

**Preparing for
Policy Change:
Suicide Prevention,
Intervention, and
Postvention**



Directing Change

Program and Film Contest



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF
Mental Health
 hope. recovery. wellbeing.



**Los Angeles County
 Office of Education**



Directing Change
Program & Film Contest



eachmindmatters.org



suicideispreventable.org

Your Social Marketer, Inc.

“Suicide Prevention and intervention require constant vigilance.”

Hayes Lewis, co-creator of Zuni Life Skills

Growing Support for Suicide Prevention

September 2016, AB 2246: Mandates all schools serving pupils in grades 7-12 to implement suicide prevention policies before the beginning of the 2017-18 school year.

Education Code Section 41533: Funding to pay for suicide prevention training for school teachers.

Education Code Section 49604: This statute authorizes Superintendent to encourage provision of suicide prevention training to each school counselor at least one time while employed as a counselor.

Education Code section 49076 (Release of Information in Emergency Situations): School districts may release information from pupil records to the following: Appropriate persons in connection with an emergency if the knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of a pupil or other persons. Schools or school districts releasing information pursuant to this subparagraph shall comply with the requirements set forth in Section 99.32(a)(5) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

AB 2246

Education Code section 215 (a)
(1)

The governing board or body of a local educational agency that serves pupils in grades 7 to 12, inclusive, shall, before the beginning of the 2017-18 school year, adopt, at a regularly scheduled meeting, a policy on pupil suicide prevention in grades 7 to 12, inclusive. The policy shall be developed in consultation with school and community stakeholders, school-employed mental health professionals, and suicide prevention experts and shall, at a minimum, address procedures relating to suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

Why was this legislation enacted?

According to the latest 2013 data from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide is **the second leading cause of death for youth and young adults 10 to 24 years of age, inclusive.**

As children and teens spend a significant amount of their young lives in school, **the personnel who interact with them on a daily basis are in a prime position to recognize the warning signs of suicide and make the appropriate referrals for help.**

Why is this legislation needed?

California Healthy Kids Survey – Los Angeles Results

- Frequency of sad or hopeless feelings were reported by 28% of 7th graders, 30% of 9th graders, and 31% of 11th graders.
- 16-18% of the high school students reported seriously considering attempting suicide.

Table A7.3

Seriously Considered Attempting Suicide, Past 12 Months

	Grade 9	Grade 11	NT
	%	%	%
No	82	84	82
Yes	18	16	18

Question HS A.124: During the past 12 months, did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide?

Accessing Data



California Healthy Kids Survey

Aggregated state and county data is available online to 2013.

To access state and county data go to <http://chks.wested.org>

Reports CHKS (<http://chks.wested.org/>)

Step 1: Select “Reports” from top menu

Step 2: Identify County and/or District

Query CHKS (<http://chks.wested.org/query-chks/>)



The case for policies and procedures



- ❑ Maintaining a safe and secure school environment is part of school's mission
- ❑ Promote the behavioral health of students, which enhances their academic performance
- ❑ Impact of suicide on other students and school community
- ❑ Avoid liability related to suicides or suicide attempts by students



The case for suicide prevention



There is Hope

<https://vimeo.com/258132480>



Behind the Smile

<https://vimeo.com/258653288>



A Fighting Chance

<https://vimeo.com/259420976>

Building a strong foundation

Create a policy that provides the foundation for suicide prevention, intervention and postvention in your district.



A strong suicide prevention policy

Protocols for helping students at risk

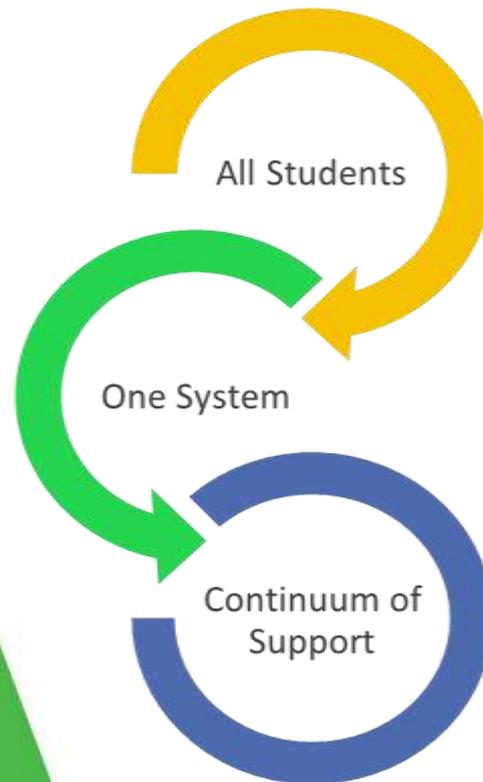
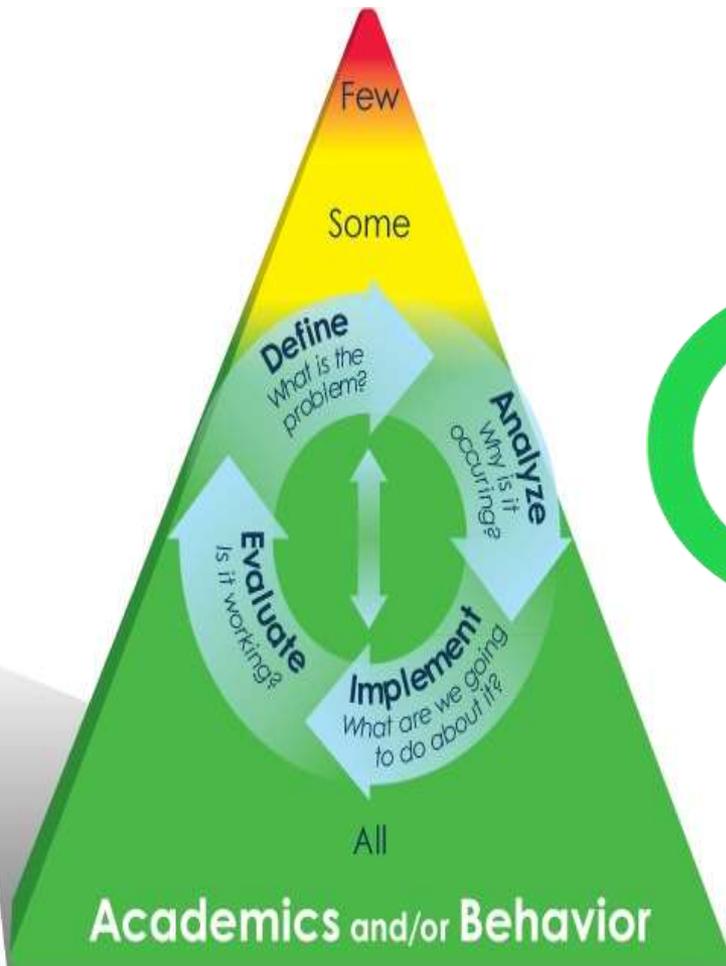
Staff
education and training

