

Kentucky Division of Behavioral Health Recommended Suicide Prevention Staff/Student Training Components

Students who perceive school is not a safe place have an increased likelihood of also reporting suicidal behavior (Rothon et al., 2009). Among Kentucky middle and high schools, 14.6% of students said they felt unsafe/very unsafe at school. Students aged 15-19 had the highest rate of feeling unsafe at 17.3% (Kentucky Incentives for Prevention, 2019). Those who feel unsafe are four times more likely to attempt suicide (KIP, 2019). Suicide is the leading cause of death among youth ages 10-14 and the second leading cause among those ages 15-34.

Middle and high school students spend a significant amount of time in the classroom and involved in extracurricular activities. School staff, including bus drivers, coaches, teachers, and administrators, are in a prime position to recognize the signs of suicide risk and to make referrals to care and other resources for these students.

What the Research Says

Youth who don't feel safe at school report a 4X greater likelihood of suicidal behavior than their peers who feel safe (KIP 2019)

Risk Factors and Warning Signs

Students share warning signs of suicide with teachers, friends, school staff, and parents. Interventions should include: a screening to identify suicide risk; assessment and evaluation by a behavioral health clinician when a screening or threat assessment indicates it is needed; parental involvement; referral; and follow through.

Below is a list of the top five risk factors and warning signs for suicide. Every student that has a risk factor may not be at risk for suicide but having one or more does increase the chance of suicide.

- Depressive disorders
- Substance use
- Previous suicide attempts
- Bullying- being bullied or being the bully
- Access to lethal means

Protective Factors

Protective factors can buffer the effects of risk factors. Actions by school staff to enhance protective factors is an essential element in suicide prevention efforts.

- Psychological or emotional well-being
- Positive mood
- Coping skills
- Self-esteem
- Family support
- Restricted access to means

As school personnel, you care about the well-being of your students. Maintaining a safe and secure school environment is essential to enhancing a child's ability to learn and to be academically successful. It is also critical to their mental health and is essential in suicide prevention efforts.



For more information or to request support related to suicide prevention for students or staff, please contact Patti Clark at patti.clark@ky.gov or 502-782-2474

In order to ensure that school staff members feel equipped and ready to address suicidal risk among the students they encounter, the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities recommends the following trainings to meet requirements for SB1. The recently approved legislation requires all school staff receive a minimum of 1 hour of training every other year, either face-to-face, streaming, or by video.

Recommendations for Staff Training

GOOD

Video sessions without discussion as a group and/or without inclusion of local policies and practices

- **QPR Online Training** (approximately \$30/person, volume pricing available. <https://qprinstitute.com/individual-training>)
- **Living Works Start Training** (approximately \$30/person, volume pricing available. <https://shopusa.livingworks.net/>)
- **Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide - Making Educators Partners in Youth Suicide Prevention** (video, free, <http://sptsuniversity.org/>)
- **The Jason Foundation – Youth Suicide: “A Silent Epidemic”** (video, free, <https://learn.jasonfoundation.com/courses/module-5/>)

BETTER

Face-to-face session with no review of local policies and procedures or online simulation modules. The sessions below can be provided at no cost to the school district.

- **Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR)***
- **Sources of Strength** (adult portion)*
- **Youth Mental Health First Aid***
- **suicideTALK***

Online simulation training

- **Kognito At Risk Simulation** (Approximately \$34/person, volume pricing available; funding has been applied for to provide this service with notification of approval anticipated by August 1; <https://store.kognito.com/>)

BEST

Face-to-face session with a certified trainer*, to include inclusion of school’s referral policies and procedures for identified students.

- **Lifelines Staff Training** (staff training included with youth prevention curriculum, \$240/school; limited number of online subscriptions available at no cost; <https://www.hazelden.org/store/item/503138>)
- **Sources of Strength** (adult portion; school does not need to be implementing Sources to utilize the adult training)*
- **Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR)***
- **suicideTALK***
- **Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)*** (for staff identified for crisis team)

*** PLEASE NOTE:** These sessions can be provided at no cost to the school district. Contact the Regional Prevention Center supporting your community to connect your school with trainers. (See contact list, attached)



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Recommended Educational School Policies for Suicide Prevention

Every school in Kentucky should have policies and procedures that protect the health and well-being of their students. These policies and procedures should address the prevention, assessment (including assessment of threat to the school), intervention, and response to suicidal behavior. These policies should be paired with other policies supporting the emotional and behavioral health of students more broadly.

