

# SAP CONNECTION

January 2022



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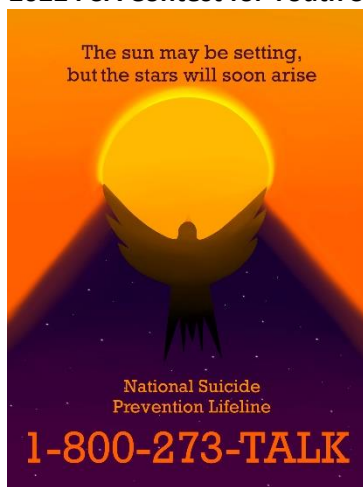
[www.pnsas.org](http://www.pnsas.org)



A **New Year's resolution** for your SAP team is to throughout the year, periodically log onto the SAP website at [www.PNSAS.org](http://www.PNSAS.org) and see what's new. Under the team tab you can find, sample documents to use and ideas for team maintenance.

## PNSAS INTERAGENCY UPDATE

### 2022 PSA Contest for Youth Suicide Prevention



Prevent Suicide PA is pleased to share information about the voting process for this year's entries to the high school PSA contest. Participating in the voting process is a great opportunity to engage staff and students in a dialogue around suicide prevention, the importance of positive messaging and youth voice, and encouraging help-seeking. The 2022 PSA contest page can be accessed at <https://psa.preventsuicidepa.org/>.

There are two mechanisms for voting.

#### **School vote**

School voting is open from January 26 – Feb 25. We would love for your school to have a voice and raise awareness, as well as display the work that was created by the students throughout Pennsylvania. More information can be found on the PSA website (link above)

#### **Public Vote**

The public voting is open from Wednesday, February 2 – Feb 25. This voting is open to anyone and can be shared widely. Contest winners will be announced in early March, and

winners will be honored in the spring. All the PSAs on the website are available for public use to support awareness efforts in schools and communities. The winners and honorable mentions from past years of the contest can be viewed

at <https://psa.preventsuicidepa.org/previous-contests>.



- Use a reward system for attendance (make sure it is something they want to earn (So you may need to survey students before implementing this idea).
- Due to COVID does your attendance policy/procedures need to be updated?
- Consider options of loaning desks and laptops for use at home.
- Increase access for all student to have internet for days they must work remotely while quarantined or that the school is working remotely.
- Could you offer the student's favorite breakfasts and lunches on Mondays?
- Consider a gentle start to Mondays with mentor meetings or mindfulness exercises.
- Ask the kids what would bring them in on Mondays.
- Positive relationships between staff, students, and families.
- Your school should develop a chronic absenteeism prevention/improvement plan based on the data.
- How many students are chronically absent and why?
- Are there patterns? Are there only a few students in one grade? Is it systemic problem for a large percentage of students and for all grades?
- Are there other patterns like Mondays having lower levels of attendance?

Is SAP appropriate to address chronic absenteeism? It depends...

You should not refer every student who displays chronic absenteeism to SAP, especially if the chronic absenteeism numbers are high in your building. If chronic absenteeism is pervasive in your school, you should not just use SAP and other Tier II and Tier III interventions (those are only for targeted students) without first implementing prevention interventions. So maybe SAP is a viable option.

Remember:

- There are always students who do not respond to Tier I interventions.
- SAP is a viable targeted intervention (Tier II intervention) process for youth who have issues that pose a barrier to learning including, truancy, mental health, drug and alcohol, grief issues, and others.
- Make sure you have time for your SAP team to meet to address the needs.
- SAP is required K-12 in PA: Act 211 of 1990, Act 55 of 2019, and Chapter 12.
- During the pandemic we are seeing increased needs for mental health and concerns related to drug and alcohol usage.
- If your school needs to switch to working remotely, make sure you develop a plan to do so virtually before it happens.
- Gathering further data through SAP on students who are chronically absent can assist schools in changing behavior and improving attendance.

Possible SAP Strategies for Students Who Are Chronically Absent

- Collaborate SAP interventions and School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC).
- Goal setting with student and parent/guardians with regular check ins/progress monitoring.
- In person or virtual screening/assessment through SAP liaisons. Ask your liaison agency what the options are.
- Connections to food banks, housing, and other community services.
- Send school staff to do in-person well-checks.
- Many youth who are chronically absent do not feel connected to school or the people in it. Positive relationships between staff and students increases the likelihood students will attend school. Remember, be creative!

