

SAP COUNTY COORDINATION UPDATE
September, 2015



Prepared by: PA Network for Student Assistance Services (PNSAS)
www.sap.state.pa.us

PENNSYLVANIA NETWORK FOR STUDENT ASSISTANCE SERVICES INTERAGENCY UPDATE

SAP Liaison Webinar on September 24: “Suicide Prevention in the School Setting”

The Pennsylvania Network for Student Assistance Services is pleased to announce a free on-line professional development opportunity for SAP liaisons to be held on Thursday, September 24, 2015 from 2-4 p.m. It is our pleasure to have Dr. Matt Wintersteen, Assistant Professor and Director of Research in the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University, and the co-chair of the Pennsylvania Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative as our speaker on “Suicide Prevention in the School Setting.”

Dr. Wintersteen’s experience includes serving on a national task force convened by the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, the American Association of Suicidology, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and the National Institute of Mental Health. If you or your agency has not received the registration announcement please contact your PNSAS regional coordinator. You can find the contact information for your regional coordinator [here](#). Registration is required due to limited slots. Deadline for registering is September 17, 2015. We would like to thank Chester County Intermediate Unit 24 for hosting for this webinar.

Department of Human Services, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS):
Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention Grant

OMHSAS has been awarded a Suicide Prevention in Schools and Colleges Grant from SAMHSA. The grant will provide gatekeeper and specialized training opportunities, standardized screening, and training in empirically supported treatments to schools, agencies, and college campuses throughout the Commonwealth. The project will raise awareness, increase identification of an at-risk youth, facilitate referrals to treatment, and improve treatment outcomes.

With questions, or to find out more information about how to get involved, please contact Perri Rosen, Project Director, at: c-prosen@pa.gov.

Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs:

2015 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

There is still time for schools to sign-up to for the 2015 administration of the PA Youth Survey (PAYS). For more information about the PAYS, the registration form, and to see a list of the school districts that have already registered to take the PAYS, click [here](#).

Let's Work Together!

Let's Work Together is a Pennsylvania mobile web resource of information for persons seeking drug, alcohol, or gambling addiction programs and other services that can be accessed from anywhere, anytime.

Find statewide addiction treatment and recovery programs near you. Locate helpful phone numbers and facility listings for persons or loved ones seeking care and recovery from substance abuse in Pennsylvania. Get Help Now: Join Pennsylvanians living free, or in recovery, from the disease of drug, alcohol and gambling addiction, resulting in safer, healthier, more productive and fulfilling lives. Go to <http://www.ddap.pa.gov/gethelpnow>

Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs Launches Facebook and Twitter Pages

August 21, 2015 Harrisburg, PA

The Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) officially launched its Facebook and Twitter pages to provide better outreach to Pennsylvanians about substance use disorder and reach more individuals who need help finding services for substance use disorder.

“By launching these social media sites, The Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs is working to provide a resource that will help address the epidemic of addiction in Pennsylvania,” said DDAP Secretary Gary Tennis. “It is important for our department to help break down the stigma which surrounds addiction, by creating a platform where people can share stories about the importance of treatment services, and to provide an outlet to reach individuals or their loved ones who are struggling with substance use disorders.”

The department's Facebook and Twitter sites are intended to be an additional resource to provide individuals and their families with information on intervention, prevention and treatment services. Follow us:

- Facebook: Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs: <https://www.facebook.com/PennsylvaniaDDAP>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/PADrugAlcohol>

PA Department of Education:

PA Department of Education's Safe Schools resources can be viewed [here](#).

Bullying Prevention Website

The PDE's website contains downloadable resources to support bullying prevention in schools and communities. Click [here](#) to access helpful resources such as the *PA Bullying Prevention Toolkit* and links to bullying prevention websites. Contact Mary Dolan, PA Department of Education, Bullying Prevention Consultant at: c-mdolan@pa.gov for further information on how to support your school and community bullying prevention efforts.

SAP BACK TO BASICS

What Happens After a SAP Referral Is Made?

After a student is referred, the team gathers specific information regarding the student's academic performance, attendance, disciplinary records, and observable behaviors from the school's staff. If this information suggests that action is necessary, written parental/guardian consent must be obtained. If a parent/ guardian provide written consent, the SAP process can continue. The SAP team will work with the parents to assist the student in accessing appropriate in school supports. If the problem lies beyond the scope of the school, the school may refer the student to the SAP liaison. With parent permission, the liaison can screen/assess the student and make appropriate referrals to community services.

