



# Supporting Student Mental Health and Wellness

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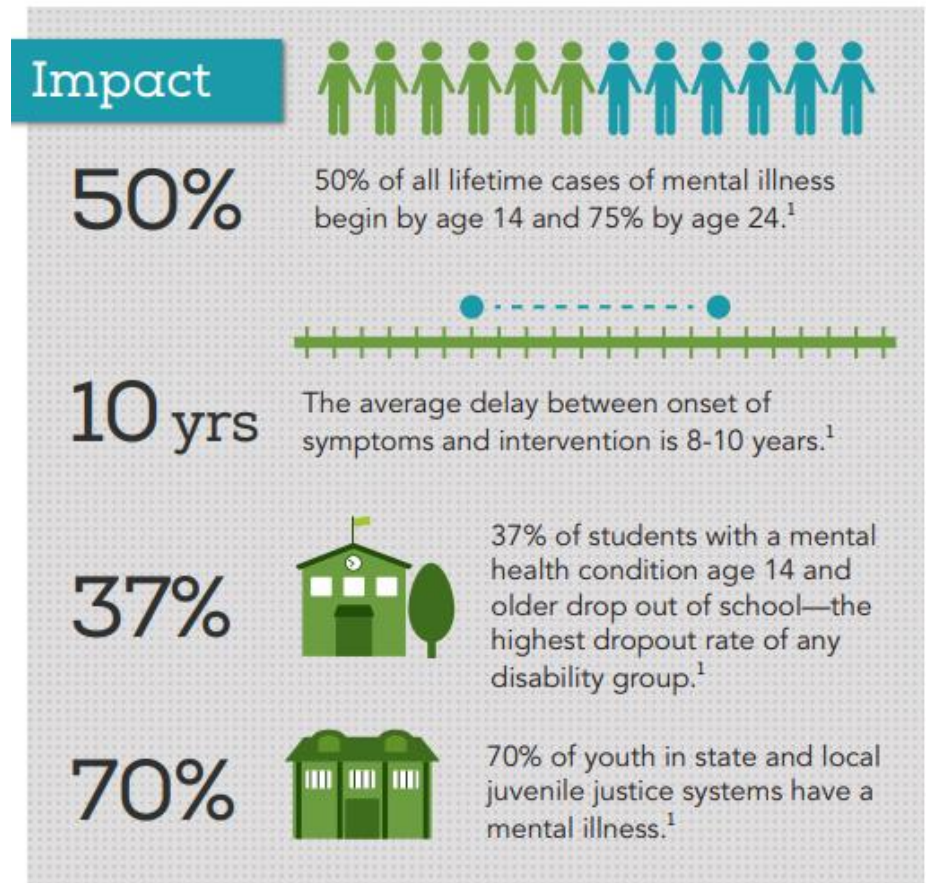
September 15, 2021

# Mission

The mission and vision of the **Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services** is ensure that every individual served by the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Service system will have the opportunity for growth, recovery and inclusion in their community, have access to culturally competent services and supports of their choice, and enjoy a quality of life that includes family members and friends.

# Mental Health Concerns among Youth

**20%** of students live with a mental health condition, yet only around **half** receive treatment in a given year (NIMH, 2015).



(NAMI, 2019)

# ▶ Youth Suicide in Pennsylvania

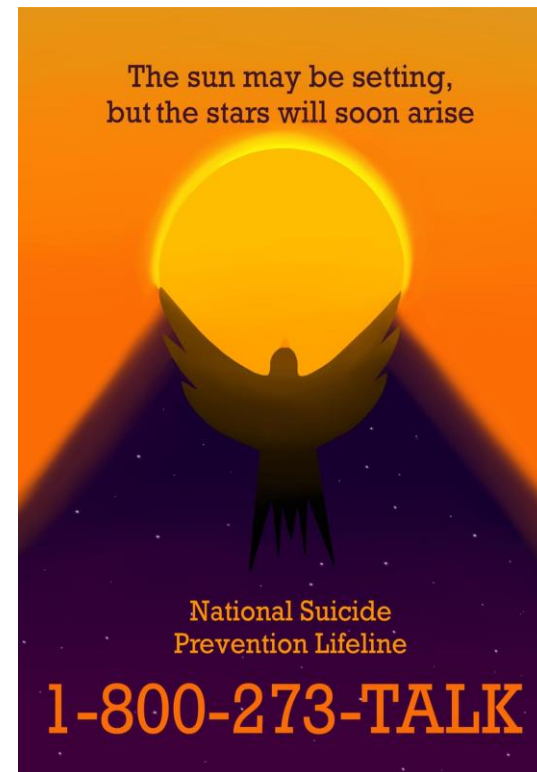
**1 in 6 youth seriously considered suicide**