Broad components of these policies and procedures should include:

- **Parental involvement** – parents and guardians are key players in youth suicide prevention. Parents should be informed and actively involved in all decisions regarding their child’s welfare.
- **District implementation** – a district level suicide prevention coordinator should be designated. This person should be responsible for planning and coordinating the implementation of the policy for the district.
- **Staff professional development** – all staff should receive professional development on risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, postvention, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention.
- **Youth suicide prevention programming** – developmentally-appropriate, student-centered education materials should be integrated into the curriculum of all K-12 health classes. This curriculum should include: healthy choices and coping strategies; risk factors and warning signs of mental disorders and suicide in oneself and others; help-seeking strategies for oneself and others, including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help.
- **Publication and distribution** – the policy should be distributed annually and included in student and teacher handbooks and on the school website.
- **Assessment and referral** – any student who is identified by a staff person as potentially suicidal should be seen by a mental health professional within the same school day to assess risk and facilitate a referral. Staff should continuously supervise the student to ensure safety. Parents should be notified. If the parent is not available, emergency services should be sought. Relationships should be established with community behavioral health providers before they are needed to ensure a warm hand-off from the school to mental health care.
- **Re-entry procedure** – after a suicidal crisis, an administrator should meet with the student and their parents to discuss the student’s readiness to return to school. A designated follow-up processes should be identified at intervals over a 6-month period after the crisis. Follow-up should occur with both the student and parent.
- **Postvention plan** – a crisis team should be designated prior to an incident and to develop an action plan in the unfortunate incidence of a suicide death in the school community. The crisis team should meet immediately following the news of a suicide death to implement an action plan.

Additional information and resources on school policies can be found at https://afsp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Model-Policy_FINAL.pdf and <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma12-4669.pdf>



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Senate Bill 1 also includes revised recommendations for provision of suicide prevention information to all students in grades 6-12 in Kentucky. The legislation requires that all students receive information via face-to-face, streaming, or video methods no later than Sept. 15.

Recommendations for Student Training

GOOD

Video sessions with accompanying discussion

- **Erika's Lighthouse Program – Depression Awareness for Middle School Students; Depression and Suicide Awareness for High School Students** (*no cost, discussion guides included in resource portal after sign in.* <https://www.erikalighthouse.org/teen-depression-awareness-classroom-programs/>)
- **Teaching Resources for Talking with Teens About Suicide** (*PBS Newshour Extra, no cost, discussion guide included,* <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/daily-videos/teaching-resources-for-talking-with-teens-about-suicide/>)
- **A Cry For Help** (*video, includes discussion guide, \$39;* <https://paracletepress.com/products/a-cry-for-help-how-to-help-a-friend-who-is-depressed-or-suicidal/>)
- **Depression: On the Edge** (*video, \$70, bulk discounts available;* https://www.youtube.com/user/InTheMixPBS/about?disable_polymer=1)

BETTER

Single sessions of an evidence-based curriculum; peer-led programming without an accompanying evidence-based curriculum delivery

- **Sources of Strength*** youth-designed peer-led campaign that reaches the entire school and focuses on connecting to trusted adults and accessing resources
- **Lifelines Curriculum** (*session 1; grades 5-12, recently revised, \$240/school; limited number of online subscriptions available at no cost;* <https://www.hazelden.org/store/item/503138>)

Online simulation training

- **Kognito Friend2Friend Simulation** (*Approximately \$25/person, volume pricing available;* <https://store.kognito.com/products/friend2friend>)

BEST

Face-to-face evidence-based or evidence-informed curriculum delivered with fidelity, complimented by a peer-led culture change program such as **Sources of Strength***

- **Lifelines Curriculum** (*grades 5-12, recently revised, \$240/school; limited number of online subscriptions available at no cost;* <https://www.hazelden.org/store/item/503138>)
- **Signs of Suicide** (*middle and high school versions, \$495/school;* <https://www.mindwise.org/shop/>)
- **Linking Education and Awareness of Depression and Suicide (LEADS)** (*High school only; \$125/school;* <https://save.org/product-category/school-education-curriculum/>)
- **The PACT** (*Kentucky created, 12-episode video driven curriculum, coming fall of 2019*)*
- **QPR*** (*should only be provided to youth in 10-12th grades in groups of 30 or less*)

We do not recommend assemblies with a single speaker for an entire student body. The topic may be triggering for students already at risk for suicide. Smaller group settings permit a trauma-informed approach for delivery of materials. We also do not recommend having youth view videos that have not been recommended, as they may not follow safe messaging guidelines and often do not include discussion guides.



