

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction



Professional Development for Youth Suicide Prevention

2015

During the 2015 North Dakota legislative session, the suicide prevention training requirements for school districts was amended through Senate Bill 2209 stating each school district must provide professional development professional development relating to youth suicide prevention annually and include middle and high school instructional staff, as well as teachers and administrators. “Annually” and “instructional staff” are the two major changes within this law. Specifically, North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) 15.1-19-24. Youth Suicide Prevention – Training mandates that:

Annually, each school district shall provide to middle school and high school instructional staff, teachers, and administrators, at least two hours of professional development relating to youth suicide risk indicators, appropriate responses, and referral sources.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall collaborate with the state department of health to obtain and disseminate to school districts and nonpublic schools, free of charge, information and training materials, including those available through the Jason Flatt Foundation.

Providing professional development in youth suicide prevention is a response to reduce youth suicide rates by ensuring educators are trained in early identification of warning signs and are better equipped to assist students. This fact sheet provides guidance for districts in meeting the requirements.

*Suicide is the **SECOND** leading cause of death for ages 10-24.*

*Each day in our nation, there are an average of over **5,400** attempts by young people grades 7-12.*

***FOUR OUT OF FIVE** teens who attempt suicide have given clear warning signs.*

*Suicide is the **LEADING** cause of **PREVENTABLE** death in our nation today.*

National data from The Jason Flatt Foundation

In North Dakota:

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), when North Dakota youth in grades 9-12 were asked:

- “Have you experienced the feeling of hopelessness and sadness for a constant period of two weeks or greater during the past twelve months?” — 25.4 percent of North Dakota youth answered YES. Nationally, the rate was 29.9 percent.
- “Have you seriously considered suicide in the past twelve months?” — 16.1 percent of North Dakota youth answered YES. Nationally, the rate was 17.0 percent.
- “Have you made a plan to commit suicide in the past twelve months?” — 13.5 percent of North Dakota youth answered YES. Nationally, the rate was 13.6 percent.
- “Have you attempted suicide in the past twelve months?” — 11.5 percent of North Dakota youth answered YES. Nationally, the rate was 8.0 percent.

North Dakota is comparable to the national rate in the first three questions confirming the severity of this issue on North Dakota youth and families. More importantly, North Dakota youth’s responses to the fourth question, “Have you attempted suicide in the past twelve months?,” were significantly higher than the nation’s average. If nothing is done to positively affect the 2013 rate, North Dakota can project that 3,678 students in grades 9-12 will “attempt” suicide in the next 12 months, a **statistical average of 307 high school students per month every month in North Dakota.**

The data for North Dakota middle school students in grades seven and eight are also alarming. The percentage of students who have ever seriously thought about killing themselves is 17.8 percent. That's **one out of every six** middle school students. The rate of middle school students who reported they made plans to kill themselves was 12.5 percent; the rate of middle school students who reported they did try to kill themselves was 5.10 percent or **833 middle school students**. (2013 YRBS). For more data from the YRBS, go to www.nd.gov/dpi.

Youth Suicide Prevention Professional Development and the Cost to School Districts

NDCC now mandates every school district provide middle school and high school teachers and administrators at least two hours every two years of professional development relating to youth suicide risk indicators, appropriate staff responses, and referral sources.

Professional development in youth suicide prevention will provide information on awareness and prevention. If you know someone who is talking about suicide or showing other warning signs, here's what to do:

1. **Ask:** Most of the time, people who are considering suicide are willing to discuss it if someone asks them out of concern and care.
2. **Listen:** Listen without judging and offer reassurance that you're there and you care.
3. **Tell/Respond:** Even if you're sworn to secrecy, you should still seek help. Contact a health professional as soon as possible. **If necessary call a local emergency number (911) or the suicide crisis line at 1-800-273-8255.**

Cost to School Districts

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction and the North Dakota Department of Health have collaborated to provide school districts and nonpublic schools with information and resources on youth suicide prevention training opportunities that meet the requirements of the law. The Jason Flatt Foundation, Inc. online professional development is free of charge to schools in North Dakota. If a school district chooses to provide professional development from a source other than the Jason Flatt Foundation Inc., the district is responsible for any costs incurred. When selecting youth suicide prevention training, districts are encouraged to explore and consider evidence-based trainings. Suggested Youth Suicide Prevention Professional Development providers include:

The Jason Flatt Foundation, Inc. (JFI)

<http://jasonfoundation.com/get-involved/educator-youth-worker-coach/professional-development-series/>

JFI is an educational organization dedicated to the awareness and prevention of youth suicide. JFI provides tools and resource for students, parents and teachers/youth workers to help identify and assist at-risk youth. One tool is a series of online Staff Development Training Modules that provides information on the awareness and prevention of youth suicide. This series of modules introduces the scope and magnitude of the problem of youth suicide, the signs of concern, risk factors, how to recognize young people who may be struggling, how to approach the student and help an at-risk youth find resources for assistance. At the conclusion of each training module, an opportunity to print a certificate of completion is provided.