Data Collection

All students who were referred to SAP should be included in the reporting, even those that did not complete the entire whole SAP process. After all the SAP data is entered by all districts, PA Department of Education will make reports available. There are reports for each building, as well as districtwide, and countywide SAP reports. Only those with approved access will be able to view the school and district reports. Since it is a new school year, it is good to review last year's data to see if there are any needed improvements your team could make. SAP reports for your school can be accessed at the [SAP reporting site](#). The process of evaluating the end of year data should be established to review adherence to benchmarks and indicators for effective team functioning. This information can assist in making adjustments to services and strategies and assist schools in identifying areas for further training and support.

Here are some questions to guide the data review process.

1. List the number of students referred.
2. List the three grades levels with the highest number of referrals.
3. Compare the number of male and female referrals.
4. What are the top 2 incoming referral sources? <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Compare all of the categories of referral sources listed.•Does it appear that the SAP team/teams have done a good job of in-servicing/educating students, faculty, families, child serving agencies and the community about SAP?•Are there adequate numbers of referrals from school staff, students, and parents?•If answered "Yes" what strategies were used?•If answered "No" what strategies could be used to help in-service or educate others about SAP?
5. List the top three reasons for referral. <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Does there appear to be a need for a specific training to be offered to the SAP team/teams and staff?•Is there a need to implement a new prevention/education program for students or education groups?
6. List the month with the most referrals? <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Is there anything significant about this? (Is this the anniversary of any significant school event?)•Is this near the time of additional stress for students; i.e. tests, etc.?
7. List the total number of students that have been referred more than once this school year.

RESOURCES

Act 71 Resources

Act 71 was passed in 2014 (formerly House Bill 1559). The law requires every school entity in Pennsylvania to do the following:

1. Shall adopt an age-appropriate youth suicide awareness and prevention policy.
2. Train all educators in grades 6-12 in suicide prevention for a period of 4 hours every 5 years.

Additionally, the law recommends that student curricula include suicide prevention. To review this legislation directly, please click [here](#).

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has developed several resources for school districts to help them meet Act 71 requirements. These resources can be found by going to PDE's "Safe Schools" website and clicking the link for Act 71 under the "Resources" column on the right. Alternatively, these resources can be obtained by clicking [here](#).

On this PDE site, you will find the following resources:

- Information about student programs and resources
- Information about professional development for staff
- Additional general, school, and parent resources

The PDE Act 71 website also has several downloadable documents on the right, under the "Resources" column, including the model school district policy, administrative guidelines for policy development, curriculum guidelines, and training priority topic guidelines.

The PA Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative (PAYSPI)

PAYSPI has several resources for schools, mental health providers, parents, youth, survivors, juvenile justice, and health care providers. There are several on-line trainings available to assist schools with the training requirement for Act 71. There are short webinars on how to develop a school suicide awareness and prevention policy, as required by Act 71. Also, there are various trainings for all staff on suicide awareness and prevention on this website. Find out more about PAYSPI and the free resources at www.payspi.org/act71.

2015 National Suicide Prevention Week Media and Information Kit Now Available

From September 7-13, schools, mental health providers, faith congregations, businesses, and others will help prevent suicide with outreach and awareness events across the United States. To participate, download a media and information kit [here](#) from the American Association of Suicidology. Also, download Suicide Prevention Resource Center's information sheet: [The Role of High School Teachers in Preventing Suicide](#).

National Center for Child Traumatic Stress Announces New Resource

Rosie Remembers Mommy: Forever in Her Heart is the story of a young girl who is struggling with childhood traumatic grief after the death of her mother. Through the beautiful illustrations by Christopher Major, we follow Rosie as she expresses wishes to see her mom, feels reluctant about school, finds no pleasure in activities she formerly found enjoyable, wonders whether she could somehow have caused her mother's death, and even refuses her favorite meal that Daddy has made. Rosie and Daddy go to meet Anna, who works with children after someone dies. Through play, song, and art, Anna helps Rosie eventually cope with the loss of her mother.

By reading *Rosie Remembers Mommy: Forever in Her Heart* to a child experiencing traumatic grief, a parent can help him or her understand the many feelings associated with the loss of a loved one, ask questions about the death, and know that their surviving parent is available to hear about all feelings—even upsetting ones. At the end of the book, readers will find the “Caregiver Guide for Helping Young Children”, which explains traumatic grief and trauma reactions, details how best to use the book, describes how adults can use the story to help grieving young children, and tells how to get additional help. Download the book [here](#).

