

SAP COUNTY COORDINATION UPDATE

September, 2019



Prepared by: PA Network for Student Assistance Services (PNSAS)

www.pnsas.org

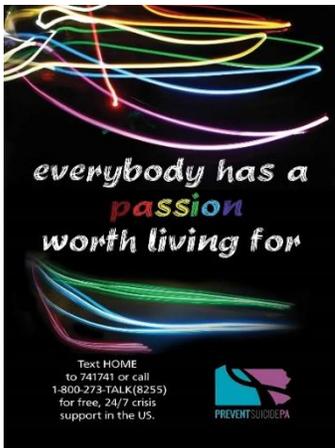
PENNSYLVANIA NETWORK FOR STUDENT ASSISTANCE SERVICES INTERAGENCY UPDATE

Suicide Prevention Month

The week of September 8th-14th is recognized as **National Suicide Prevention Week**, with Tuesday, September 10th marking **World Suicide Prevention Day**. This year's theme is "Working Together to Prevent Suicide." The Jana Marie Foundation, Prevention Suicide PA, Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention Grant, and PNSAS created a guide to support school and community efforts to commemorate this important month. In the guide, you'll find ideas for suicide prevention awareness, a sample proclamation, helpful language to use when talking about suicide, and a variety of other suicide prevention resources.

Social media campaigns such as The Jason Foundation's #iwontbesilent challenge are a great way to engage youth as leaders in starting conversations about suicide, or participate in Aavidum's online National Suicide Prevention Week campaign by viewing and sharing their daily photos, videos, and public service announcements on Facebook and Instagram at @aavidum. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline's #BeThe1To message can also be shared widely to help spread the word about the actions we can all take to help prevent suicide. Consider promoting one of these campaigns or working with local partners to start a campaign tailored to your school or community. Additional ideas, along with sample social media posts, are included in the attached resource document.

Thank you for taking the time to consider how you can build partnerships in your community to advance suicide prevention efforts. It is only in working together that we can #stopsuicide.



2020 PSA Contest for Youth Suicide Prevention

Prevent Suicide PA is once again hosting the annual PSA contest. This is a great opportunity to engage students in a dialogue around suicide prevention, the importance of positive messaging, and communicating effectively. Staff who have participated in the past have seen this as a way to teach students on many levels (academically, socially, and emotionally), and students have been empowered to use their voice to reach out to their peers. This year's contest will be announced during National Suicide Prevention week, starting **Monday, September 9, 2019** and all submissions are due by **Friday, November 15, 2019**. Please be on the lookout for additional information in early September.

All of the winning and honorable mention PSAs from previous years are available for free public use and can be accessed by visiting <http://psa.preventsuicidepa.org>.

These are great resources during Suicide Prevention Week and throughout the year. Any questions about the contest or the PSAs can be emailed to rose.milani@jefferson.edu.

Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention Grant

Pennsylvania's Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) has been awarded a 4th round of Garrett Lee Smith funding from SAMHSA, which aims to address suicide among youth ages 10-24. The new 5-year grant involves two approaches: 1) a statewide approach that will continue and build upon prior grant work related to training, screening, and the Higher Education Suicide Prevention Coalition (HESPC); and 2) a targeted county approach. The grant team will identify 15 counties across 5 geographical regions, based on both need and existing infrastructure related to youth suicide prevention efforts. The targeted approach seeks to improve cross-system communication and collaboration to support continuity of care for youth at risk of suicide as they transition between youth-serving systems (e.g., schools, primary care, crisis, hospitals, etc.)

Governor Wolf's Suicide Prevention Task Force

The Governor has announced a Suicide Prevention Task Force aiming to bring together multiple state agencies to develop a new statewide Suicide Prevention Plan for Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS), in collaboration with Prevent Suicide PA, drafted the new plan and is in the process of obtaining feedback from state agencies to finalize the plan in line with other agency priorities and initiatives with regard to suicide prevention across the lifespan. A series of listening sessions is being planned to gather stakeholder feedback and input for policy changes and legislative priorities.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness Month

September 9th is celebrated annually as International FASD Awareness Day to promote education and awareness efforts on FASD. More recently, the month of September has been designated as FASD Awareness Month. A Fetal Alcohol Awareness Kick-Off will take place at the Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg, PA on Monday, September 9th at 11 a.m. Help raise awareness about FASD, a preventable disorder that may impact up to 1 in 20 children, and remind Pennsylvanians that no amount of alcohol is safe while pregnant.