Parent
education and training

Student
education and engagement

- ✓ Prevention
- ✓ Intervention
- ✓ Postvention

Establishing a Multi-Tiered System of Support for Suicide Prevention/Intervention/Postvention -



In California, MTSS is a whole-school prevention-based framework for improved learning outcomes for every student through a layered continuum of evidence-based practices and support (CDE)

Our Work Today

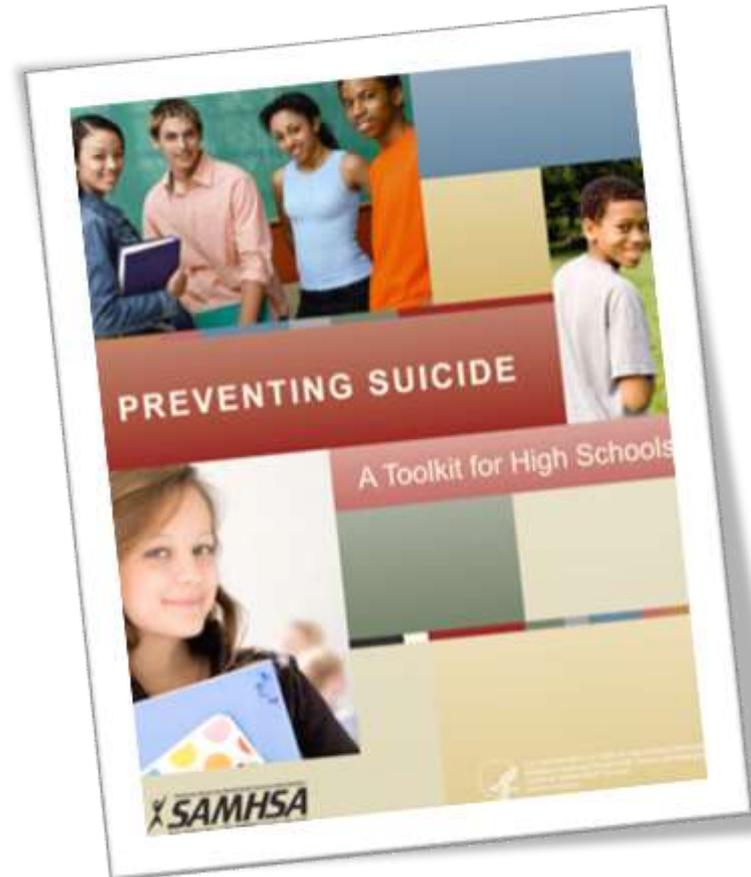
- Use the template policy developed by a work group led by the California Department of Education as a starting point to help you update, as needed, your existing policy and support you in strategizing how to meet the requirements in the policy.
- District policies for suicide prevention must be developed “in consultation with school and community stakeholders...and suicide prevention experts”.
- This sample policy *will still need to be customized* to fit the needs and culture of individual districts
- *Here is the link to the full AB 2246 language:*
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB2246



A great resource

This Presentation is based in part on information found in:

*Preventing Suicide:
A Toolkit for High Schools (Ch. 3)*



Website: store.samhsa.gov/product/Preventing-Suicide-A-Toolkit-for-High-Schools/SMA12-4669



Staff Development and Trainings

What does the new law require?

Education Code section 215 (a) (3)

- . The policy shall also address any training to be provided to teachers of pupils in grades 7 to 12, inclusive, on suicide awareness and prevention.
- . Materials approved for training may also include programs that can be completed through self-review of suitable suicide prevention materials.

What does the CDE sample policy recommend?

- All staff will receive annual professional development on risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, postvention, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention.
- The training shall be offered under the direction of a District counselor/psychologist and/or in cooperation with one or more community mental health agencies.
- Additional professional development in risk assessment and crisis intervention will be provided to school employed mental health professionals and school nurses.

Education Code section 215 (a)
(4) The policy shall be written to ensure that a school employee acts only within the authorization and scope of the employee's credential or license. Nothing in this section shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging a school employee to diagnose or treat mental illness unless the employee is specifically licensed and employed to do so.

Turn and Share

How are you currently training staff?



Trainings for Staff

QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer)

- 60-90 minute gatekeeper training (free through LADMH)
 - Online License begins at \$30 for individual license.
 - “Train the Trainer” available (\$495/person)
 - Website: www.QPRInstitute.org
- Contact: SuicidePrevention@dmh.lacounty.gov



Assign 3 to 5 positions to be QPR Trainers for your district. This will allow you to customize staff trainings to your districts policies and procedures. In addition, offer online option for staff that missed in person training.

Programs for Staff

safeTALK

- Skills to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect to further support (3 hour, in person, free)
- Contact: SuicidePrevention@dmh.lacounty.gov



- Gatekeeper presentation (1 hour, in person, free)
- Contact: Patricia S Speelman, LMFT, Division Director:
Pspeelman@DidiHirsch.org
310.895.2352

Programs for Staff



Kognito

- Professional development online simulation Provides hands-on, interactive, and personalized learning through use of practice role play conversations with virtual students.

at-risk

- For Elementary School Educators
- For Middle School Educators
- For High School Educators

- **Website:** www.Kognito.com
- **Contact:**
colleen@reillygroupinc.com

- Evidence based for mental health/suicide prevention
- Includes Measurement, Evaluation, Reports
- Delivered on-line & in groups
- Customized to include Warning Signs, Referral Processes, Policies and Resources
- Simulations build skills that reduce the anxiety teachers and staff may experience about identifying and responding to an emotionally at risk student.

Programs for Staff

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)

- [Talk Saves Lives](#) (1 hour, presentation)
- [Online Suicide Prevention](#) Training for K-12 Educators
- Program Costs vary from \$35 for an individual license to \$15 for 100-199 licenses to \$4 for 1000 or more licenses.



Contact: Traute Winters, Los Angeles Area Director

twinters@afsp.org or call: (424) 327-7101

Website: <https://afsp.org/chapter/afsp-greater-los-angeles/>

Recipe for Success



Kick off the implementation of AB 2246 with a staff training and youth-led activity to engage your school community and provide context for why they are being asked to do this.

Workgroup Time

What trainings will you offer to all staff?
(Define all staff)



High Risk Populations

AB 2246 require policies to specifically address the needs of certain high-risk groups that are disproportionately affected by suicide.

Youth who are members of these groups can be at elevated risk for suicide, but it is important to remember that identification with any of these groups does not necessarily mean an increase of risk.

Efforts should be targeted to address and reduce added stressors youth who identify as part of these (or other) groups may experience.