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Bipolar Spectrum Disorders in Youth

October 15, 2015

8:30 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

University Club (on the University of Pittsburgh Campus)

Pittsburgh, PA

This conference conducted by the Child and Adolescent Bipolar Spectrum Services (CABS) of WPIC will focus on the assessment, differential diagnosis, and treatment of bipolar spectrum disorders in youth.

Early and correct diagnosis is critical in youth with mood dysregulation; however, it can often take up to ten years to identify and treat bipolar disorders. During the meeting, faculty from CABS will cover various topics including high risk populations, assessment methods, early diagnosis, psychosocial and medication interventions, and management of bipolar spectrum disorders in youth.

Please visit the conference website <http://www.wpic.pitt.edu/oerp/conferences> for program description and registration information, or contact Nancy Mundy at 412.204-9090 or via email mundynl@upmc.edu.

Youth Mental Health First Aid

The Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education is pleased to announce the following training opportunity:

PaTTAN Pittsburgh - September 23 & 24, 2015

PaTTAN King of Prussia - October 14, 2015

PaTTAN Harrisburg - October 29, 2015

Target Audience:

This training is only open to LEA school-based teams consisting of FIVE members. LEAs are public, private, approved private and Charter schools. The five team members must include one or more of the following: classroom teachers, coaches, administrators, social services staff, bus drivers, volunteers, paraprofessional and/or family members.

Other professionals such as substance abuse professionals, social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, and nurses may be included as part of the team, but should not serve as the majority of the team as this training is considered introductory and does not inform advanced skills/strategies.

Registration Information:

Registration is NOT available on-line. To register your team, please contact the people at your regional office listed below.

Pittsburgh - Kristen Olszyk, kolszyk@pattan.net; 412-826-6848

Harrisburg - Wendy Weary, wweary@pattan.net; 717-901-2273

King of Prussia - Delores Lawson, dlawson@pattan.net; 800-441-3215 x7216

NEWS

Act 126 Passes in Pennsylvania-Cyber Harassment of a Child Now a Punishable Offense

Pennsylvania has a new law that aims to stop cyberbullying of children by making it a punishable offense. Act 126HB229, now Act no. 26 amends the Harassment Statute, Section 2709 of the Crimes Code to define cyber harassment of a child and makes it a misdemeanor of the third degree to use electronic communications to repeatedly make statements or offer opinions about a child's sexuality or sexual activity or make statements that significantly ridicule, demean or cause serious embarrassment to a child under the circumstances.

Cyber Harassment of a Child is now a misdemeanor of the third degree. This allows intervention by law enforcement and juvenile probation officers who would initially review the case if it involved a juvenile offender. If appropriate, the case will be referred to juvenile court or the juvenile offender could be placed in a diversion program. An adult who engages in such conduct will be prosecuted in court, rather than be issued a summary citation, reflecting the seriousness of this form of child abuse. For more information or to read the law, click [here](#).

First Assessment for Grieving Youth Developed

UT Health University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

The first test ever constructed to assess Persistent Complex Bereavement Disorder - a problematic syndrome of grief has been jointly published by researchers from The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) and The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

Persistent Complex Bereavement Disorder (PCBD) has been included as a proposed diagnosis for further study in the most recent edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)*, which is published by the American Psychiatric Association. The new assessment tool, called the PCBD Checklist for Youth, was developed for children who are having difficulty coping with a death.

"PCBD has never been studied in its entirety. By including it in the appendix, the *DSM-5* is inviting us to conduct rigorous research examining this proposed maladaptive form of grieving," said Christopher M. Layne, Ph.D., first author, a research psychologist in the UCLA Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and director of Education in Evidence-Based Practice at the UCLA/Duke National Center for Child Traumatic Stress. "The PCBD Checklist for Youth is the first instrument ever developed for the specific purpose of assessing PCBD in bereaved children and adolescents." Read more [here](#).

Mental Illness Afflicts Many Juveniles in Jail

Hospitalization for mental health problems is far more common among kids behind bars than among children and teens in the general population, a new study finds. Juvenile inmates also have longer hospital stays, which suggests they have more serious underlying mental health problems, according to the Stanford University School of Medicine researchers.