Video Training Series: "School-Based Primary Prevention: A Key to Combating the Opioid Epidemic"

The PA Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP), in collaboration with the Penn State EPISCenter, the PA Department of Education (PDE), and the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency has developed a video training series entitled, "School-Based Primary Prevention: A Key to Combating the Opioid Epidemic". This training is intended to provide an overview of the opioid crisis and information on best practice and strategies schools can use to help prevent opioid misuse. This video series is comprised of 20 videos broken into 5 learning modules:

- Module One: The Real Truths of the Opioid Epidemic
- Module Two: Primary Prevention - The Big Picture
- Module Three: Essential Elements of Programs That Work
- Module Four: How to Incorporate Primary Prevention into the School Environment
- Module Five: What You Can Do to Help

The training is available on PDE's [SAS Portal](#). This will allow teachers/others to receive two Act 48 hours for completing the training. The training can be used toward fulfilling professional development requirements related to [Act 55 of 2017](#).

The training is available as well on the [DDAP](#) and [EPISCenter](#) websites. Each video is downloadable with the purpose of allowing individual videos to be incorporated into presentations, trainings, etc. others provide.

Obtaining Parent Permission for SAP and Liaison Screening/Assessment for Students Experiencing Homelessness

When a school has a child who is considered homeless and is not living with the parents, there is a required procedure for

gaining permission for screenings and assessments. They are as follows:

1. Document attempts to gain parent permission. This documentation must be in writing.
2. District homeless liaison can sign permissions if parent permission has been sought and was unable to be received.
3. If district homelessness liaison is not able to sign (per district protocol) the regional homeless coordinator should be contacted and can give permission.

Definition of “Homeless” in No Child Left Behind

- Students who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence
- Students living in shelters, hotels, motels and camping grounds
- Students living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings
- Students sharing housing (doubled up) due to loss of housing or economic hardship
- Students awaiting foster care placement
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless
- Unaccompanied youth living in the situations above

Resources:

Homelessness and the Student Assistance Program (SAP) Professionals

[Information for Student Assistance Program \(SAP\) Professionals: Homeless and Displaced Families and the School](#)

Pennsylvania’s Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Site Contacts

There are eight regional sites in operation, with the state coordinator located in Harrisburg. If you have any general questions or questions about specific situations to help students experiencing homelessness, contact a coordinator. Click [here](#) for the directory.

Pennsylvania Department of Education Homeless Education website:

<https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Homeless%20Education/Pages/default.aspx>

SAP BACK TO BASICS

Over the years we have included articles in “SAP Back to Basics” that have focused on various areas of the Student Assistance Program and related concerns. This year, we will be featuring a series on the Pennsylvania Student Assistance Program Components and indicators which focus on SAP best practices.

The original handbook can be located on the SAP website at

<http://pnsas.org/Portals/1/Uploaded%20Files/componentsandindicators.pdf>

There are nine essential components of SAP practice, which include: Policy and Procedures, Communications, Referral Mechanisms, Parent Participation, Team Planning, Intervention and Recommendations, Follow-up and Support, Training, Outcome Indicators and Evaluation.

For each component area there are specific performance indicators and checklists that school SAP teams can utilize to check for fidelity of the program. SAP teams will benefit from reviewing this information at a meeting each month. This month we are focusing on Component 1: Policy and Procedures. Be sure to check back next month for Component 2!

Component 1. Policy and Procedures

- Building administrators are involved and support SAP
- Drug and Alcohol and Mental Health SAP liaisons work with team
- SAP coordinator for the building
- Policy violations and consequences for alcohol, drugs, involving weapons, tobacco
- SAP structure and organization (including members and titles, clear delineation of roles and responsibilities, meeting times, membership selection criteria, etc.)