**1 in 8 youth had a suicide plan**



**1 in 10 youth attempted suicide**



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# Mental Health Concerns among LGBTQ+ Youth

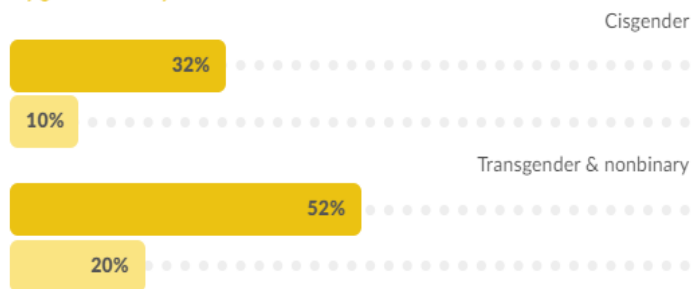
**> 70% of LGBTQ youth** reported symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder in the past two weeks, including **more than 3 in 4 transgender and nonbinary youth**

**>60% of LGBTQ youth** reported symptoms of major depressive disorder in the past two weeks, including **more than 2 in 3 transgender and nonbinary youth**

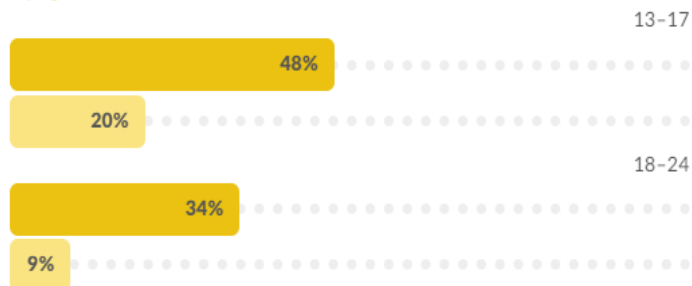
LGBTQ youth who:

● Considered suicide ● Attempted suicide

By gender identity



By age



# Safe2Say Something

TIP TOTALS 07/01/2020 - 06/30/2021	
Event Types	Total
Bullying / Cyber Bullying	1459
Suicide / Suicide Ideation	1394
Cutting / Self-Harm	944
Drug Distribution / Possession	603
Depression / Anxiety	566
Smoking (Tobacco, E-Cig, Vape) in School	556
Hate Crime / Hate Speech / Discrimination	510
Inappropriate Language/Behavior/Gesture	419
Harassment / Intimidation	390
False Report / Prank Tip	378

# ▶ Legislation Related to School Mental Health

## Act 18 (2019)

- Model Trauma Informed Plan (SCSS)
- Training on Trauma-Informed Approaches
- Encourage Trauma-Informed Approaches
- Threat assessment teams

