

**Unit 4**

Tyler Mahone

Department of Sociology Longwood University

Soc1 306

Dr Bidwell

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## Unit 4

The Columbine shooting was the deadliest school shooting of its time killing 15 and injuring 24 others. It was national news for years and led to many changes in programs such as bullying prevention and school safety. On April 20, 1999 Dylan Kebold and Eric Harris tried to set off explosives in the school cafeteria that didn't work. They decided to go in and shoot their fellow classmates and teachers and create a panic before eventually turning the gun on themselves. The story of what happened before and after the events come from the viewpoint of Sue Kebold, Dylan's Mother in her book *Mother Reckoning*. She wanted to tell her story and the events she dealt with and stress and crisis her and her family dealt with. She was put into a situation no parent or anybody would ever want to be a part of. She has to deal with more than the stress of dealing with losing her son to suicide but also not knowing her son was depressed and having to come to terms with what terrible things he had done while dealing with this she had mental health issues of her own she had to overcome. By overcoming what she went through she decided to tell her story and speak out of the topic of mental health and suicide to help others know they are not alone.

The Abc-x Model and the Double Abc-x Model are two ways to show and explain how families deal with stress and to show their story of a stressful event and the outcome. The ABC-X model shows how A the stressor event then B the resources and then C the perception of the event. The X is a rating of the stress or crisis. The double ABC-X module keeps the ABC-X the same but then adds (a) pile up (b) existing and new resources ( c ) perception of the event (x) adaptation that is all focused around coping from the stressor event. The Double ABC-X model shows more of the effects post adjustment to the module. This module is to show that it isn't always just one crisis point there can multiply through the process such as the many different stressor events that

occurred to the Kebold family after the first crisis moment. These two modulus are used to see how the outcome will come to fruition in the end with all of the factors put together to show the overall picture and allow you to see the full picture and whole story.

The Initial stressor took place the morning of the events of the shooting at Columbine highschool. When Sue Kebold got a call from her husband Thomas Kebold about how something terrible had happened at the highschool. She left work and on her way home a million different thoughts went through her head about if her son was safe. When getting home Thomas and Sue learned after sometime that Dylan had been involved in the shooting and he could not be accounted for. Later the police showed up with a swat team to search the house for bombs and the Kebold family was questioned about their part in what happened this is where they learned their son was the shooter and the stress began. The stress for the family consumed them as it would be anybody eventually after hours of having to wait outside of their house they were allowed back into get there stuff and then were told they had to leave but the media was all around there property so they sneaked out and went and stayed with some family members. The first couple of days they were in shock from what had transpired and were still left out of what had happened at the school. Sue especially couldn't believe that Dylan would do such a thing and was in denial that he would ever kill anyone that there had to be a mix up as any mother would be. Their initial stress was at an extremely high level due to the serenity of the situation with the entire world media after and the entire community after them and on top of that losing their son in the same day. They did not see it coming; they believed that Dylan was a good son and would never do such a thing and were blindsided by the act due to his shy and friendly nature. Some members of the community such as their close friends and family were there for them from the start to comfort knowing what they were going through. But the media and other members of the

community did not see it the same way they saw Dylan and their family in the light of the shooting, not how they knew them before and blamed the parents for the acts that happened. The family was in shock for the initial reaction and in denial that such a thing could happen and were more cornered over the stress of the death of their son than the overall picture. They tried to think of different outcomes that could have possibly happened than what they were hearing such as Dylan did not take part or was forced to or that he was on drugs but all of those things came out to be untrue.

The post stress came from a variety of different forms such as learning the overall picture of what happened that day and out comes from it. The parents learned about their son Dylan being depressed and his hatred for the world and how he was entangled in this plan with his friend Eric. They learned that Dylan wanted a way out of this world and this was his way out with committing susicide with the plan of attacking the school. They learned these things from Dylan's journal and the videotapes from what happened in the school and from the videotapes from the basement boys were Dylan and Eric videotaped their anger towards the world and what they were going to do. With learning this information it then led to another stressor that overtook Sue that how she didnt see this before the event. How did she not see that she soon was depressed and would ever do the things he did. Another the stressor would be the lawsuits to follow on the family from what had happened. Having to deal with the stress of knowing that your son took 15 innocent lives and had injured 24 more with many lawsuits from his actions. Another stress would be the media and the amil they received. With the outside world having an opinion of what happened by blaming the parents and saying the kids were outcast and were bullied into these actions. This made it really conflicting for Sue because Dylan was not the monster they said his entire life. With the mail they received they received hate mail and mail that was offering

support. With the mail it was comforting for the family to know that not everybody hated them for what their son had done but offered support for them losing their child and the tremendous pressure the family was under from the media and the outside world perception. They also had support from their family members that were also going through this with them. They also had the support from their neighbors and friends who knew Dylan and the family who knew what they were going through. Sue eventually retired to work and received support from her colleagues and her boss to help her get through the pain of losing her son to the trouble he had caused. Sue talked about how after the first year of the stress the second year got worse due to not seeing light at the end of the tunnel of being consumed with the pain and that there was no way out you were going to have to deal with the rest of your life that you would never be able to wake up from the nightmare of the columbine shooting. The family post stressor event had even more pile up with not only the grief of losing there soon to suicide they had to grieve over the victims he left in his wake and had to hear where they went wrong and had to think to themselves why did they not see Dylan was in the mental state that lead to his actions. Sue also was unable to get some of the resources necessary to overcome her mental health because no therapist would want to see her and she wasn't allowed at any of the group sessions because it could have triggered another member who could be a victim or a family member of a victim. They adapted the best they could to the situation they were put in a situation where they loved their son but at the same time could not because of what he did and said and ontop being blindsided by the event totally. I think a situation they were put in takes a lifetime to fix. The protective factors that lead to the family to be able to fight to overcome would be support groups, the family itself and the ability to spread what they learned on to others to help others who went through what they dealt with. With Sue joining a suicide prevention group and being

able to help hear stories of other people's experiences with losing loved ones made her feel at ease because people understood what she was dealing with. A major turn in her life would be when a lady shared a story to her about her 12 year old committing suicide and comforting Sue at one of the Suicide prevention meetings. This allowed Sue to see that she at least she got to see Dylan grow up and there were people that knew how she felt and were there for her in her recovery process. This process takes time with years of medication and therapy for Sue to help with her pain. But what helped her get through it would be her voice to go out and speak of what she went through and hope to reach others of the factors of depression and suicide prevention. To share her message about suicide-murder to how the facts and let other people hear her story and what she had learned on how to prevent it with warning signs and the different outlets you can use. Tom and Sue grew apart and divorced in the following years during Sue's mental health battle but she got through it and wanted to speak out towards the dangers of not getting treatment for mental health and became an activist. Her way of coping with what happened is to tell her story to others so they know they are not alone and to raise awareness on suicide and mental health problems.