Policies and procedures are designed to influence and determine decisions and actions with all activities taking place with the parameters set by them. Procedures are the specific methods employed to reinforce policies in the day to day operations of a school or agency. Policies and procedures ensure that a point of view developed by a team is translated into steps that result in an outcome compatible with that view. School entities should have written policy/procedures that address their Student Assistance Programs (SAP), including duties of the SAP team members and the SAP process within the school entity.

The collection, maintenance and dissemination of student records, including SAP records, should be addressed by the school entity's records policy, which must comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations. For example, a parent's right to student records is governed by both federal and state law (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99; 22 Pa. Code § 12.31).

SAP policy/procedures must conform to applicable state and federal laws and regulations and should be reviewed frequently (at least every two years or when a relevant law has been amended). SAP team members should receive a written copy and all staff should receive professional development related to SAP. Parents and students should also be aware of the SAP process and policy.

Building administrators are integral to the success of the school SAP team. Administrators provide guidance to support team members in adhering to policy and procedures.

Drug and Alcohol and Mental Health SAP liaisons should provide services as requested by a school based on a letter of agreement with each school district it serves to outline their role on the SAP team. However, it is not the role of the agency staff to "act as a school staff member" during a crisis situation. At a minimum, the liaison should have a copy of and have reviewed all school crisis policies for the schools in which they service. Additional training may be warranted, depending on the requests from the school district and the expertise of the liaison. Also, it may be beyond the scope of a liaison to provide crisis response services and schools may need to contract with agencies beyond their letter of agreement for additional services. Additionally, liaisons can provide postvention services. It is recommended that in the aftermath of a crisis, liaisons assist the SAP team to ensure calm among school community.

Policy violations and consequences for alcohol, drugs, involving weapons, and tobacco should be handled by administrators following the consequences outlined in the individual substance use and weapons policies. Administrators will enforce the discipline procedures approved by the board of directors. SAP teams may receive a referral to support a student following the consequences and/or treatment a student receives. The team should now address any referrals and begin the data collection process with parent approval.

SAP structure and organization of a core team of individuals who are flexible enough to be able to work with students, parents, and community resources in a variety of situations as they relate to preventative and intervention measures with families. SAP team members must be trained by a Pennsylvania Approved SAP Training Provider to be

part of a team. These individuals include:

- Administrator
- Nurse
- Counselor
- Classroom Teacher
- Specialist (PE, Art, Music, Computers, etc.)
- Coach
- Drug and Alcohol and Mental Health Liaisons
- School Resource Officer
- Juvenile Probation Officer
- Youth and Family Services / CYS

School entities should have designated **SAP coordinators** who are able to guide the team through the SAP process before during and after receiving a referral. Quite often this is a counselor, nurse or team member who is highly recognizable to the majority of the student population.

RESOURCES

Blair County Launches Nation's First C-SSRS App to Help Save Lives: Columbia Protocol App Connects Pennsylvania Residents with Local Support

Blair County commissioners announced in March the launch of Columbia Protocol, a free smartphone app that gives residents instant access to a few simple questions that can help save lives. The county is the first in the country to develop an app that uses the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS) while also providing local contact information to nearby crisis centers for individuals at risk for suicide. This app is another way to offer help to the members of our community who need it most.

Users who download the iOS or Android app will gain access to the C-SSRS, a few simple questions that gauge when an individual is at risk for suicide and recommends an appropriate level of mental health support. The list of questions can be answered within a few minutes. App users are also presented with contact information for local and national crisis centers.

With over 20 years of research to validate its relevance and effectiveness, the C-SSRS is seen as the gold standard in assessing suicide risk and is used by governments, schools, and communities across the globe. For people who have thought about suicide, simply being asked these questions can come as a relief. One study found that asking the questions reduced distress in depressed respondents.

Blair County developed the app alongside PS Solutions, a software development firm headquartered in Altoona, Pennsylvania. The app can be easily customized to meet the demands of other counties, cities, and states across the country and to provide local contact information to crisis centers based on a user's phone location. To access the app, type in Columbia Protocol in your app store.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness Month

September 9th is celebrated annually as International FASD Awareness Day to promote education and awareness efforts on FASD. More recently, the month of September has been designated as FASD Awareness Month. FASDs are preventable by abstaining from alcohol while pregnant. Download a FASD Awareness Month/Day packet [here](#).

