

SAP CONNECTION

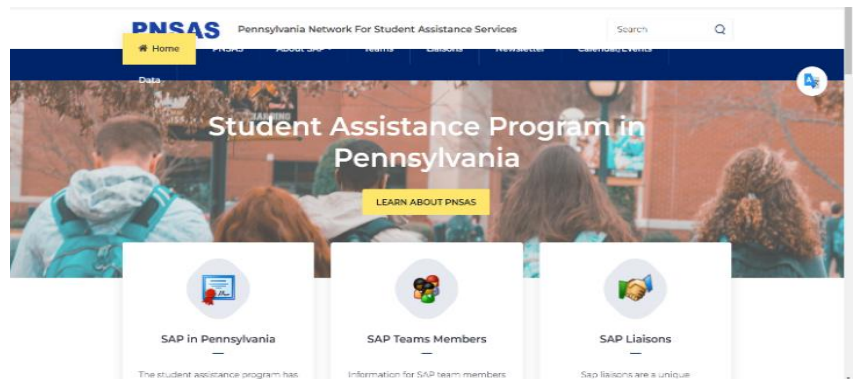
September 2022



Prepared by: PA Network for Student Assistance Services (PNSAS)
www.pnsas.org

PNSAS Website has a new look and continues to be updated.

Check it out at <https://www.pnsas.org>



SAP BACK TO BASICS

Starting the School Year with Suicide Prevention Month

The start of the school year coincides with National Suicide Prevention Month in September, providing a prime opportunity for SAP teams to start off the year with positive messaging and awareness activities that reinforce wellness and connectedness, and to share important resources for suicide prevention. Suicide continues to be a leading cause of death among youth, and results from last year's Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS) showed an increase in the percentage of students that seriously considered suicide within the past year. Suicide prevention in schools should help educate the school community about the warning signs, how to respond to someone who may be thinking about suicide, and crisis resources. However, it is much more than that. It is also about creating a positive learning environment in which staff and students feel safe, valued, and cared for.

What are the ways your school is planning to build awareness of suicide prevention this September?

Below are five overarching strategies for SAP teams to consider, with some ideas for action under each one:

1. Promote wellness:

- Share [wellness and self-care resources](#) with the school community (visit the link and go to p. 6 for some resources).
- Identify student and staff connection points. Try a [Relationship Mapping Strategy](#) to ensure that all students have a positive connection to an adult at school.

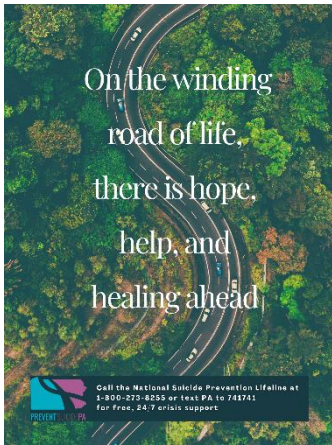
- Help build student resilience by implementing the Jana Marie Foundation’s free [Mind Matters curriculum](#) for students in grades 6-12.
2. **Share resources and information:**
 - Promote your school SAP team as a resource for students, staff, and families. Share how to make a referral.
 - Disseminate crisis resources by updating the district website with new [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) information, hanging [PSA posters](#) around the school, using a [virtual background](#), or posting on social media.
 - Use your local [Pennsylvania Youth Survey \(PAYS\)](#) data to start a community conversation or create an infographic.
 3. **Engage students and families:**
 - Engage students in implementing a youth-led wellness, mental health promotion, or suicide prevention [awareness activity](#) around the school.
 - Look up how to start an [Aavidum Club](#) or download Aavidum’s [free curriculum](#) to educate students on mental wellness and suicide prevention.
 - Share [information](#) with parents and families about [youth suicide warning signs](#) and how to have a [conversation](#) with their child about suicide.
 4. **Provide information and training to staff:**
 - Encourage staff to take a free training on the [Suicide Prevention Online Learning Center](#).
 - Watch an [archived presentation](#) from a past University of Pittsburgh STAR-Center conference, such as [“Preteen Suicide and Suicidal Behavior: Assessment and Prevention.”](#)
 - Review your school’s suicide awareness and prevention policies and protocols with staff and discuss the role of staff within those protocols.
 5. **Connect with community partners:**
 - Partner with media to highlight your school’s efforts during National Suicide Prevention Month. Be sure to share national best practices for [reporting on suicide](#).
 - Connect with your county’s [Suicide Prevention Task Force](#) to find out what trainings or events are happening locally during September.

