

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Are you prepared?

Suicide Prevention experts recommend a multifaceted approach for Suicide Prevention that includes education and training, as well as intervention and postvention strategies. Review the guidelines below to determine your preparedness:

Staff Education and Training:

School staff have the opportunity to identify young people who exhibit warning signs and/or subtle behavior changes and are essential to preventing suicide. Key elements include:

- All staff training about the importance of suicide prevention
- All staff training on recognizing and responding to students who may be at risk of suicide
- Additional training, for appropriate/assigned staff, on assessing, referring, and following up with students identified as at risk of suicide.



Parent Education:

Parents must take the lead in preventing suicide and promoting mental wellness in their children. Schools can support parents by providing the following:

- Information about strategies to promote mental health
- Information about suicide and related behavioral health issues
- Strategies to engage parents in suicide prevention programs

Student Education:

Suicide prevention should seek to improve overall social, emotional and mental wellness among youth. In addition, young people are in the best position to support each. Prevention strategies should include:

- Programs that teach strategies to promote mental health and wellness
- Programs that integrate suicide prevention into other student behavioral health initiatives
- Suicide prevention education that addresses healthy coping, helps to identify trusted adults at school, at home, and in the community and supports ways to stay safe when suicide is the issue.

See guide: [Suicide Prevention In The Classroom.](#)

Intervention Strategies:

It is essential that schools have written guidelines for staff to follow if warning signs of suicide are observed or suspected as well as procedures to refer those deemed at risk. These include:

- Protocols for helping students who may be at risk of suicide
- Protocols for helping students who express suicide ideation verbally or in writing
- Protocols for responding to students who attempt suicide or report an attempt
- Access to resources to refer students for behavioral health services



Postvention:

If there is a death by suicide in the school community, guidelines for following are important:

- Protocols for responding to a death by suicide
- Steps to take after the suicide of a student or other member of the school community
- Staff responsible for taking these steps
- Agreements with community partners to help in the event of a suicide

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Comprehensive Suicide Prevention Planning Resources for Schools:

- <https://www.preventsuicideny.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/SchoolsSuicidePreventionGuide.pdf>
- https://www.jedfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/The-Comprehensive-Approach-to-Mental-Health-Promotion-and-Suicide-Prevention-for-High-Schools_JED.pdf

Video Resources for Educators:

- [Warning Signs](#)
- [Warm Handoff](#)



Resource adapted from SAMHSA Preventing Suicide A Toolkit for High Schools <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Preventing-Suicide-A-Toolkit-for-High-Schools/SMA12-4669>