## Act 44 (2018)

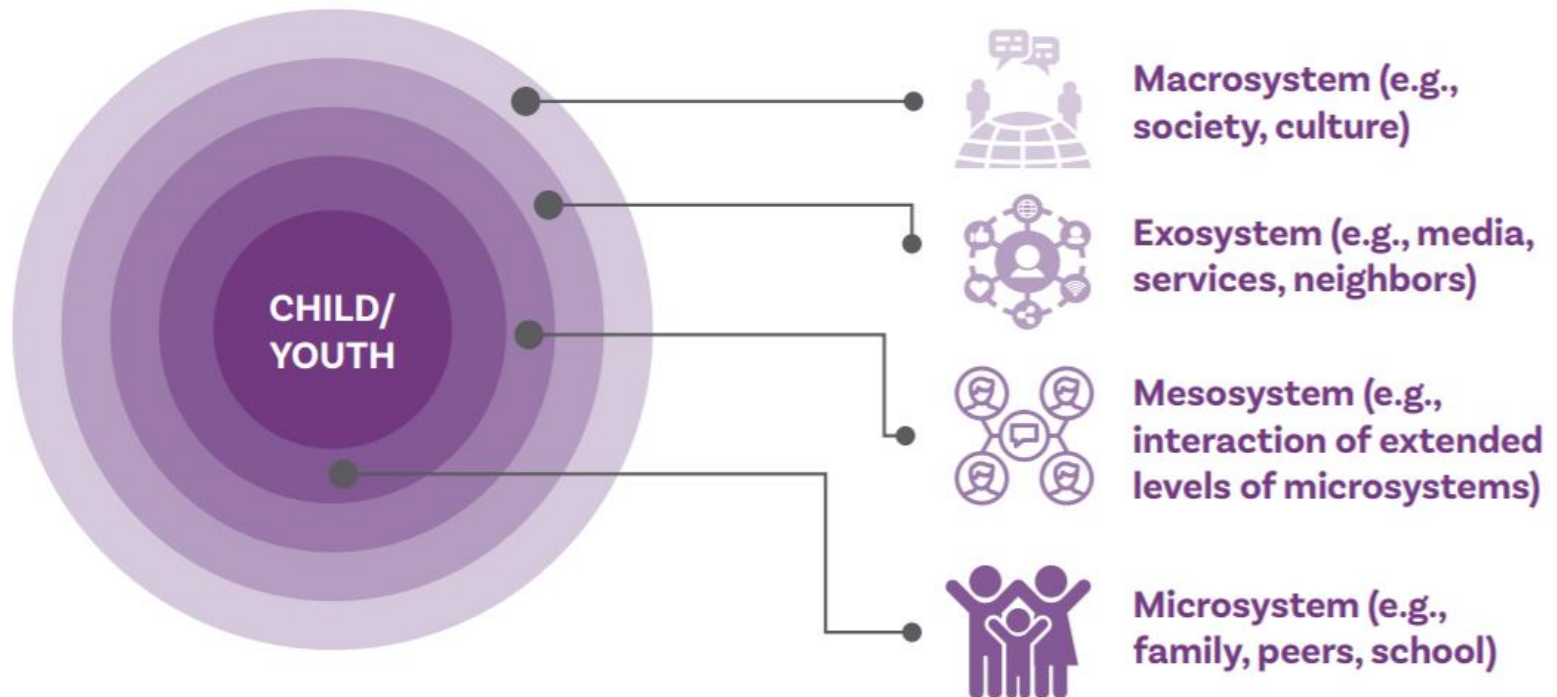
- School Safety and Security Coordinator
- Safe2Say Something
- School safety grants
- School safety assessment criteria

## Act 71 (2014)

- Suicide prevention policies and procedures
- Training for staff grades 6-12, 4 hours every 5 years
- Student education



# Ecological Systems Model



(Hoover et al., 2019)