Suicide prevention efforts are important not only in September but throughout the year, and SAP teams play a huge role in building awareness and sharing resources. For additional information to support your school-based suicide prevention efforts in an ongoing way, visit [PDE’s Act 71 page](#) and [Prevent Suicide PA’s Act 71 page](#).

Thank you for your continued efforts to prevent suicide among Pennsylvania students.

September is National Suicide Prevention Month

The week of September 4th through 10th is recognized as **National Suicide Prevention Week**, with Saturday, September 10th marking **World Suicide Prevention Day**. This year’s theme is “Creating Hope through Action.” The Jana Marie Foundation, Prevent Suicide PA, Aavidum, STAR-Center at the University of Pittsburgh, Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention Grant, and PNSAS created a [resource guide](#) to support community efforts to commemorate this important month. In the guide, you will find ideas for suicide prevention awareness, sample social media posts and virtual backgrounds, helpful language to use when talking about suicide, and a variety of other suicide prevention resources to support awareness efforts.



2023 PSA Contest for Youth Suicide Prevention

Prevent Suicide PA is once again hosting the annual PSA contest for high school students. 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 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 on **Monday, September 19, 2022**, and all submissions are due by **Wednesday, December 14, 2022**. Contest rules and submission guidelines will be updated on the current PSA website soon.

All 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 to use during Suicide Prevention Month and throughout the year.

Suicide Prevention Online Learning Center

Prevent Suicide PA and the Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention Grant are pleased to share new courses and features of the [Suicide Prevention Online Learning Center](#). This free training site is designed to provide research-based and best practice information to anyone who may come into contact with individuals struggling with suicidal thoughts and behaviors, including educators, mental health professionals, medical professionals, and the general community.

Select featured courses include the following:

- Youth Suicide Prevention for Educators (an 8-class course that can fulfill Act 71 requirements for schools)
- Facilitator Guides: The Youth Suicide Prevention for Educators course may now be implemented by a facilitator, using the pre-recorded videos and facilitator guides. To review the guidelines and expectations for facilitators, register as a facilitator, and access the guides and other necessary materials please [visit this page](#).

The Suicide Prevention Online Learning Center can be accessed by visiting <https://pspalearning.com/>.

PNSAS INTERAGENCY UPDATE

“Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Treatment Services in Schools: Considerations for Schools and Providers.” The document is focused on providing guidance to improve communication and collaboration between schools and providers of outpatient treatment (mental health and/or drug and alcohol) delivered in school settings. The document places emphasis on the SAP process and how it can be used to improve these partnerships. The document is available on the [PNSAS website](#).

2022/2023 PDE 4092 SAP Reporting: As the new year starts, please start to collect your data for the end of the year report which will be due June 30, 2023. This can be accessed through the [Safe schools online website](#). If you are experiencing technical difficulties with the login/ password/ or application, contact Jay Wasser from the PDE Help Desk at c-jwasser@pa.gov or (814) 243-3658. If you have questions, contact your PNSAS [regional coordinator](#).

ATLAS (Addiction Treatment Locator, Assessment, and Standards Platform)

A new treatment locator was launched in Pennsylvania called [ATLAS®](#). This free resource includes an assessment to understand the appropriate level of care and a dashboard to search for and compare treatment facilities using criteria such as location, services offered, and insurance accepted to find the best treatment for the individual's unique needs. ATLAS currently includes 67% of licensed treatment facilities in Pennsylvania and is available in

English and Spanish. ATLAS does not take the place of an in-person assessment at a licensed treatment facility and each person seeking treatment through ATLAS will need an individualized plan to address their treatment and non-treatment needs.

PA Youth Survey: Check out the newly updated [PAYS Guide](#) for resources and direction in putting your PAYS data into action.

RESOURCES AND NEWS

Social support and connection are key protective factors against suicide. Positive and supportive social relationships and community connections can help buffer the effects of risk factors in people's lives. Programs and practices that promote social connectedness and support are one element of a [comprehensive approach to suicide prevention](#). **Learn more** about promoting [social connectedness](#).