Education Code section 215
(a) (2)

The policy shall specifically address the needs of high-risk groups, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

- Youth bereaved by suicide.
- Youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance use disorders.
- Youth experiencing homelessness or in out-of-home settings, such as foster care.
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth.

High Risk Youth Perspectives



Foster Youth Culture

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eyiMdTC0i8g>



Pain Never Lasts

<https://vimeo.com/92756717>



Binary Blues

https://youtu.be/veJJ2_bgRIg



The Empty Seat

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2JnSSZOJDVM&feature=youtu.be>

High Risk Populations

- Speak to youth and involve them!
- Meet and learn about local community resources
- Provide cultural competency trainings for staff (speakers, online, CBOs)
- Create clubs on campus (e.g. GSA, NAMI on Campus)
- Create support group on campus



“Suicidal behaviors in LGBT populations appear to be related to “minority stress”, which stems from the cultural and social prejudice attached to minority sexual orientation and gender identity. This stress includes individual experiences of prejudice or discrimination, such as family rejection, harassment, bullying, violence, and victimization. Increasingly recognized as an aspect of minority stress is “institutional discrimination” resulting from laws and public policies that create inequities or omit LGBT people from benefits and protections afforded others. Individual and institutional discrimination have been found to be associated with social isolation, low self-esteem, negative sexual/gender identity, and depression, anxiety, and other mental disorders. These negative outcomes, rather than minority sexual orientation or gender identity per se, appear to be the key risk factors for LGBT suicidal ideation and behavior.”

-U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Trevor Project

The Trevor Project:

- Trevor Lifeline: 866-488-7386
 - Counselors who are trained to help LGBTQ+ youth are available to talk 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.
- TrevorChat: www.TheTrevorProject.org
 - Online instant messaging with a TrevorChat counselor.
- Trainings: Lifeguard workshop, Trevor Ally Trainings, Trevor CARE



High Risk Populations



Lifeguard Workshop:

The Lifeguard Workshop is a free online learning module with a video, curriculum and teacher resources for middle and high school classrooms. 25-minute interactive, online learning activity

Website: www.thetrevorproject.org/pages/lifeguard

High Risk Populations



Creating a Safe Space for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth

- Variety of programs, trainings and resources to support schools including:
 - Workshops for educators
 - National, student- and educator-led campaigns (Day of Silence, Ally Week, No Name Calling Week)
 - Change the Game: The GLSEN sports project
 - “Safe Space Kits”

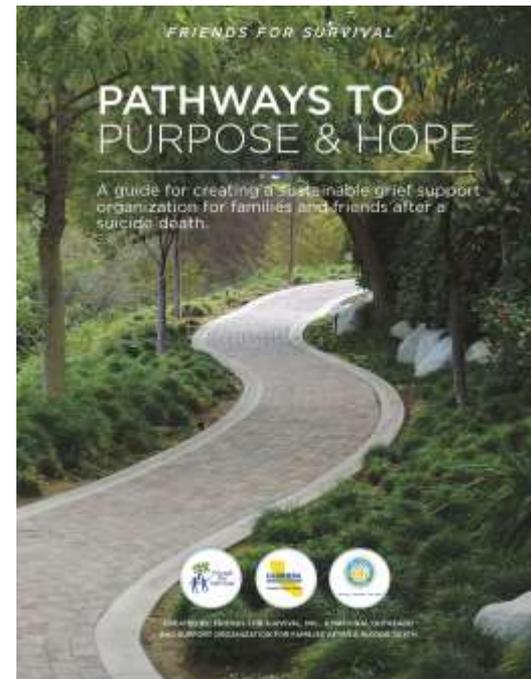


Resources for Suicide Loss

Pathways to Purpose and Hope:

A Guide to Creating a Sustainable Suicide Bereavement Support Program for Families and Friends After a Suicide Death

- EMMResourceCenter.org
- Download for FREE



Additional Resources

Youth Suicide Prevention Project

- <http://preventsuicide.lacoe.edu/>



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION PROJECT

About Suicide ▾ Admin & Staff ▾ Parents & Students ▾ Special Issues ▾ Resources ▾ Events ▾ Project ▾

Los Angeles County Youth Suicide Prevention Project
Providing outreach and support to districts, schools, parents and high risk youth populations.

Student Mental Health Film Screening and Awards

If you need immediate help, please call 911.

LA County Dept. of Mental Health Access Hotline
1-800-854-7771

Suicide Prevention Center Hotline
1-877-7-CRISIS or
1-877-727-4747

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK or
1-800-273-8255

Trevor Lifeline - LGBTQ
1-866-488-7388

Teen Line
310-855-HOPE or
1-800-TLC-TEEN or
1-800-852-8336
Toll free in CA only, 6 pm - 10 pm PT



Assessment

Assessment: What does the CDE sample policy recommend?

- At least two staff members shall be designated as the primary and secondary point of contact regarding potential suicidal intentions.
- A referral process should be prominently disseminated to all staff members, so they know how to respond to a crisis and be knowledgeable of the school and community-based resources.
- Additional professional development in risk assessment and crisis intervention will be provided to school employed mental health professionals and school nurses.

Education Code section 215
(a) (4) The policy shall be written to ensure that a school employee acts only within the authorization and scope of the employee's credential or license. Nothing in this section shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging a school employee to diagnose or treat mental illness unless the employee is specifically licensed and employed to do so.

Turn and Share- Do you have something like this?

Create a simple one page or double sided handout with:

- The name and phone number of all people on campus trained to conduct risk assessments and safety planning.
- The name and phone numbers of the primary and secondary point of contact on campus regarding potential suicidal intentions.
- The name and phone number of the primary contact at your district
- Information about what to do and who to contact if someone (bus driver, teacher, cafeteria lady) is concerned about a student.
- Additional helpful information would include a list of warning signs and the local crisis line.