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Kentucky's Regional Prevention Centers

The Regional Prevention Centers serve every county in Kentucky. They are your portal to a variety of resources related to suicide prevention in your school and community. Reach out to them if you have questions regarding the recommended trainings or to access free resources noted with asterisks.

Four Rivers RPC 01

Ellen Walsh, Director

ewalsh@4rbh.org

(270) 442-8039 ext. 1703; fax (270) 442-5729

Serves: Ballard, Calloway, Carlisle, Graves, Hickman, Fulton, Livingston, Marshall, McCracken

Pennyroyal RPC 02

Chris Sparks, Director

csparks@pennyroyalcenter.org

(270) 886-0486; fax (270) 890-1790

Serves: Caldwell, Christian, Crittenden, Hopkins, Lyon, Muhlenberg, Todd, Trigg

River Valley RPC 03

Dianne McFarling, Director

McFarling-Dianne@rvbh.com

(270) 689-6565; fax (270) 689-6677

Serves: Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union, Webster

LifeSkills RPC 04

Lisa Johnson

ljohnson@lifeskills.com

(270) 901-5000 x1277; fax (270) 842-6553

Serves: Allen, Barren, Butler, Edmonson, Hart, Logan, Metcalfe, Monroe, Simpson, Warren

Communicare RPC 05

Tara Smith, Director

tcsmith@communicare.org

1311 N. Dixie Avenue, Bldg. A

Elizabethtown, KY 42701

(270) 765-5992 x1401; fax (270) 737-2293

Serves: Breckinridge, Grayson, Hardin, Larue, Marion, Meade, Nelson, Washington

Centerstone RPC 06

Patty Gregory, Director

Patty.Gregory@centerstone.org

(502) 589-8600; Fax (502) 589-8925

Serves: Bullitt, Henry, Jefferson, Oldham, Shelby, Spencer, Trimble

Northkey RPC 07

Heidi Bohman, Director

Heidi.Bohman@northkey.org

(859) 283-0952 x4251; (fax) (859) 431-7959

Serves: Boone, Campbell, Carroll, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, Owen, Pendleton

Comprehend RPC 08

Sarah Arrasmith, Director

sarrasmith@comprehendinc.org

(606) 759-7799; fax (606) 759-7609

Serves: Bracken, Fleming, Lewis, Mason, Robertson

Pathways RPC 09-10

Amy Jeffers, Director

Amy.Jeffers@pathways-ky.org

(606) 329-8588 x4099 (Amy); fax (606) 324-9501

Serves: Bath, Boyd, Carter, Elliott, Greenup, Lawrence, Menifee, Montgomery, Morgan, Rowan

Mountain RPC 11

MaShawna Jacobs, Director

Mashawna.Jacobs@mtcomp.org

(606) 889-0328; fax 606-889-6427

Serves: Floyd, Johnson, Magoffin, Martin and Pike

Kentucky River RPC 12

Ginger H. Shouse, Director

Ginger.Shouse@krccnet.com

(606) 436-4124; fax (606) 666-4151

Serves: Breathitt, Knott, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Owsley, Perry, Wolfe

Cumberland River RPC 13

Jill Owens, Director

jill.owens@crccc.org

(606) 337-2070; fax 606-337-2210

Serves: Bell, Clay, Harlan, Jackson, Knox, Laurel, Rockcastle, Whitley

Adanta RPC 14

Sherri Estes, Director

sestes1@adanta.org

130 Southern School Road, Somerset, KY 42501

(606) 679-9425; fax (606) 677-1862

Serves: Adair, Casey, Clinton, Cumberland, Green, McCreary, Pulaski, Russell, Taylor, Wayne