"We know young people in the juvenile justice system have a disproportionate burden of mental illness, but I was really surprised by the magnitude of the problem, because hospitalizations typically occur for very severe illness," lead author Dr. Arash Anoshiravani, a clinical assistant professor of adolescent medicine, said in a university news release. The researchers analyzed nearly 2 million hospitalizations of children and teens in California over the age of 15. They found that mental health disorders accounted for 63 percent of hospitalizations among juvenile inmates, compared to 19 percent for those not in jail.

"We are arresting kids who have mental health problems probably related to their experiences as children," Anoshiravani said. "Is that the way we should be dealing with this, or should we be getting them into treatment earlier, before they start getting caught up in the justice system?" Read more about the study [here](#).

National Suicide Prevention Week is September 7-13, 2015

Join with the suicide prevention community to observe National Suicide Prevention Week (September 7-13, 2015). An Information and [Media Kit](#) is available from the American Association of Suicidology to help you participate in this annual event.

World Suicide Prevention Day

According to the recently released World Health Organization (WHO) report: Preventing Suicide: A Global Imperative, over 800,000 people die by suicide across the world each year. The report notes that this estimate is conservative, with the real figure likely to be higher because of the stigma associated with suicide, lack of reliable death recording procedures, and religious or legal sanctions against suicide in some countries.

We may not be able to pinpoint the exact figure, but we do know that each individual suicide is a tragic loss of life. It is hard to imagine the extreme psychological pain that leads someone to decide that suicide is the only course of action. Reaching out to someone who is struggling can make a difference. 'Preventing Suicide: Reaching Out and Saving Lives' is the theme of the 2015 World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD), an initiative of the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) and the WHO, a co-sponsor of meetings and events related to WSPD 2015. Since 2003, WSPD has taken place on 10th September each year. It serves as a call to action to individuals and organizations to prevent suicide. This year, the theme encourages us all to consider the role that offering support may play in combating suicide.

The act of showing care and concern to someone who may be vulnerable to suicide can be a game-changer. Asking them whether they are OK, listening to what they have to say in a non-judgmental way, and letting them know you care, can all have a significant impact. Isolation increases the risk of suicide, and, conversely, having strong social connections is protective against it, so being there for someone who has become disconnected can be life-saving.

Click [here](#) for more information on World Suicide Prevention Day and links to local suicide prevention activities.

School Climate and Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Youth

SPRC Suicide Prevention Resource Center

A supportive school environment can virtually eliminate the disparity in the rate of suicidal thoughts between lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) youth and their heterosexual peers, according to the authors of a study that correlated Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System data with school climate measures.

Among all students surveyed, LGB youth were significantly more likely than heterosexual adolescents to report having suicidal thoughts or making a suicide plan or a suicide attempt in the past year. However, LGB students living in cities and states with school climates that are supportive of LGBTQ youth were significantly less likely to report suicidal thoughts than were their LGB peers in non-supportive environments. There was no similar effect among heterosexual youth. The percentages of LGB youth living in states and cities with supportive school climates who made a suicide plan and who attempted suicide in the past year also decreased, although these reductions did not reach statistical significance.

A supportive climate includes:

- A Gay-Straight Alliance and safe spaces for LGBTQ youth on campus;
- Curricula on health matters relevant to LGBTQ youth;
- A policy prohibiting harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identity;
- Encouragement for staff to be trained about school environments that support LGBTQ youth;
- Assistance for students to access offsite health and mental health services targeted to LGBTQ youth.

The authors believe their findings support the view that "comprehensive suicide prevention and interventions for sexual minority adolescents should address not only individual-level and family-level factors, but also broader social-contextual influences, including school climate."

This summary is from: Hatzenbuehler, M.L., Birkett, M., Van Wagenen, A., & Meyer, I.H. (2014). Protective School Climates and Reduced Risk for Suicide Ideation in Sexual Minority Youths. *American Journal of Public Health* 104(2): 279-286.

Click [here](#) for more information from PPRC's website.

Bullying, Drug Abuse, Child Abuse, Sexting Big Concerns Adults Have for Children

Children's Safety Network

Aug 19, 2015

Sexting and online safety are now some of the leading health concerns adults have for children, an annual poll finds. "The increasing level of concern about Internet safety and sexting that are now ranked even higher than smoking as major childhood health issues really dominates the story this year," poll director Dr. Matthew Davis, a professor of pediatrics and internal medicine in the child health evaluation and research unit at the University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor, said in a university news release. For more information, [click here](#).