Preventing Suicide: The Role of High School Teachers and Mental Health Providers

These fact sheets for high school teachers and mental health providers from the Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) includes information on recognizing and responding to suicide warning signs, suicide prevention resources, and other information to help prevent suicide among students.

The fact sheet for teachers can be accessed [here](#). Click [here](#) for the fact sheet for high school mental health providers.

Back to School Resources for School Personnel

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network's (NCTSN) back-to-school resource list highlights trauma-related issues, explains how trauma can affect children and adolescents, and helps schools support affected students and families. Materials ranging from informational fact sheets to trauma intervention webinars, provide school personnel with information that is applicable to youth of all ages (preschool to high school). Access this resource [here](#).

Helping Teachers Manage the Weight of Trauma: Understanding and Mitigating the Effects of Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) for Educators.

Roughly half of American school children have experienced at least some form of trauma — from neglect, to abuse, to violence. In response, educators often find themselves supporting the emotional healing of their students, not just their academic growth. With this evolving role comes an increasing need to understand and address the ways in which student trauma affects our education professionals.

Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) can affect teachers' happiness, health, and professional practice. But Betsy McAlister Groves, a clinical social worker and former faculty member at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, says that she has often been surprised by the number of teachers, school counselors, and administrators who recognized the cumulative stressors that they faced in their schools but did not realize that their symptoms were a common reaction to working with traumatized children — and that these symptoms had a name.

Read more [here](#) about how schools can acknowledge STS and to learn of resources for educators and schools in managing the weight of trauma.

Talking to Children about Tragedies & Other News Events

After any disaster, parents and other adults struggle with what they should say and share with children and what not to say or share with them. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) encourages parents, teachers, child care providers, and others who work closely with children to filter information about the crisis and present it in a way that their child can accommodate, adjust to, and cope with. Go [here](#) to access tips on providing appropriate information to different age groups of children, including those with special needs.

Common Sense Education's Digital Citizenship

Check out these lessons that take on real challenges and digital dilemmas that students face today, giving them the skills they need to succeed as digital learners, leaders, and citizens tomorrow. These digital citizenship lessons were designed and developed in partnership with Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and Common Sense. Access the free lessons for grade levels K-12 [here](#).

Red Ribbon Week Planning Guide

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is currently planning its activities for this year's Red Ribbon Week, which is a cornerstone of DEA's community outreach and prevention support efforts. Red Ribbon Week, which is observed annually on October 23-31, highlights the importance of preventing drug abuse in our nation's schools and communities and committing to living a healthy, drug-free lifestyle. This year, while October 23-31 will still be highlighted as Red Ribbon Week, DEA's acting Administrator, Uttam Dhillon, has asked that Red Ribbon be commemorated throughout the month of October. The Red Ribbon Planning Guide has great information about this year's campaign message, ideas for celebrating Red Ribbon in your community, media templates and more. Download the 2019 Red Ribbon Planning Guide [here](#).

Tips for Teens

SAMHSA's "Tips for Teens", specifically designed for teens, addresses the risks, statistics, and myths about various substances that teens may use. The series includes new fact sheets on opioids and e-cigarettes. Go [here](#) to download the tip sheets.

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) and Addiction Policy Forum (APF) Launch "What is Prevention?" Video Series

CADCA is proud to partner with Addiction Policy Forum to provide a valuable resource for our coalitions: the "What is Prevention" video series explains the nuts & bolts of evidence-based prevention and seeks to empower everyone to play a role- at home, at school, and throughout our communities. You can view the entire video series [here](#).

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Online Suicide Prevention Summit

The Mental Health Academy ([MHA](#)) and its partners are hosting a free online Suicide Prevention Summit from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on September 14 and 15. Go [here](#) for more information and registration details.