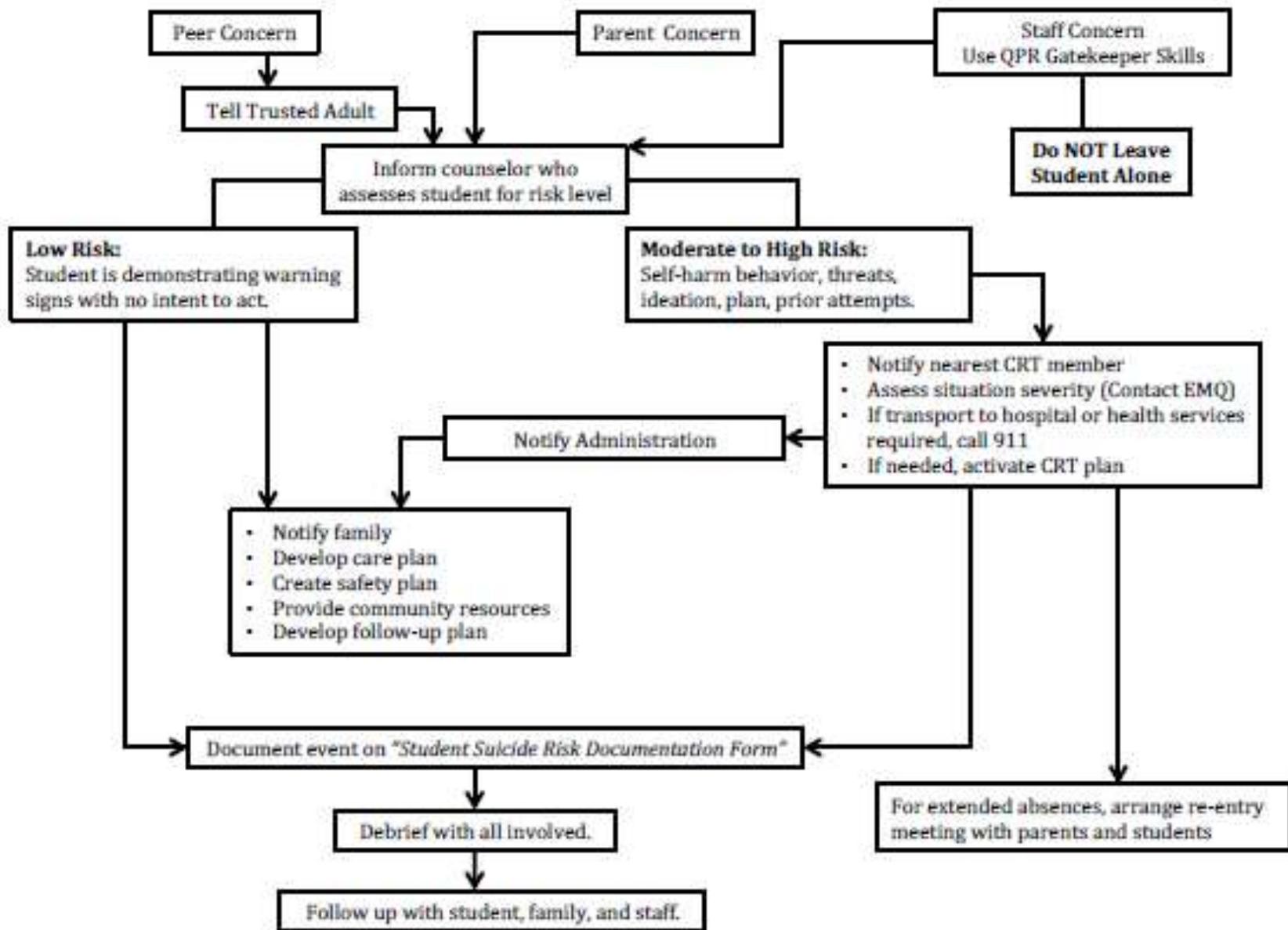
Share with all school staff: a printed copy and encourage them to take a picture with their phone

Assessment

- Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions, they shall promptly notify the primary or secondary point of contact
 - Assessment conducted
 - Parent notification
 - Referral to outside resources
- Students experiencing suicidal ideation shall not be left unsupervised.



SUICIDE INTERVENTION PROTOCOL FLOWCHART: LOW, MODERATE & HIGH RISK
 STUDENT HAS DEMONSTRATED RISK FOR SUICIDE



Assessment: Risk Assessment Tools

A suicide risk assessment is warranted:

- **If any suicide warning signs are evident**
- **If significant risk factors are present**

Generally, the more warning signs and risk factors present, the greater the individual's risk.



Assessment: Risk Assessment Tools

Components of a Risk Assessment:

1. Assess risk factors
2. Ask about suicidal thoughts, plan, and intent
3. Assess protective factors
4. Apply clinical judgment
5. Document

Assessment: Risk Assessment Tools

Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (CSSRS)

www.cssrs.columbia.edu/

Versions for schools, first responders, healthcare and other fields

Visit the website for materials and training resources



Turn and Talk

Are safety plans currently part of the assessment process on your campus?



Assessment: Safety Planning

Safety Planning and Support:

- Recognizing the signs of crisis
- Identifying coping strategies
- Having social contacts who may distract from the crisis
- Contacting friends and family for crisis support
- Contacting health professionals, including 911 or crisis hotlines

Reducing access to lethal means

MY3 Safety Planning Mobile App

www.MY3app.org

- **Target audience:** Those at risk for suicide
- **Purpose:** Getting those at risk for suicide connected to their primary support network when they are in crisis; also provides safety planning and other helpful resources

Reducing access to lethal means



LA County DMH: Partners in Suicide Prevention



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF

Mental Health

hope. recovery. wellbeing.

Contact: SuicidePrevention@dmh.lacounty.gov

LA County DMH: Partners in Suicide Prevention

PSP Team Activities

- Increase public awareness
- Reduce stigma/discrimination associated with mental illness, substance abuse and suicide
- Provide education and training
- Promote prevention/early intervention
- Create linkages, provide referrals
- Assist care providers

Contact: SuicidePrevention@dmh.lacounty.gov

Trainings for Specialized Staff

Clinical (2-3 hours):

- Provides training on risk assessment, intervention and postvention
- Includes information on the CSSRS and safety planning

Contact: Patricia S Speelman, LMFT, Division Director

Pspeelman@DidiHirsch.org or call 310.895.2352

Service Providers (2 hours):

- Mental Health Providers
- Covers: risk factors, assessment, prevention, interventions

Contact: SuicidePrevention@dmh.lacounty.gov

Trainings for Specialized Staff

Recognizing and Responding to Suicide Risk (RRSR)

- 2 days
- For MH Professionals
- Advanced interactive training teaching effective assessment and management for suicide risk

Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk (AMSR)

- 1 day
- For MH Professionals
- Advanced interactive training teaching effective assessment and management for suicide risk

Trainings for Specialized Staff

Youth Mental Health First Aid

- 8 hours/one day or 4 hours/2 days
- www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org



Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

- 2 day interactive workshop to intervene and prevent immediate risk of suicide, suicide first-aid



Suicide to Hope (8 hours)

- Clinicians and other professional caregivers
- Provides skills for working with persons recently at risk of suicide towards recovery and growth

Workgroup Time

Work together to identify if there are any areas in your existing assessment process that need to be modified to meet the requirements of AB 2246.

- Identify your primary and secondary point of contact at each campus.
- What assessment tool are you or will your district use?
- Who will be trained to conduct assessments?
- What safety plan tool are you or will your district use?
- What is the process to notify parents?
- How are you keeping records?



