



Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

# SUICIDE AND SCHOOLS

John R. Kasich, Governor  
Tracy J. Plouck, Director

## Resources for schools to help at-risk youth

Suicide prevention efforts seek to reduce the risk factors in youth and strengthen the protective factors that help them cope with stress in more positive ways.

Many people incorrectly believe that talking with students about suicide will “put the idea into their head.” However, asking students if they are feeling depressed or suicidal, in a non-judgmental way, shows them that someone else is interested in them and cares for them.

As required in Ohio House Bill 543 (the Jason Flatt Act), educators must be knowledgeable about the signs and symptoms of depression and suicidal behavior among students and possess the skills to identify and refer if they suspect that these issues may personally impact a student.



## National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255

Twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week, the Lifeline provides free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for individuals or their loved ones, and best practices for professionals. An online chat option is also available, as are numbers for veterans, Spanish-speaking individuals, or people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

<http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

## Crisis Text Line - Text “4hope” to 741-741

Unveiled in September 2016, any Ohio resident who needs help coping with a stressful situation can reach out 24/7 by text to communicate with someone trained to listen and respond in a method that is private, secure and confidential. Crisis Counselors provide a personal response and information on a range of issues, including: suicidal thoughts, bullying, depression and self-harm.

Data usage while texting Crisis Text Line is free and the number will not appear on a phone bill with the mobile service carrier. An algorithm reviews text for severity and messages that are determined to be from someone at imminent risk are placed at the top of the queue.

[Crisis Text Line Fact Sheet](#)

## Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation (OSPF)

Ohio’s Campaign for Hope Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative offers free suicide prevention trainings by OSPF using Kognito. Kognito is a research-proven training simulation designed to prepare educators, staff and students to: 1) recognize when someone is exhibiting signs of psychological distress or underlying trauma and 2) manage a conversation with the goal of connecting them with the appropriate support.

In online courses, users engage in practice conversations with virtual humans. With the help of a virtual coach, users learn effective methods for engaging in difficult conversations, including applying motivational interviewing skills, asking open-ended questions and avoiding common pitfalls. These conversations address PTSD, behavioral health, suicide prevention and social change, and other topics, giving users a low-risk environment in which to practice conversations.

The initiative is a three-year youth suicide prevention campaign funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

<https://ohio.kognito.com/>



## Project AWARE Ohio

This partnership among the Ohio Department of Education, the Center for School Based-Mental Health Programs at Miami University and the educational service centers within three pilot counties (Cuyahoga, Warren and Wood) makes Youth Mental Health First Aid training available statewide at no cost. Project AWARE is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The **Youth Mental Health First Aid** course is an eight-hour training (which can be broken into two, four-hour trainings) intended for adults who interact with school-age youth (12-18 years old). The course reviews typical adolescent development, introduces common mental health challenges for youth, and teaches a five-step action plan to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations.

To learn more or schedule a Youth Mental Health First Aid training, contact Kathy Oberlin, director, Ohio Mental Health Network for School Success, at [oberlink2@gmail.com](mailto:oberlink2@gmail.com) or (330) 697-3899.

## American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

This non-profit organization was founded in 1987 and now has a chapter in all 50 states. It supports research, education and advocacy. Its Model School District Policy on Suicide Prevention presents specific, actionable steps to support school personnel; sample language for student handbooks; suggestions for involving parents and guardians in suicide prevention; and guidance for addressing in-school suicide attempts.

In collaboration with the American School Counselor Association, the National Association of School Psychologists, and The Trevor Project, the program is research-based, and easily adaptable for middle and high schools.

Download the policy at <https://afsp.org/our-work/education/model-school-policy-suicide-prevention/>



## Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools

This free toolkit from the SAMHSA was developed to assist high schools and school districts in designing and implementing strategies to prevent suicide and promote behavioral health. The kit includes tools to implement a multi-faceted suicide prevention program that responds to the needs and cultures of students.

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

## Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)

Funded by SAMHSA, SPRC is the nation's only federally supported resource center devoted to advancing the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. It supports comprehensive plans for suicide prevention in every setting where people live, work and are cared for -- including schools. The website includes a free online course in understanding the role of gatekeeper training and whether it may make sense to implement one in your school or organization.

<http://www.sprc.org/>



## SuicidePrevention.Ohio.gov

Ohio legislation, known as House Bill 28, requires each state public institution of higher education to provide incoming students with information about mental health topics, including available depression and suicide prevention resources. This website was developed by a workgroup of professionals in evidence-based prevention programming to support Ohio's public colleges and universities in complying with this law. However, the resources included can be of interest to anyone interested in learning more about suicide prevention.

<http://suicideprevention.ohio.gov/>



**Our mission is to provide statewide leadership of a high-quality mental health and addiction prevention, treatment and recovery system that is effective and valued by all Ohioans.**

November 2016