



Teachers as Impactful Partners in Suicide Prevention

This Call to Action recognizes teachers as essential partners in school suicide prevention. While teachers are not responsible for assessing suicide risk or providing mental health treatment, they are often the adults who spend the most time with students and are uniquely positioned to build meaningful relationships, notice changes in behavior, and connect students with support.

School connectedness is one of the strongest protective factors against suicide. Students who feel seen, valued, and supported by adults at school are more likely to experience a sense of belonging and seek help. Through everyday interactions, teachers help create the connections that support student wellbeing and resilience.

Many students experiencing emotional distress demonstrate warning signs in the classroom. Changes in attendance, academic performance, behavior, social engagement, or expressions of hopelessness may be observed by teachers before anyone else. [When educators understand warning signs and know how to activate school-based support systems, students can be connected to help quickly.](#)

Supporting teachers in suicide prevention requires intentional planning, training, and collaboration among district leaders, school administrators, and school mental health professionals. Teachers need clear expectations, accessible referral pathways, and confidence in the systems designed to support students in crisis.

Under Adi's Act, Oregon school districts are required to adopt comprehensive suicide prevention plans that include staff training, intervention procedures, and supports for students at elevated risk of suicide. This Call to Action offers practical **recommendations and checklists** for [School Administrators](#), [School Mental Health Professionals](#), [Teachers and Instructional Staff](#), and [Students and Families](#).

Every student interaction is an opportunity to strengthen connection, foster belonging, and support student wellbeing.

Together,

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School Administrators Suicide Prevention Checklist

This fall review your school district [Adi's Act suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention plan](#) and the protocol for your building. If your district needs training or support with Adi's Act, contact your regional [School Safety and Prevention Specialist](#) or the [Safe and Inclusive Schools team](#) at ODE.

Building Teacher Capacity:

- Do all teachers and instructional staff receive suicide prevention training that aligns with their roles and responsibilities? Resource: [Which Training Should I Take? For School Staff](#)
- Do teachers understand how and when to refer a student who may be demonstrating warning signs?
- Are referral pathways simple, clearly documented, and communicated annually to all staff?
- Have you identified what training is required, recommended, and available for staff in your district?
Resource: [Oregon School Suicide Prevention Training Guidance](#)

Equipping Educator Systems:

- Have district leaders, school administrators, and labor representatives discussed how suicide prevention training and implementation fit within existing professional learning structures?
- Have you identified opportunities for suicide prevention training during professional development days, in-service activities, staff meetings, or other contracted learning time?
- Are expectations for teacher involvement in suicide prevention efforts clearly defined and aligned with staff roles?
- Do teachers have opportunities to provide feedback about training needs, referral processes, and implementation challenges?
- How is educator wellbeing supported throughout the school year?
- Do staff know where to access support following a student crisis, suicide intervention, or suicide loss?
Resource: [No cost contracted educator well-being services through Oregon Wellbeing Trust](#).

Creating a Culture of Connection and Belonging:

- How are teachers supported in creating classroom environments that foster belonging and connection?
- What strategies are in place to reduce discrimination, bullying, and exclusion?
- How are students from populations identified as being at elevated suicide risk intentionally supported?
Resource: [ODE Transformative Social & Emotional Learning](#)

Building-Level Response Systems:

- Does every staff member know who to contact when they are concerned about a student's mental health?
- Is there a backup plan when designated mental health staff are unavailable?
- Are suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention procedures, rooted in restorative justice frameworks, reviewed annually with all staff?
- Resource: [ODE Restorative Justice](#)

School Counselors, Mental Health Staff, & Other Licensed School Health Staff Suicide Prevention Checklist

School-wide Protocols & Teacher Engagement

- Do staff know how and when to refer a student, including when immediate support is needed for suicide warning signs?
- Are referral pathways for suicide risk clear, consistent, and easy for teachers to use in real time (e.g., during a class period or student interaction)?
- Are teachers regularly included as partners in prevention and intervention (e.g., feedback on referral systems, restorative justice, training needs, and student support processes)? | Resource: [ODE Restorative Justice](#)
- Do students and staff know how to access crisis support? Is messaging reinforced throughout the year?
- **Does my school have visible and accessible resources for mental health support, such as YouthLine or 988 posters, brochures, or stickers?** Consider ordering no-cost materials from [YouthLine](#) (shipping not included) or from [988](#) (free shipping). Consider leading or supporting a school-led or student-led campaign on reaching out to 988. There is specific support for [local Oregon 988 campaigns](#).

Clinician & Responder Readiness

- **Do I have the appropriate training in suicide screening and basic safety planning?** If not, consider taking [ASIST](#), [Youth SAVE](#), and [Suicide Prevention 201: Advancing Suicide Prevention & Management for Diverse Populations](#). For access to SP201 at no cost, contact Maria at mpos@aocmhp.org.
- Do I know what forms to fill out when you receive a referral from staff about a student who may be at risk for suicide? Do I know where to submit or store the forms?
- Do I know where to refer a student demonstrating suicide risk after a screening? Do I know how to access crisis services for a student at imminent risk for suicide?
- Have I identified mental health staff to consult for complex situations?