Bluegrass RPC 15

Shawn Freeman, Director

drfreeman@bluegrass.org

1351 Newtown Pike, Building 3

Lexington, KY 40511

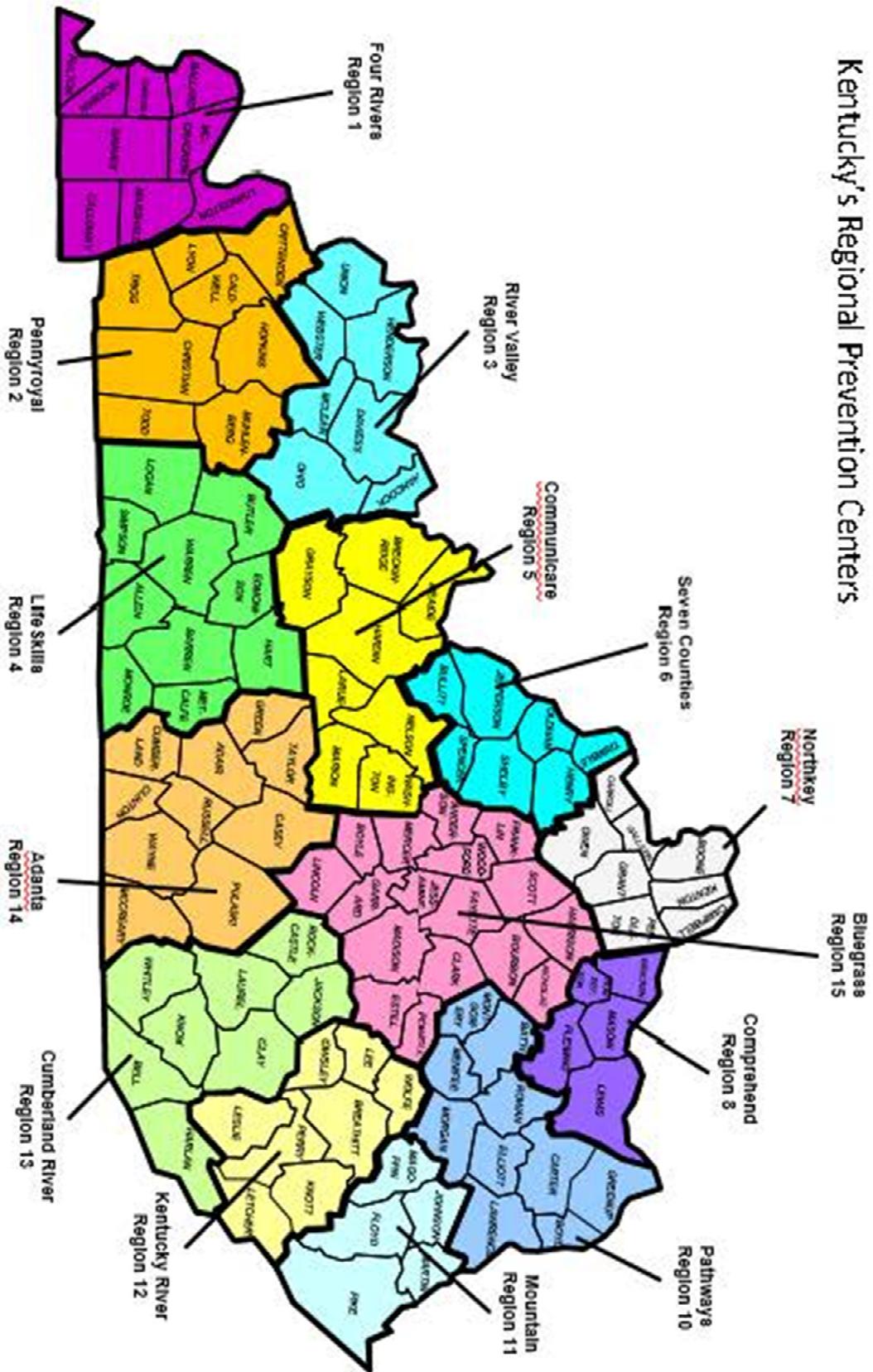
(859) 225-3296; fax (859) 254-2412

Serves: Anderson, Bourbon, Boyle, Clark, Estill, Fayette, Franklin, Garrard, Harrison, Jessamine, Lincoln, Madison, Mercer, Nicholas, Powell, Scott, Woodford



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