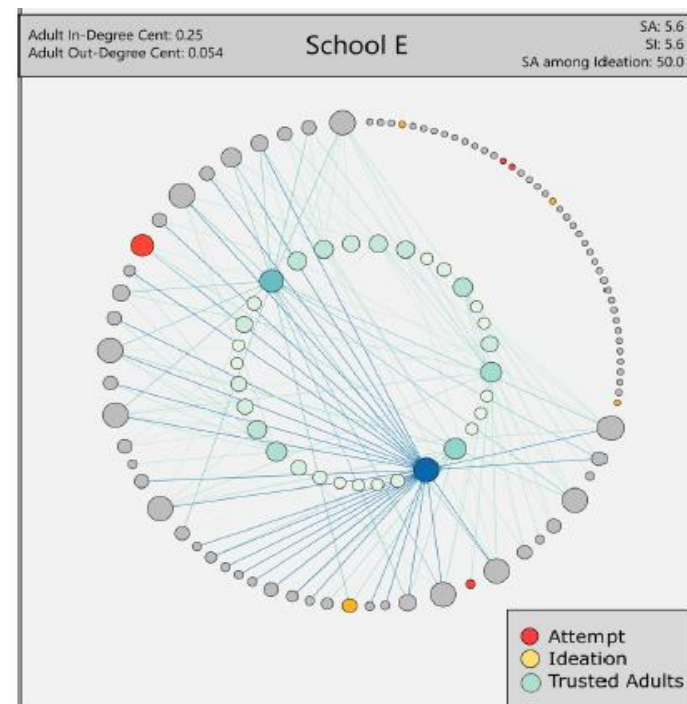
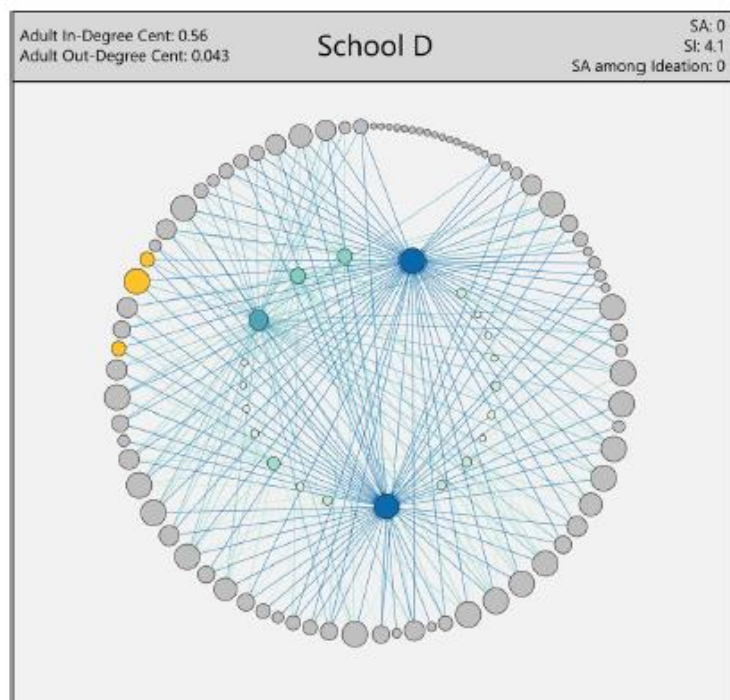
# ➤ Risk Factors

- Stressful events, abuse or trauma
- Learned behavior
- Chemical imbalance
- Substance misuse and sensitivity
- Seasonal changes
- Previous episode of mental illness or presence of another mental illness
- Ongoing stress and anxiety
- Medical conditions and hormonal changes
- Side effects of medication
- Illness that is life threatening, chronic, or associated with pain
- Brain injury