Resources

- If a school lacks staff to provide suicide screening and safety planning, staff can call 988 or the [local crisis hotline](#) for screening and safety planning support.
- [Oregon Toolkit for Suicide Intervention in Schools](#) shares Oregon specific tools for suicide screening.
- [Oregon LGBTQ Resources](#) provides training and resources for increasing wellness and belonging for LGBTQ2SIA+ young people. Their website has free poster downloads, videos, and resources.
- [Rural Educator's Toolkit](#) informs how to best support LGBTQ2SIA+ students at school.
- For grounding, try this 1 minute visual [breathing exercise](#). For connection, try these [check-ins](#).
- [Building Belonging](#) and [Finding Balance](#) are two Oregon-created series of tier 2 lessons developed to support students that experience challenges when processing emotions. Available at no cost.
- [Erika's Lighthouse](#) offers free mental health and suicide prevention curriculum including family engagement and schoolwide climate and culture. Available in English and Spanish. (Email sign-up.)
- [GLSEN's Rainbow Library](#) is a program that sends LGBTQ2SIA+ affirming text sets to schools at no cost.
- The [Family Acceptance Project](#) provides training and resources for increasing wellness and belonging for LGBTQ2SIA+ young people. Their website has free poster downloads, videos, and resources.
- [ODE immigration support resources](#): Available in nine languages with Latino/a/x community-developed stress management strategies for schools and families.

Teachers, Instructional Staff, & Student-Facing Staff Suicide Prevention Checklist

Suicide Prevention:

- Do I know the warning signs that a student may be struggling or at risk (e.g., withdrawal, hopelessness, sudden behavior changes, talk of death or suicide, declining engagement)?
Consider the recommended training to understand basic suicide prevention warning signs and how to refer to help: [Be Sensitive, Be Brave \(BSBB\)](#) or [Question, Persuade, Refer \(QPR\)](#). For access to BSBB and QPR at no cost, contact Learning@linesforlife.org.
- Do I know how to respond if I notice warning signs, including staying calm, listening, and immediately connecting the student to designated school supports?
- Does my classroom or school space have visible and accessible resources for mental health support, such as YouthLine or 988 posters, brochures, stickers, and wristbands? Consider ordering no-cost materials from [YouthLine](#) (shipping not included) or from [988](#) (free shipping).

Building Connectedness & Belonging:

- How do I intentionally build daily connections with students (greetings, check-ins, noticing absences) and address exclusion, bullying, and support belonging for all students, especially those at higher risk?

My Role in Referring Students for Mental Health Support:

- Do I know my role is to notice, stay with the student if needed, and connect to trained staff? Most instructional staff do not have the role of suicide risk assessment or safety planning.
- Do I know who to contact and when to refer a student in need of help immediately?
- Do I follow referral procedures without delay and understand my role is to refer, not assess risk?

After a Crisis or Loss:

- Do I know how to access support after responding to a student concern?
- Do I follow postvention guidance and avoid managing crises alone?

Key Reminder: Teachers are not expected to assess risk. Teachers are essential to noticing, connecting, and referring students to support.

Resources

- [ODE immigration support resources](#): Available in nine languages with Latino/a/x community-developed stress management strategies for schools and families.
- [Oregon LGBTQ Resources](#) provides training and resources for increasing wellness and belonging for LGBTQ2SIA+ young people, including free poster downloads and videos.
- [Rural Educator's Toolkit](#) informs administrators how to best support LGBTQ2SIA+ students at school.
- If your school lacks staff to provide suicide screening and safety planning, please call 988 or your [local crisis line](#) for screening and safety planning support.
- For grounding, try this 1 minute visual [breathing exercise](#). For building connection, try these check-in question [ideas](#).
- [Work 2 Be Well](#) is a free (with email sign-up) mental health curriculum for use by educators.

Students and Families Suicide Prevention Resources

Have you been trained to understand basic suicide prevention warning signs and how to refer a loved one to help? If not, consider taking [Be Sensitive, Be Brave \(BSBB\)](#) (ages 14+) or [Question, Persuade, Refer \(QPR\)](#) (ages 16+). Young people as well as family members can take these community helper trainings. For access to QPR and BSBB at no cost, contact Learning@linesforlife.org.



988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

For 24/7 support in English, Spanish, and ASL

The suicide and crisis lifeline is always open for calls, texts, and chats. It is always free and always confidential. Specific support for Veterans and Spanish-speakers. [Learn more.](#)



YouthLine *For older elementary, middle, or high school students*

Youthline, a teen-to-teen help, support, and crisis line is open daily from 4-10 pm PT via call, text, and chat. Adults answer phone calls at all other times for support 24/7. [Learn more.](#)

Call 877-968-8491, Text 'teen2teen' to 839863, or Chat the youthline.org



SafeOregon Tip Line 844-472-3367 (Call or Text)

For students, families, staff, and community members

SafeOregon was created to report and respond to student safety threats (including suicide risk). Note: This tip line is not for immediate emergency response. For crisis situations, call 911 or 988. [Learn more.](#)



Call BlackLine 800-604-5841 (Call or Text)

A space for peer support, counseling, reporting of mistreatment, witnessing and affirming the lived experiences for folx who are most impacted by systematic oppression with an LGBTQ+ Black Femme Lens. Call BlackLine prioritizes BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color). By us for us.

[Learn more.](#)

Find a [comprehensive set of resources for undocumented students.](#)