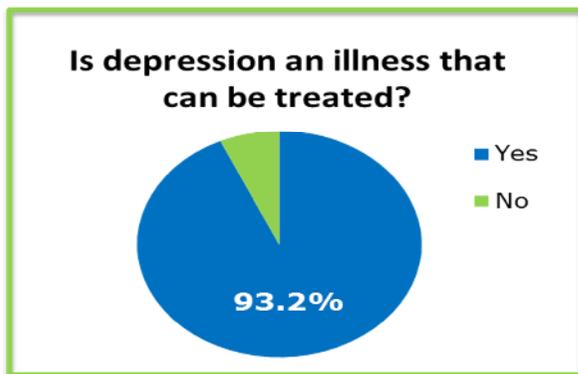
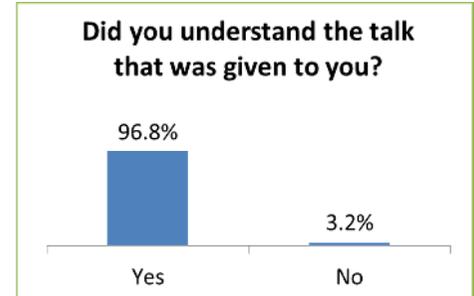


Assessing Impact of SADAG/Rotary Club Teen Suicide Prevention Workshop

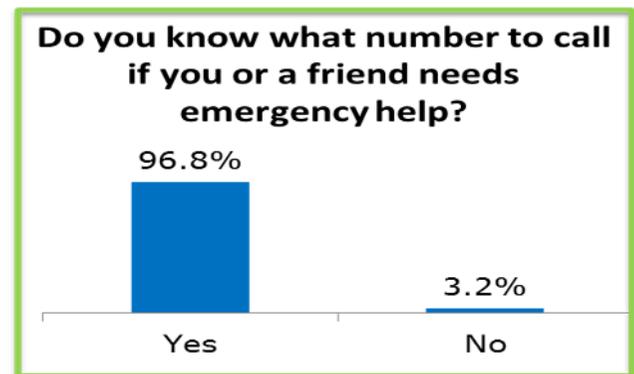


The South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG) visited the Ponelepele Oracle Secondary School in Kaalfontein to talk to students (grades 8-11) about depression and suicide. Depression and teen suicide greatly endanger South Africa's youth. Each class was given a presentation supplemented by an innovative tool, the Speaking Book, called "Suicide Shouldn't Be A Secret". The book is designed for people with low levels of literacy and is typically used in rural communities. It has 16 pages of colorful illustrations supported by straightforward and easy to understand text and a corresponding soundtrack. The book has encouraged understanding of mental health problems in underprivileged communities, and is very useful in addressing issues of stigma.

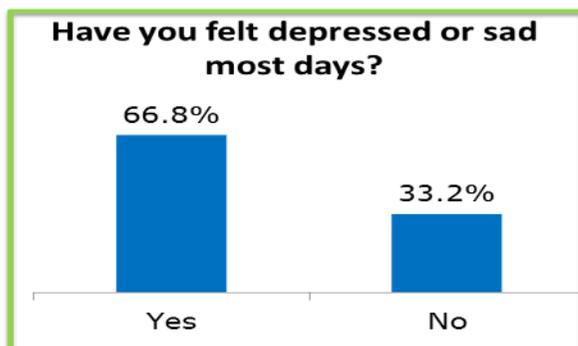
The objective of the presentation was to generate awareness of depression and suicide and help students open up. The students were very receptive, asked plenty of questions, and participated in discussions. Students were asked to complete a questionnaire to assess the appropriateness of the presentations and the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ), adapted for teens. 250 students completed each of the questionnaires. The average age for the learners completing the questionnaires was 14.5 years old. 96.8% of students said they understood the presentation they heard.



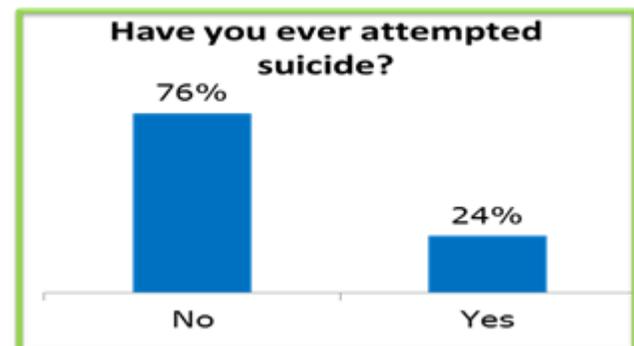
Students clearly understood that depression is an illness that requires professional help to overcome.



Nearly all of the students could provide the SADAG help-line number should they need any assistance.



Two-thirds of students felt sad or depressed most of the time for during the past year.



Nearly a quarter of students admitted having tried to take their own life sometime in the past.

The preliminary findings from the above research provided a clear indication that the SADAG presentation are effective in addressing issues of stigma in mental health, and that learners now know where to get help for themselves, their family and friends. These findings are also in line with national studies such as the Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (2008) in identifying the extent of mental health problems among youth.