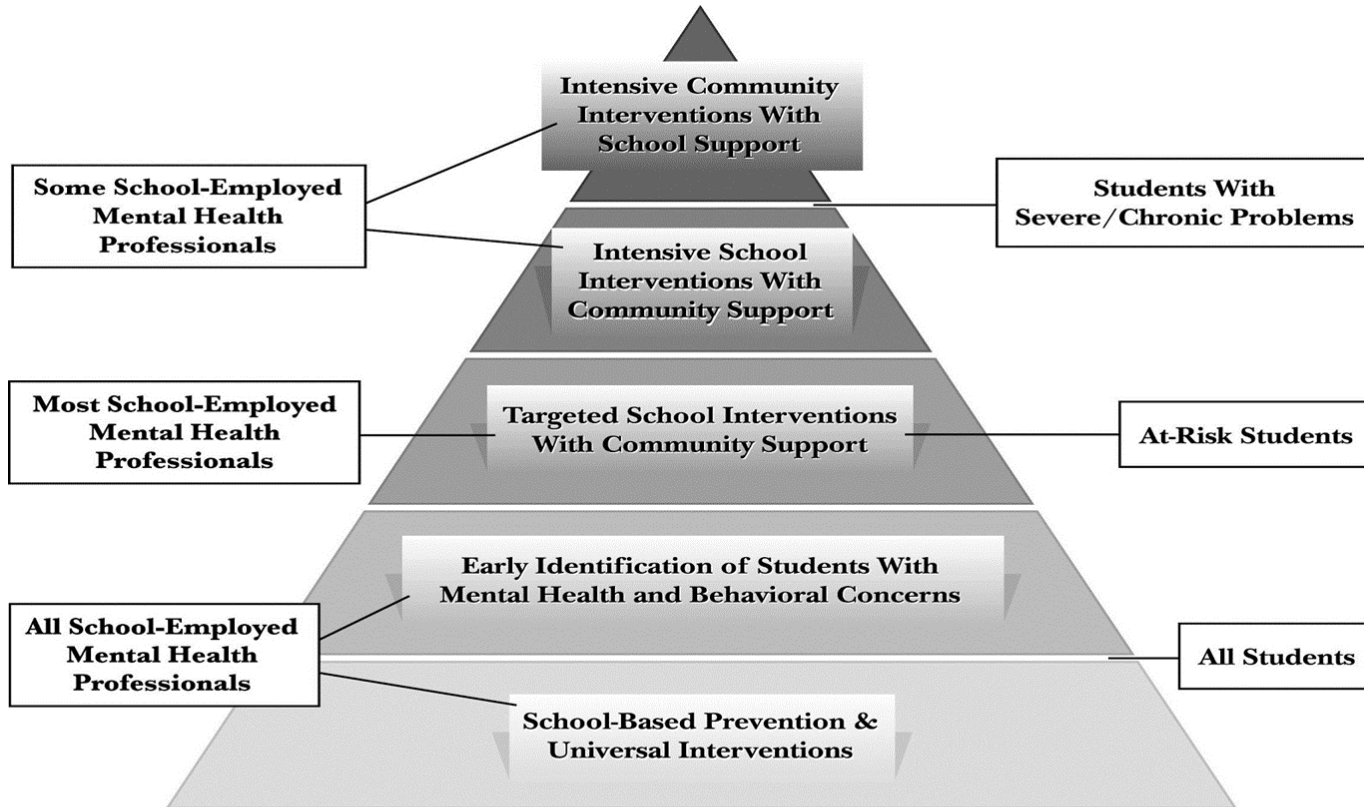
# Protective Factors

- Healthy habits
- Good self-esteem
- Good problem-solving skills
- Feeling of control in your own life
- Spirituality
- Avoiding alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs
- Consistent routines
- Parent/family support
- Regular school attendance
- Having a good social support system
- Availability of safe and enjoyable recreation activities
- Connections to your community
- Feeling close to at least one adult

# Relationships and Connectedness



(Wyman et al., 2019)



## The Continuum of School Mental Health Services

Adapted from "Communication Planning and Message Development: Promoting School-Based Mental Health Services" in *Communiqué*, Vol. 35, No. 1. National Association of School Psychologists, 2006.

# Trauma-Informed Strategies for Supporting Youth

Provide structured routines

Remain flexible

Offer choice

Set limits and boundaries

Use language that reinforces connectedness (“we”)

Acknowledge everyone’s “story”

Model self-care

Reach out, respond, and refer



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# ➤ Strategies for Mental Health Literacy

- Provide training to teachers and support staff
- Student education programs/curricula
- Student mental health awareness clubs
  - [Youth Move National](#) and [Youth Move PA](#)
  - [Aevidum](#)
- School-wide awareness events or campaigns
- Sharing of mental health and crisis resources
- Posting of mental health information/resources
- Refresher trainings