ACEs Training for Mental Health Professionals

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has launched an [online training](#) for mental health professionals on preventing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) Launches Updated Data Course

SPRC is pleased to release an updated and redesigned version of our popular online course, [Locating and Understanding Data for Suicide Prevention](#). This free, self-paced course offers step-by-step guidance to help you find and interpret suicide-related data in order to target your prevention efforts effectively. The course explores a variety of commonly used data sources for information on suicide deaths and attempts, suicidal ideation, and related factors--as well as new frontiers in suicide surveillance, such as interactive dashboards and real-time data collection. It also explains key concepts that will help you better understand the data you find. This course is highly recommended for anyone involved in national, state, or community suicide prevention.

Racial Disparity, Implicit Bias Workshop

The Diversity Task Force in partnership with the Pennsylvania Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN) Prime Contract Presents: Racial Disparity, Implicit Bias. This workshop presentation will invite courageous dialogue on highly sensitive issues playing out in American society today, will discuss the racial disparities present in both the populations of children in care and the professionals who work with them.

The presenters will give an overview of the historical and structural causes of racial discrimination to help participants contextualize the root causes of these disparities. This discussion will encourage participants to recognize and develop a deeper understanding of their role as professionals to work as effectively as possible with families and children of color. Training is provided across Pennsylvania in September. Go [here](#) for more information on dates, locations, and to register.

Cultural and Linguistic Webinar Series

The Pennsylvania Care Partnership held a Cultural and Linguistic Webinar Series for 2019 focusing on the following topics.

- Understanding Social Media Bullying, Bias and Microaggressions
- Culturally Responsive Systems of Care Often Engage The Family First
- Addressing Unconscious Bias to Create an Inclusive System of Care Webinar

Webinars are recorded and PowerPoint slides are available [here](#)

2019 Safe Schools Conference

Keeping Our Children Safe: Strategies for Schools and Communities

October 2-3, 2019

Hilton Harrisburg

One North Second Street

Harrisburg, PA 17101-1601

For more information and to register click [here](#).

SAVE THE DATE

2020 PASAP Conference

February 23-25, 2020
Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel
215 Innovation Blvd.
State College, PA 16803

2020 STAR-Center Conference

Friday, May 15, 2020
Pittsburgh, PA

NEWS

Suicide Rates Are Rising Among Young Girls, Study Finds

For years, more boys than girls have taken their own lives — but that divide is narrowing. And it's not because fewer boys are dying by suicide. It's because the number of girls doing so is rising, according to research recently by Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. Suicide is still a leading cause of death among teenagers, but the researchers found a disproportionate increase in the number of suicides by younger girls from the ages of 10 to 14.

"We can't think it's just a male problem," said study author Donna Ruch, a researcher at Nationwide Children's Center for Suicide Prevention and Research. Ruch and her colleagues analyzed national data on suicides from 1975 to 2016 among children and teens 10 to 19. Suicide rates fell during the 1990s, but started to climb in 2007, according to the study published in May in *JAMA Network Open*. Rates increased among both boys and girls, but more so for girls. Read more [here](#).

Surgeon General Releases Advisory on Marijuana's Damaging Effects on the Developing Brain

Surgeon General Vice Adm. Jerome M. Adams, recently issued an advisory emphasizing the importance of protecting youth and pregnant women from the health risks of marijuana use.

Marijuana, or cannabis, is the most commonly used illicit drug in the United States. Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), a component of marijuana, binds to receptors in the brain, producing euphoria and a variety of potentially harmful effects, including intoxication and memory and motor impairments. Newer strains of marijuana have also shown to be increasingly more potent, leading to other risks like anxiety, agitation, paranoia and psychosis.

"There is a false perception that marijuana is not as harmful as other drugs. I want to be very clear – no amount of marijuana use during pregnancy or adolescence is known to be safe," said Surgeon General Adams. Read the U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory: [Marijuana Use and the Developing Brain](#).

Student Reports of Bullying: Results from the 2017 School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey

These Web Tables use data from the 2017 School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) to show the relationship between bullying victimization and other variables of interest such as the reported presence of gangs, guns, drugs, alcohol, and hate-related graffiti at school; select security measures; student criminal victimization; and personal fear, avoidance behaviors, fighting, and weapon-carrying at school. Download the report [here](#).