



## Online Suicide Prevention Training for California Schools

Please join us in creating a safety net for students in California middle and high schools

Beginning on April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020, LivingWorks' Start, an online suicide prevention training, will be available to middle and high school staff. We encourage you to promote this training to your staff so they may be better equipped to support students who may be experiencing thoughts of suicide.

**Why Focus on Suicide Prevention:** According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) *Vital Signs* report, suicide deaths have been rising in nearly every state. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth ages 10-24.<sup>1</sup> For every youth who dies by suicide, an estimated 100-200 youth make suicide attempts. Emergency rooms throughout California have seen a 42% increase in adolescents seeking care for a mental health crisis from 2012 to 2018.<sup>2</sup> Research shows that suicide is preventable and California is taking action.

**Assembly Bill (AB) 1808:** AB 1808 added Section 216 to the California *Education Code* and provided funding to ensure school staff were prepared to identify, support, and refer middle and high school students who may be experiencing thoughts of suicide. The bill also called for the training to be offered to middle and high school students. The San Diego County Office of Education was selected as the lead to make this online training available, at no cost, to local educational agencies (LEAs) to voluntarily use as part of their youth suicide prevention policy.

**Staff Training:** To ensure that middle and high school staff are well prepared to support students, we have secured the Start online training from LivingWorks, an internationally respected organization specializing in suicide intervention skills training. LivingWorks' Start complies with AB 1808 as it is an evidence-based program consistent with the CDE's Model Youth Suicide Prevention Policy; addresses the needs of high risk populations identified in the bill; can track aggregate, statewide usage; and can assess trainee knowledge before and after training is provided in order to measure training outcomes.

**Student Training:** The online training will be rolled out in stages with the first stage targeting to staff so students may be supported when they take the training. The online training program will be made available to students in September 2020.

**What LivingWorks' Start Includes:** In as little as 90 minutes, LivingWorks' Start will prepare adults to observe student behavior to help keep them safe. The program is accessible from any computer, tablet, or smartphone with internet. It trains people to recognize when someone is having thoughts of suicide, engage with them, and intervene to connect them to further help. It is designed to develop meaningful skills through simulations and practice. After completing LivingWorks' Start, trainees will have ongoing, unlimited access to a resource and information database called LivingWorks' Connect.

*For questions or further information please contact SDCOE's Student Wellness & Positive School Climate Unit Program Specialist: Heather Nemour at [heather.nemour@sdcoe.net](mailto:heather.nemour@sdcoe.net) (858) 569-5489.*

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<sup>1</sup> CDC Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS), 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016.