Turn and Talk

Do you have a process for ensuring continuity of care for a student identified at risk for suicide?



Crisis Procedures for In-School Attempts

In the case of an in-school suicide attempt, the health and safety of the student is paramount.

In these situations:

- First aid/transportation following district emergency protocols
- Student will remain supervised throughout
- Contact of parent/guardian
- If appropriate (not emergency), assessment of student
- Notification of administration
- Engagement of crisis response team as needed

Crisis Procedures for Out of School Attempts

If a staff member becomes aware of a suicide attempt by a student that is in progress in an out-of-school location, the staff member will:

- Call the police and/or emergency medical services, such as 911.
- Inform the student's parent or guardian.
- Inform the school suicide prevention coordinator and principal.

Re-Entry Procedures

For students returning to school after a mental health crisis (e.g., suicide attempt or psychiatric hospitalization):

- School staff to meet with parent/guardian (discuss re-entry, next steps)
- Identify coordinator for student/parent/outside care provider
- Parent to provide documentation of care
- Identified coordinator to provide “check-ins” with student

Supporting a Student, After an Attempt

Things to consider:

- Social and Peer relations
- Transition from the hospital setting
- Academic concerns on return to school
- Medication
- Family concerns (denial, guilt, lack of support, social embarrassment, anxiety)
- Ongoing support*

Didi Hirsch Suicide Prevention Center



Didi Hirsch Suicide Prevention Center

Crisis Services

- 24-hour Suicide Crisis Line:
 - **NSPL - 1.800.273-8255**
 - **LA and Orange Counties - 877.727.4747**
- Crisis Chat Services
 - **www.didihirsch.org/chat**
- Crisis Text Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing
 - **Text “HEARME” to 839863**

Didi Hirsch Suicide Prevention Center

- Suicide Response Team
 - Respond to scenes of suicide deaths to provide support and referral to family, friends and colleagues
 - 310.895.2326

Didi Hirsch Suicide Prevention Center

Support Groups:

- **Loss survivors:**
 - Two support groups will be created for teens
 - Offer training on facilitating suicide bereavement support groups
- **Attempt Survivor Support Groups:**
 - Only available to adults at this point

Didi Hirsch Suicide Prevention Center

Postvention in Schools (after a suicide death)

Provide crisis counseling support
and debriefs with
students/staff/parents

Didi Hirsch Suicide Prevention Center

Contact:

- Patricia S Speelman, LMFT, Division Director:
 - Pspeelman@DidiHirsch.org
 - 310.895.2352
- Shawn Silverstein, PhD., Lead Psychologist:
 - Ssilverstein@DidiHirsch.org
 - 310.895.2347

Turn and Talk

- What is our crisis plan for a suicide attempt, in or out of school?
- What interventions/support do we/should we offer for students thinking about suicide?
- What will be our re-entry process for students returning to school after a suicide attempt?
- What “outside” resources does your district utilize for mental health care for students?





Student Engagement and Youth Voice

Workgroup Time

How are you currently engaging youth?



Youth Engagement Programs

- Walk in Our Shoes
- NAMI on Campus and Ending the Silence Presentations
- The Directing Change Program and Film Contest
- More Than Sad: American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- LEADS for Youth: Linking Education and Awareness of Depression and Suicide
- Kognito (Peer-to-Peer)



Ending the Silence Program



Kognito



American Foundation
for Suicide Prevention

WALK IN OUR SHOES

Hello! Are you curious about what it's like to be in someone else's shoes? Do you want to learn about other people's lives? Curiosity and learning are great, so lace up, strap on, or slip on your sneakers and let's learn about mental health. Learning about other people can help you understand that they're still a lot like you — they're just on a journey in different shoes.





FOR GROWNUPS

NEED HELP NOW?

FOR TEACHERS

Mental health challenges are more common than one realizes. As an educator, you play a crucial role in introducing the subject of mental health to your students. In fact, some of your students have probably experienced their own mental health challenges.

The following resources provide information about mental health, a synopsis of the Walk In Our Shoes campaign and a Classroom Facilitation Guide, with accompanying activities, that familiarize students with mental health and wellness.

INTRODUCING MENTAL HEALTH (TEACHERS)
ABOUT WALK IN OUR SHOES
CLASSROOM FACILITATION GUIDE
CLASSROOM LESSON PLANS
CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

www.walkinourshoes.org/for-grownups

Youth Engagement



<https://namica.org/nami-on-campus/>

What is a NAMI on Campus High School (NCHS) Club?

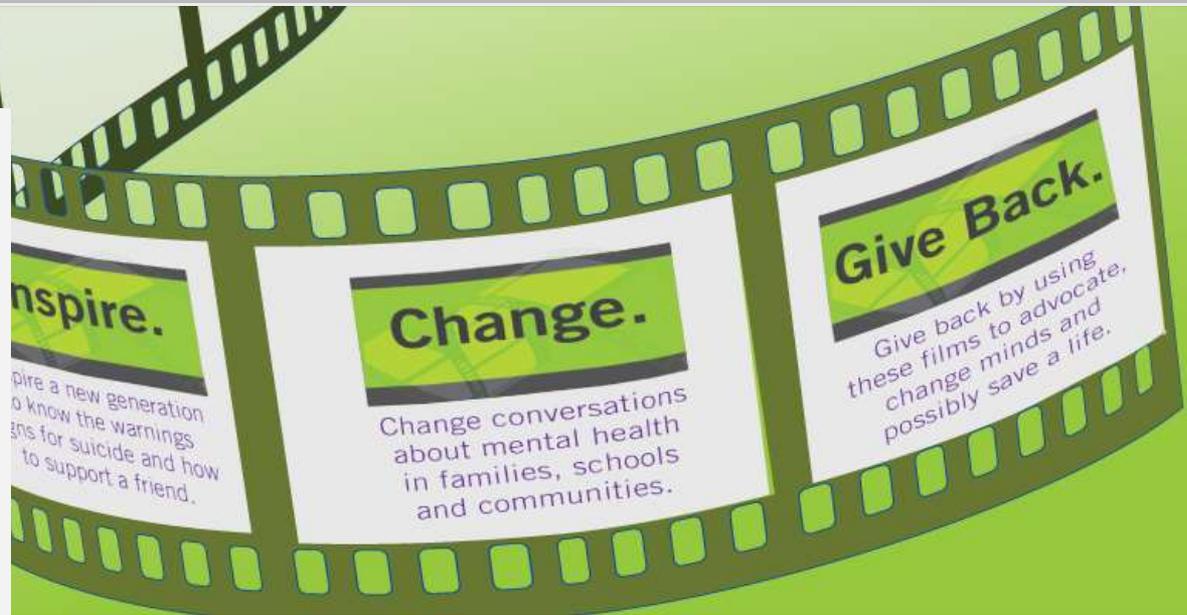
- NAMI on Campus High School (NCHS) is a student-led mental health awareness and stigma reduction club program for high schools in California
- **The goals of NCHS are to:**
 - Make mental health and mental illness more acceptable topics at school
 - Bring awareness to how we can all better support and help one another when faced with a mental illness (either our own or someone we care about)
 - Reduce stigma so people feel more comfortable seeking help for a mental health concern