- What supports do you have in place to touch bases with youth (Such as, “Check and Connect” or “Check-in-Check-out”, or mentoring)? Can someone check and see how they are doing and help them prepare for the day and feel supported?
- Do you offer educational support groups to provide pro-social supports, peer support and connectiveness?
- Do you offer “lunch buddies” and other supports during stressful times that contribute to absenteeism?
- Offer office or other “jobs” in the school with a mentor.
- Do you have a tutoring program?
- Does your school have study halls where they can access tutoring or is it after school?
- If afterschool, is there adequate bussing/transportation? Are their on-line tutoring options?

Web resources:

[Compulsory School Age and Pennsylvania’s Truancy Law Fact Sheet](#)

[Attendance Works](#)

[Pennsylvania School Attendance Improvement and Truancy Reduction Toolkit](#)

**RESOURCES and NEWS**

**Talk. They Hear You.” Campaign**

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recently launched the “Talk. They Hear You.” campaign that aims to reduce underage drinking and substance use among youths under the age of 21. The campaign provides parents and caregivers with information and resources to address alcohol and other drug use with their children early, including a [mobile app](#) designed to show them how to turn everyday situations into opportunities to talk with their children about alcohol and other drugs, and equip them with the necessary skills, confidence, and knowledge to continue these conversations as their kids get older. The app also helps prepare communities to implement and promote the campaign locally and educators to engage student assistance professionals, school leaders, and families in supporting the needs of students who may be struggling with substance use, mental health, or school-related issues.

**SAMHSA’s “Talk. They Hear You.” [Student Assistance Discussion Starter Video.](#)**

Here's a link to mp3 - <https://s3-us-gov-west-1.amazonaws.com/audio-video-96.127.46.6/underage-drinking/partner-resources/discussion-starter-video/by-your-side.mp4>

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: [Student Assistance: A Guide for School](#)**

**[Administrators.](#)** SAMHSA Publication No. PEP19-03-01-001. Rockville, MD, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2019)

**Student Assistance Resources:** <https://www.samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you/partner-resources/materials-school>

**Back to School during Covid-19:** Going back to school during a pandemic can be challenging for families and schools.

SAMHSA offers resources to address mental health and resiliency in school settings. [Read more](#)

**What can schools do to navigate the effects of long term COVID?** Schools have become accustomed to flexing protocols to respond to the rapidly changing pandemic environment but navigating "long COVID" — persistent and recurring post-COVID conditions experienced for four or more weeks after initial infection — remains uncharted territory. [Read More](#)

**Professional Quality of Life Scale:** The [Professional Quality of Life Scale \(ProQOL\)](#) was developed as a measure of both the negative and positive effects of working with those who have experienced traumatic stress. The ProQOL has sub-scales for compassion, satisfaction, burnout, and compassion fatigue.

Participating in a ProQOL assessment can help you become more trauma-informed about your experiences, both positive and negative. You should answer the questions based on the last 30 days so your scores can help determine how you feel about your work and your work environment. You may wish to discuss your results with a supervisor, colleague or health care professional. ProQOL also offers tips to [Care for Yourself in the Face of Difficult Work](#). Source: [Governor's Office of Advocacy and Reform](#)

## **TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

**January 12, 2022 3:30** [Transitioning Back to School During COVID-19 for Anxious Youth](#) Hosted by the Mountain Plains MHTTC, Transitioning Back to School During COVID-19 for Anxious Youth, will provide resources to school professionals on identifying anxiety in youth and provide strategies to address worry in youth around transitioning back to school. They will also provide free resources to help in the identification and treatment of anxiety disorders. An important emphasis will focus on culturally adaptive anxiety and how to best meet youth needs. [Register here](#)

**SAP Trainings:** available both in person and virtually in certain locations throughout the state. These trainings are delivered by PA Approved SAP Training Providers. For a complete listing [click here](#) to access the training calendar.

**The Pennsylvania Care Partnership:** offers trainings and webinars throughout the year. [Click here](#) for this year's events.

**PA Parent and Family Alliance:** upcoming and archived webinars, tip sheets, and resources are located on their [website](#).

**PA Association of Student Assistance Professionals Conference** - The 2022 Virtual PASAP Conference is quickly coming together and there will be a lot to offer along with a few surprises! Conference sessions will remain open from **February 27th - April 10th**. Stay tuned, more information will be available at <http://pasap.org/>