# Mental Health Warning Signs

- Feeling really sad or withdrawn for more than two weeks
- Drastic changes in mood, behavior, personality, or sleeping habits
- Extreme difficulty concentrating or staying still
- Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities
- Really concerning risk-taking behaviors, acting out of control
- Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason
- Not eating, throwing up, significant weight loss/gain
- Repeated frequent use of drugs or alcohol
- Seeing, hearing or believing things that aren't real



# ➤ Youth Suicide Warning Signs

1. Talking about or making plans for suicide
2. Expressing hopelessness about the future
3. Displaying severe/overwhelming emotional pain or distress
4. Showing worrisome behavioral cues or marked changes in behavior, particularly in the presence of the warning signs above. Specifically, this includes significant:

Withdrawal from or changing in social connections/situations

Recent increased agitation or irritability

Anger or hostility that seems out of character or out of context

Changes in sleep (increased or decreased)

# ➤ Having a Supportive Conversation

- Express concern
- Ask open-ended questions
- Listen actively and nonjudgmentally
- Affirm emotions
- Limit personal sharing
- Offer support and hope
- Refer as needed



# Components of Compassion Resilience

## Expectations

- Realistic ones for self
- Realistic ones for others

## Boundary Setting

- Know what you want/can say

## Staff Culture

- Connecting with colleagues in a way that helps and heals

## Self-Care

- Mind
- Spirit
- Strength
- Heart



# Self-Care 101- Get Back to Basics

## Care For Your Five Senses

What can you focus on today?



(Milani, 2020)