Cost: Free of charge to North Dakota schools/districts

Kognito: At-Risk for High School Educators or Kognito : At-Risk for Middle School Educators

<http://store.kognito.com/>

Kognito is a one-hour evidence-based, online program to educate middle and high school teachers and personnel to identify, approach and refer students exhibiting signs of psychological distress, including depression, and suicidal ideation. School districts could include additional professional development (i.e., facilitated discussion, small group work, or other forms of instruction) to supplement the Kognito and meet the requirements of the law requiring "at least two hours of professional development."

Cost: \$28.95 per person

More Than Sad

www.morethansad.org/

Developed by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, More Than Sad is an educational program that assists teachers and school personnel in learning more about teen suicide and how they play a role in its prevention. It features two films, each approximately 25 minutes in length and a manual that integrates both films into a comprehensive suicide prevention program.

Cost: Program materials are available at no cost by contacting Mary Weiler, Chair of the North Dakota Chapter of American Foundation of Suicide Prevention, at (701) 219-4110; requires an individual to review, prepare and deliver a youth suicide prevention in-service to school staff.

Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools

www.store.samhsa.gov/product/SMA12-4669

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides a suicide prevention toolkit that can assist high schools and school districts in designing and implementing strategies to prevent suicide and promote behavioral health. It includes tools to implement a multi-faceted suicide prevention program that responds to the needs and cultures of students. The toolkit may be downloaded from the website or ordered free of charge (shipping charges may apply).

Cost: The toolkit is free of charge; requires an individual to review, prepare and deliver a youth suicide prevention in-service to school staff.

QPR Institute

www.qprinstitute.com/

QPR stands for Question, Persuade and Refer, an emergency mental health intervention for suicidal persons. The QPR Institute offers comprehensive suicide prevention training programs, educational and clinical materials for professionals, institutions and the general public. This is a one- to two-hour training; districts can work with instructors to assure the training meets the requirements of the law.

Cost: Prices vary. Contact Alison Traynor, North Dakota Department of Health, at (701) 328-4580 or atraynor@nd.gov for more information.

Signs Matter: Early Detection

www.afsp.org/preventing-suicide/our-education-and-prevention-programs/programs-for-professionals/signs-matter-early-detection

Signs Matter: Early Detection is an online program developed by American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and University Behavioral Care at Rutgers University to assist K-12 education professionals in identifying and addressing children at risk of suicide and related mental health issues. It presents scientifically based information on a variety of topics related to youth suicide. It includes a series of real world scenarios from elementary, middle, and high schools and expert analysis of each scenario along with an overview of research, best practices and the latest data related to suicidal ideation.

Cost: \$35 (Individual) / \$25 (50-99) / \$15 (100-199) / \$10 (200-299) / \$6 (500-999) / \$4 (1000 or more)

safeTALK

www.livingworks.net/programs/safetalk/

safeTALK is a half-day alertness workshop that prepares individuals to become a suicide-alert helper. Most people with thoughts of suicide don't truly want to die, but are struggling with pain in their lives. The safeTALK workshop will demonstrate the importance of suicide alertness and identify ways people invite help when they're at risk. safeTALK's steps provide a simple yet effective method to engage with people at risk and connect them with resources that can carry out a full-scale intervention. At the end of the workshop, participants will have a chance to practice these skills firsthand. safeTALK provides practical knowledge of how to identify someone at risk and link them to life-saving resources.

Cost: Varies. Check website for more information.

Suicide Warning Signs

Warning signs (include but are not limited to the following):

- Suddenly worsening school performance
- Fixation with death or violence
- Unhealthy peer relationships
- Violent mood swings or sudden change in personality
- Indications the teen or young adult is in an abusive relationship
- Risky behaviors
- Signs of depression

For more information about suicide warning signs, go to www.ndhealth.gov/suicideprevention/?id=74.

Resources

Tell anyone who is thinking about suicide to either talk to someone he or she trusts or call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255. In an emergency, call 911.

- ◆ American Association of Suicidology
www.suicidology.org/home
- ◆ American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
www.afsp.org/
- ◆ Suicide Prevention (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/suicide/index.html
- ◆ The Jason Foundation
www.jasonfoundation.com
- ◆ Preventing Youth Suicide (Violence Prevention Works!)
www.violencepreventionworks.org/public/youth_suicide.page
- ◆ National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (US HHS)
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/
- ◆ North Dakota Department of Human Service Center
www.nd.gov/dhs/services/mentalhealth
- ◆ North Dakota Suicide Prevention Program
www.ndhealth.gov/suicideprevention
- ◆ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
www.samhsa.gov/
- ◆ Sources of Strength
<http://sourcesofstrength.org/>
- ◆ Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE)
www.save.org/
- ◆ Suicide Prevention Resource Center (Education Development Center, Inc)
www.sprc.org/
- ◆ Youth Suicide Prevention School-Based Guide (University of South Florida)
<http://theguide.fmhi.usf.edu/>



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For more information, resources
or technical assistance, contact:
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