Process to Start a Club

1. Students submit the Online Interest Form through NAMI CA website
 - ▶ This lets NAMI CA know they are initiating the process; NAMI CA informs the local Affiliate
2. NAMI CA will send the students the Start Up Packet
3. NAMI CA coordinates a webinar or conference call with the students, Advisor, and local Affiliate
 - ▶ Objective is to answer questions, go over important club policies, etc.
4. Local Affiliate, students, and advisor have an in-person meeting to get to know one another and form plans for partnership
5. Students and advisor complete the Start Up Packet and turn into NAMI CA for approval
6. NAMI CA reviews the Start Up Packet and officially approves the club

Directing Change Program & Film Contest

Youth and young adults submit 60 second films in suicide prevention, mental health matters, and explore these topics through the lens of diverse cultures.



❖ **Submission Deadline: March 1**

✓ **Open to youth ages
14-25 and grades 7-12**

✓ **Red Carpet Award Ceremony**

✓ **Cash prizes for winning
teams and schools**

Learning Methodology



Directing Change integrates sound pedagogical principles into the filmmaking process, and participants are engaged via all methods of the “learning spectrum”: to see, experience, discuss, and apply. Once created films are used in schools and communities to raise awareness and start conversations about these topics.



<https://vimeo.com/92756723>



<https://youtu.be/aR7Rgo6tPU0>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFFICLJNbQ8>

Educational Resources

The Directing Change Program is an evaluated education program that can easily be integrated into classroom, club, or extracurricular activities.

Example of educational resources:

- Lesson plans
- Short educational films and Prezi about mental health, suicide prevention and how to help a friend
- Fact sheets
- PowerPoint presentation for schools with lesson plans
- Getting started Prezi presentation and participation booklets
- Prevention programs, staff and parent trainings



<http://www.directingchangeCA.org/schools/>

Directing Change - Key Findings

Directing Change is effective at:

- Increasing knowledge and skills
- Changing attitudes and behaviors related to mental illness and suicide prevention

“It is remarkable that significant findings persisted even months after the program had ended—with fielding of the survey among participants in the program 3 - 6 months after completing their film submissions”



NORC 75

at the UNIVERSITY of CHICAGO

...learning spectrum" to see, ...
...used in schools and communities to raise awareness and start
...conversations about these topics.
Findings from a cross-sectional case-control study by NORC at the University of Chicago
demonstrated knowledge, attitude and behavior changes:



Directing Change participants more frequently agreed that suicide is preventable, identified more warning signs and were more willing to encourage others to seek help, beyond their own social circles.

Directing Change participants are more willing to engage in conversation aimed at suicide prevention and have fewer attitudes that contribute to stigma about mental illness.



Teachers report impact on students and school climate such as gaining skills for dealing with mental health issues later in life, noticing social isolation, increased sense of safety and sensitivity to the feelings of others, and knowledge of how to connect peers with resources.

Directing Change provides an effective, tangible, and supportive way to generate open discussion about mental illness, prevent suicide, increase help-seeking, and to reduce stigma and discrimination.



86%

OF YOUTH LEARNED PROPER RESPONSE TO A FRIEND'S SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS VIA PROGRAM

58%

OF YOUTH ENCOURAGED SOMEONE GOING THROUGH A TOUGH TIME TO SEEK HELP

86%

AGREED EVEN PEOPLE WHO SEEM SUCCESSFUL CAN BE HURTING ON THE INSIDE AND THINKING ABOUT SUICIDE

82%

MADE A PERSONAL EFFORT TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

2,138

NUMBER OF FILMS SUBMITTED BY YOUTH IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS

77,343

Since 2012, 5,343 youth have participated in the Directing Change Program and Film Contest. Their commitment and creativity towards raising awareness about suicide prevention has helped inspire a new generation to know the warning signs, reach out for help, and initiate conversations that could help save a life.

Learn more about the Directing Change Program and Film Contest by visiting DirectingChange.org.

Directing Change Outcomes



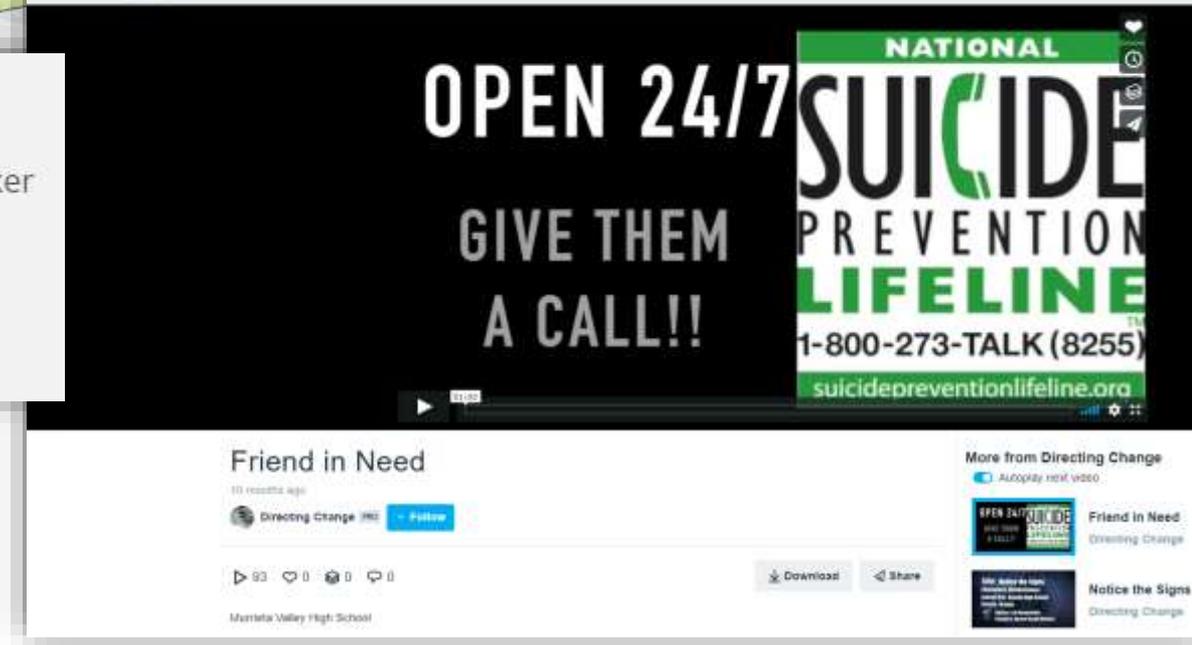
[Outcome Video](#)

