Suicide Prevention Resources

In January of this year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ranked suicide as the 14th leading cause of death in New Jersey and the third leading cause of death for those ages 10 to 24. While New Jersey continues to have a lower rate of suicide compared to the national average, suicide remains a priority area to combat within the State.

We must continue to work together to proactively raise awareness of suicidal behaviors, encourage dialogue to reduce the social stigma around suicide and mental health, and aim to increase the availability of treatment and protective factors for suicide.

As schools return to in-person learning, it is imperative to be mindful of the mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic over the past 18 months. Emotional and physical well-being of students and staff are paramount to ensuring a successful academic year. To support schools in their efforts to increase awareness and prevent suicide, educators may find it helpful to visit the New Jersey Department of Education’s updated Suicide Prevention website which includes resources for students, families, school staff, and free suicide prevention education toolkits.

As a reminder, every public school teaching staff member must complete a minimum of two hours of instruction in suicide prevention every five years. This instruction is to be provided by a licensed healthcare professional with training and experience in mental health issues and shall include information on the relationship between the risk of suicide and incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying (N.J.S.A. 18A:6-112).

The Protocol for Reporting Youth Suicide Attempt or Completion outlines a list of professionals who, by law, are required to report attempted or completed suicide by youth. The Youth Suicide Event Reporting Form is a short online form submitted directly to the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) that is used to statistically report non-identifying demographic information regarding a student or youth who has either attempted or completed suicide (N.J.S.A. 30.9A-24).

As always, the New Jersey Hopeline, the 2nd Floor Youth Helpline, and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline are available 24 hours/7 days a week if you or someone you know is considering suicide.

c: Members, State Board of Education
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