Updated Rural Suicide Prevention Toolkit: The Rural Health Information Hub ([RHlhub](#)) has recently updated their [Rural Suicide Prevention Toolkit](#). The toolkit contains evidence-based and promising resources for organizations implementing suicide prevention efforts in rural areas across the U.S.

The American Foundation for Suicide prevention is excited to announce a collaboration with [Most Days](#), a daily app that helps people change their behavior to improve their Mental Health and well-being through different routines , as well as support through the app's community network. Most Days is among the apps available today which offer users content that is created by licensed psychologists, practicing physicians and scientists. Having quality guidance and support for the public is of the utmost importance," said Dr. Doreen Marshall, AFSP's vice president of mission engagement. Most Days does not replace professional mental health services, but it does provide access to help and connection to a supportive community. Dr. Marshall, who is a licensed psychologist, drafted [four routines](#) for the app related to suicide prevention: Thoughts of Self-harm or suicide; Healing after surviving a suicide attempt; Supporting others who may have thoughts of self-harm or suicide; and grieving loss of a friend or family member from suicide. [Learn more](#).

On July 7, 2022 Governor Wolf signed [Act 32 of 2022](#) which amends the state Mental Health Procedures Act (MHPA) to align with federal health privacy standards to permit providers, facilities, and health plans to share patient mental health and substance use disorder-related information more easily. The amendments meet existing Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements to ensure patient confidentiality. Act 32 of 2022 utilizes terminology and requirements that are already familiar to providers to create a consistent standard and revise outdated regulations to provide consistency between statutory and regulatory language and their intended requirements. OMHSAS is currently reviewing Act 32 of 2022 and the Chapter 5100 regulations to determine next steps and will provide additional information.

New App to Connect Students and Families Experiencing Homelessness with Resources: The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) today announced the creation of *Finding Your Way in PA*, a Pennsylvania-based [mobile and desktop app](#) developed by the Center for Schools and Communities to help connect students and families experiencing homelessness with local services and resources. While using the app, users can search for and request assistance with services and resources in their current location, local communities, and throughout Pennsylvania to connect them with helpful supports. In this effort, Pennsylvania's network of [eight regional offices](#) ensures that the educational needs of students experiencing homelessness are met. To learn more about Pennsylvania's education for children and youth experiencing homelessness initiatives visit <https://ecyeh.center-school.org/>.

Why a Positive Call Home is Worth the Effort: Best practices for making positive phone calls home a manageable, sustainable routine. For more of the article [click here](#).

WELLNESS CORNER



Stay well with these self-care tips:

- Get regular exercise
- Eat healthy, regular meals and stay hydrated
- Make sleep a priority
- Stay connected and focus on positivity

Emotional wellness is just as important as physical wellness. How you feel can affect your ability to carry out everyday activities, relationships, and your overall mental health. Emotional wellness is the ability to successfully handle life's stresses and adapt to change and difficult times. Some things that can help improve your emotional health include reducing stress, getting quality sleep, practicing mindfulness, and more. [Check out what the National Institutes of Health have to say about emotional wellness.](#)

The whole of our mental health is made up of a sum of little choices we make each day. From increasing your water consumption to filling your home with plants, try these [31 Simple Tips for a Healthier Lifestyle](#).

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES:

SAP Trainings: PA Approved SAP Training Providers deliver these trainings and are available both in person and virtually in certain locations throughout the state. [Click here](#) to access the training calendar.

PA Parent and Family Alliance

Upcoming and archived webinars, tip sheets, and resources are located on their [website](#).

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

Center for Safe school: Stay tuned for The Third Thursday series. If you missed any of last years, these are all recorded on their website and can be [viewed here](#).

Upcoming events include:

September 29, 2022, 2:30-4:00 pm. The Pennsylvania Care Partnership presents: Pandemic Anxiety and Family Stress. Speakers Dr. Mike Usman and Dr. Linda Bisnauth. [Click here to register.](#)

October 6, 2022: Building Restorative Justice Systems in Schools, sponsored by PaTTAN with a focus on AEDY Beginning of the series. October: Creating a Foundation for Teaching and Learning Jan: Harm, Conflict, and Healing **Free webinar**, Register [here](#).

November 1-2, 2022: School Safety Summit [Register here!](#)

November 30 - December 2, 2022: PaPBS Implementers Forum, Hershey, PA. Registration coming soon.

February 26 - 28, 2023: Save the date for the 2023 PASAP Conference: In person at the Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center