How to Access FILMS



Honorable Mention "Your Story"
Orange County
Filmmakers: Kenna Madrick & Paige Walker
Canyon High School
Advisor: Alex Graham

[View](#)
[Download](#)



www.DirectingChangeCA.org/films/

Los Angeles County Service Areas

Learn4Life	1
William J. Pete Knight High School	
Clark Magnet High School	2
Canoga Park High School	
Cleveland Charter High School	
Downtown Magnet High School	
Daniel Pearl Magnet High School	
Edward Roybal Learning Center	
Firebaugh High School	
Foothill High School	
Francisco Bravo Medical Magnet High School	
Highland High School	
John F. Kennedy High School	
Reseda High School	
Roy Romer Middle School	
Saugus High School	
Sunland Christian School	



- ① Antelope Valley
- ④ Metro
- ⑦ East
- ② San Fernando Valley
- ⑤ West
- ⑧ South Bay
Includes Catalina Island
- ③ San Gabriel Valley
- ⑥ South

Arcadia High School	3
Claremont High School	
Diamond Bar High School	
John Marshall Middle School	
Learning Works Charter School	
Los Altos High School	
Maranatha High School	
Northview High School	
Pasadena City College	
Opportunities Unlimited Charter High School	
San Marino High School	
School of Arts & Enterprise	
Sierra Vista High School	
South Hills High School	
St. Lucy's Priory High School	
Tri - City Mental Health Services	
University of Laverne	
Village Academy High School	

Benjamin Franklin High School	4
East Valley High School	
Francisco Bravo Medical Magnet High School	
Helen Bernstein High School	
Los Angeles Trade Technical College	5
Opportunities Unlimited Charter High School	
Santa Monica College	
University High School	
University of California, Los Angeles	
UCLA CAPS	

Santee Education Complex	6
View Park Continuation High School	
Cerritos College	7
Biola University	
El Rancho High School	
Norwalk High School	8
California State University Long Beach	
Carson High School	
Central Michigan University	
Environmental Charter High School	
Leuzinger High School	

Attend the Awards Ceremony!



May 22 at the Theater at the
ACE Hotel

All are welcome!

To RSVP visit

www.DirectingChangeCA.org

and *click* on “Awards
Ceremony”:

[\(www.directingchange.org/2018-award-ceremony/\)](http://www.directingchange.org/2018-award-ceremony/)

Turn and Talk

- How will you ensure student and family voice in your policy?
- What student activities, health education and/or classroom curricula should we offer as a part of suicide prevention?
- How can you integrate suicide prevention activities into our existing Universal (Tier I) support systems?

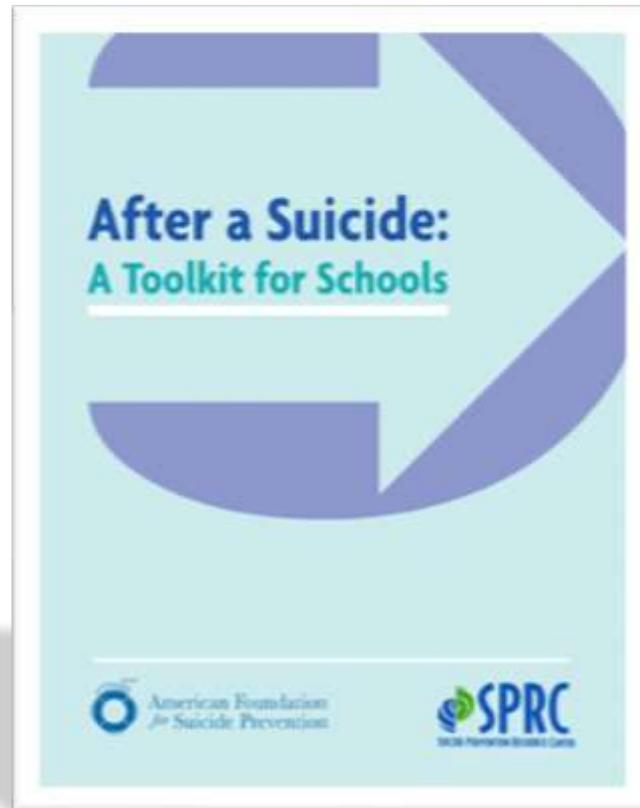




Postvention

Another great resource

*After a Suicide: A Toolkit
for Schools*



What is Postvention?

Postvention refers to programs and interventions for survivors following a death by suicide.

Postvention Considerations:

- **Timing** is CRITICAL
- Plans are best followed when created **BEFORE** a suicide occurs



Why Postvention in Schools?

- Schools are often unsure about how to respond after a suicide and there has been debate as to best practice response
- Certain practices may put some students at greater risk
- An effective response can reduce the risk of suicide contagion and restore a safe, healthy learning environment



Goals of Suicide Postvention

- Assist survivors in the grief process
- Identify and refer individuals who may be at risk following the suicide
- Provide accurate information while minimizing the risk of suicide contagion
- Implement or further ongoing prevention efforts



Postvention: What does the CDE sample policy recommend?

- It is vital that schools are prepared ahead of time in the event of such a tragedy.
- The suicide point of contact for the district shall ensure that each school site adopt an action plan for responding to a suicide death as part of the general Crisis Response Plan.
- District Policy should require that all schools have a postvention plan in place that is updated annually.

Postvention Checklist

Steps to Take in Immediate Aftermath	Staff Responsible	External Contacts (Phone Numbers)	Tools
Notify key individuals			
1. Verify death	Lead: _____ Backup: _____	Police: _____ Medical examiner: _____	
2. Ensure that staff know how to respond to inquiries and manage the campus for safety	Lead: _____ Backup: _____		Tool 3.A.1: Sample Script for Office Staff
3. Notify superintendent's office	Lead: _____ Backup: _____	Superintendent : _____ Backup/weekends: _____	
4. Notify district crisis team*	Lead: _____ Backup: _____	District crisis team: _____ Weekend/vacation/late night contacts: _____	
5. Notify schools attended by family members of the deceased	Lead: _____ Backup: _____	Other schools in district: _____	
6. Contact and coordinate with external mental health professionals	Lead: _____ Backup: _____	Community mental health providers: _____ External crisis response professionals: _____	Tool 3.A.2: Sources of Postvention Consultation
7. Reach out to and work with the family of the deceased	Lead: _____ Backup: _____		Tool 3.A.3: Guidelines for Working with the Family
*In tribal communities, Bureau of Indian Education schools notify the main office and tribal schools notify the principal.			