# The “Wellness Compass”



## HEART

**Relationships:** the ability to create and maintain healthy connections with others in your life

**Emotions:** the ability to express your emotions and receive others’ emotions in a healthy way



## MIND

**School/Work:** the ability to get the most out of educational, volunteer, and employment opportunities

**Organization:** the ability to manage time, priorities, money, and belongings



## SPIRIT

**Core Values:** the development of a personal value system that supports your sense of meaning and purpose

**Rest & Play:** the ability to balance work and play to renew yourself



## STRENGTH

**Stress Resilience:** the ability to deal positively with the challenges of life

**Care for My Body:** the ability to build healthy habits around your physical well-being, and to end unhealthy habits

# ▶ The SAP Process

Referral

Team  
Planning

Interventions and  
Recommendations

Follow-  
up

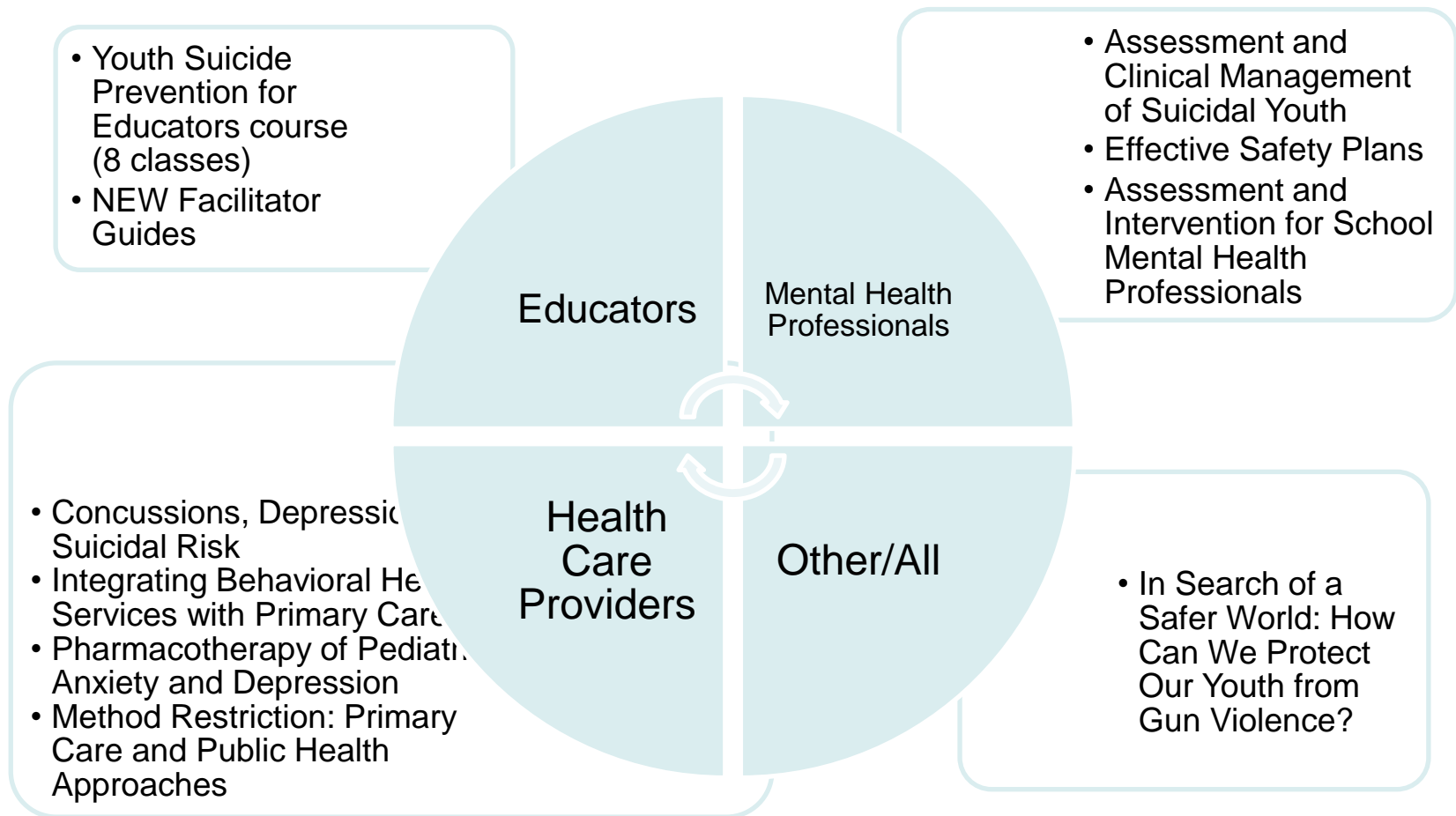
Pennsylvania Network for  
Student Assistance Services:

<http://pnsas.org/>



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# Suicide Prevention Online Learning Center





# Mental Health and Crisis Resources

**CRISIS TEXT LINE |**

**Text PA to 741741**  
**Free, 24/7, Confidential**

**TRANS  
LIFELINE**  
**1-877-565-8860**

**THE TREVOR PROJECT**  
**LGBTQ CRISIS HOTLINE**  
**CALL 1-866-488-7386**

**NATIONAL  
SUICIDE  
PREVENTION  
LIFELINE**  
**1-800-273-TALK (8255)**  
[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

**RED NACIONAL  
de  
PREVENCIÓN  
del  
SUICIDIO**  
**1-888-628-9454**  
[prevenciondelsuicidio.org](http://prevenciondelsuicidio.org)



**SAFE SAY  
SOMETHING**

**SEE IT. REPORT IT.**

  **MOBILE APP**

 **1-844-SAF2SAY**

 **SAFE2SAYPA.ORG**

# Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Resources

- Child Mind Institute: <https://childmind.org/>
- Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network: [Therapeutic Resources for those who Identify as BIPOC](#)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness: <https://www.nami.org/home>
- National Center for School Mental Health: <http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/>
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network: <https://www.nctsn.org/>
- National Hispanic and Latino Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network: <https://pttcnetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/SuicidePreventionFS-ENG.pdf>
- PA Dept. of Education Safe Schools Website:  
<https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/Pages/default.aspx>
- Pennsylvania Network for Student Assistance Services (PNSAS): <http://pnsas.org/>
- PA Youth Survey (PAYS): [https://www.pccd.pa.gov/Juvenile-Justice/pages/pennsylvania-youth-survey-\(pays\).aspx](https://www.pccd.pa.gov/Juvenile-Justice/pages/pennsylvania-youth-survey-(pays).aspx)
- Prevent Suicide PA: <https://www.preventsuicidepa.org/>

# Contact Information

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