no real reason; you feel like you're no good; you've lost your confidence.

Life seems meaningless or like nothing good is ever going to happen again.

You have a negative attitude a lot of the time, or it seems like you have no feelings.

You don't feel like doing a lot of the things you used to like-- like music, sports, being with friends, going out-- and you want to be left alone most of the time.

It's hard to make up your mind. You forget lots of things, and it's hard to concentrate.

You get irritated often. Little things make you lose your temper; you over-react.

Your sleep pattern changes; you start sleeping a lot more or you have trouble falling asleep at night. Or you wake up really early most mornings and can't get back to sleep.

You're eating pattern changes;

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