Steps to Take in Immediate Aftermath	Staff Responsible	External Contacts (Phone Numbers)	Tools
Notify school community			
8. Notify all faculty and staff	Lead: _____ Backup: _____		Tool 3.A.4: Guidelines for Notifying Staff
9. Coordinate notifying students about the deaths	Lead: _____ Backup: _____		Tool 3.A.5: Sample Announcements
10. Notify families of students about the death and the school's response	Lead: _____ Backup: _____		Tool 3.A.6: Sample Letter to Families
Support students and staff			
11. Provide staff with guidance in talking to students	Lead: _____ Backup: _____		Tool 3.A.7: Talking Points for Students and Staff After a Suicide
12. Provide support to staff	Lead: _____ Backup: _____	Community mental health professionals: _____	
13. Identify, monitor, and support students who may be at risk	Lead: _____ Backup: _____		
14. Implement steps to help students with emotional regulation	Lead: _____ Backup: _____		
15. Participate in and/or advise on appropriate memorialization in the immediate aftermath	Lead: _____ Backup: _____		Tool 3.A.8: Guidelines for Memorialization
Minimize risk of contagion through the media			
16. Work with press/media	Lead: _____ Backup: _____	Local media contact(s): _____	Tool 3.A.9: Guidelines for Working with the Media
17. Monitor social media	Lead: _____ Backup: _____		

Turn and Talk

What processes are currently in place in your district to respond to student deaths (all deaths)?



Components of a Postvention Plan

Components of Suicide Postvention Response Plan shall include:

- Identification of staff member to confirm death and cause (school site administrator)
- Steps for contacting deceased family (within 24 hours)
- Steps for enacting the Postvention Response Plan, including an initial meeting of the district/school Postvention Response Team.

Components of a Postvention Plan, Cont'd

- Process for notification of all staff members (ideally in-person or via phone, not via email or mass notification)
- Coordination of all-staff meeting
- Process to identify students significantly affected by suicide death and other students at risk of imitative behavior



Staff Planning Session

Guidelines for staff include:

- Replacing rumors with facts and honoring the family's request for privacy
- Encouraging the ventilation of feelings
- Stressing the normality of grief and wide array of stress reactions children demonstrate
- Discouraging attempts to romanticize the suicide
- Identifying students at risk for an imitative response
- Knowing how to make the appropriate referrals

Identify Those Significantly Affected by the Suicide

- Inquire with family of deceased for connections
- Discuss during all-staff meeting
 - Identify all school connections (teams, clubs, activities)
 - Whether student is new to school or well connected (been in same district since childhood)
- Allow for students with no direct connection to be affected. We may not be aware of all social networks or past friendships.

Components of a Postvention Plan, Cont'd

- Process for communicating with the larger school community
- Funeral considerations for family and school community
- Process for responding to memorials based on best practices in postvention response.
- Identification of media spokesperson

Memorials

- Strive to *treat all student deaths the same way*
- *Prohibiting all memorials is problematic*
- Any memorials should be in places that can be avoided
- Spontaneous memorials should be left in place until after the funeral then consider giving to the family
- Meet with students and be creative and compassionate
- Develop living memorials, such as student assistance programs, that address risk factors in local youth

Memorials

- Schools may hold supervised gatherings such as candlelight memorials
- Monitor off campus gatherings
- Student newspaper coverage should follow media reporting guidelines
- Yearbook and graduation dedication or tributes should **all be treated the same**
- Grieving friends and family should be discouraged from dedicating a school event and guided towards promoting suicide prevention
- *Permanent memorials on campus are discouraged*

Components of a Postvention Plan, Cont'd

- Identification of media spokesperson
- Process for utilizing and responding to social media outlets
- Long-term suicide postvention response
 - Anniversaries
 - Siblings
 - Long-term memorials



Communicating with the School Community

Sample Letters

- Option 1: Death has been ruled a suicide
- Option 2: Cause is unconfirmed (ask that rumors not be spread)
- Option 3: Family has requested cause of death not be disclosed
 - Addressing rumors of suicide
 - Since the subject of suicide has been raised...it's complex but mental illnesses such as depression are usually the cause

Funeral Considerations

- Encourage family to consider holding funeral off school grounds and outside of school hours
- Communicate importance of connecting suicide to underlying mental health issues (depression)
- Depending on the family's wishes, help determine and disseminate information such as:
 - Time and location of funeral
 - Guidance on how to express condolences
 - Policy for releasing students during school hours
 - Arrange for MH professionals to attend
 - Encourage parents to attend with their child

Social Media

- Designate a **Social Media Manager** to assist the Public Information Officer
- Identify **which platforms** students at the school use most
- **Utilize students** as "cultural brokers" to help faculty and staff understand their use of social media
- **Train students in gatekeeper role**, and specifically identify what suicide risk looks like when communicated via social media.
- Have staff **monitor social networks** and **provide safe messaging** when important (this will require that districts not completely block these networks)
- Utilize the **Facebook Reporting System** for concerns or issues with content. (Twitter has reporting tool as well)

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Practical suggestions

- Reorganizing of seating chart
- Counselor to “shadow” deceased’s schedule
- Confirm that support services are ADA compliant
- Protocols should be connected to position not person
- Cultural considerations for family
- Use consistent resources in all communications

Workgroup Time

Review and discuss the postvention checklist.

Homework:

Ask every school in your district to complete the form and turn in it to you!





Messaging

Safe Messaging

Key Considerations:

What messages are we using?

What messages are we sending?



SuicidePreventionMessaging.org

Reporting On Suicide

- Provide a suicide prevention resource
- Discuss warning signs and risk factors
- Create a positive narrative
- Avoid over-simplifying
- Avoid information about suicide method

www.ReportingOnSuicide.org

Resources for *13 Reasons Why*

- **National Association of School Psychologists (NASP.org)**
 - [Considerations for Educators](#)
- **Prevention Communities, *13 Reasons Why Resources***
 - <https://preventioncommunities.com/13rw-resources/>
- **Each Mind Matters SP Week 2017 Toolkit:**
 - <http://www.eachmindmatters.org/spw2017/>
 - “13 Reasons Why Not” activity
 - Drop in article

A wide range of **mental health** and **suicide prevention** educational resources are available for diverse communities across the lifespan:

- Posters
- Brochures
- Fact Sheets
- Personal Stories of Hope
- Vignettes and booklets
- TV and radio PSAs
- Billboards

And more at:

EMMResourceCenter.org

SuicidelsPreventable.org

EISuicidioEsPrevenible.org

EachMindMatters.org

SanaMente.org



Thank you!

Stan Collins: Stan@SuicideIsPreventable.org

Jana Sczersputowski: Jana@YourSocialMarketer.com



Directing Change

Program & Film Contest



eachmindmatters.org



Your Social Marketer, Inc. 



suicideispreventable.org