



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

May 2025

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Important Information about Youth Suicide Prevention

By Wendy Overturf

Youth suicide is a pressing public health issue that impacts families, schools, and communities across Wisconsin. In recent years, the rate of youth suicide in Wisconsin has seen a concerning rise. According to the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#), suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people aged 10-24 in the state. The statistics reveal that:

- The suicide rate among youth has increased by more than 30% over the past decade.
- Data from the Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YBRS) from 2023 indicated that 18.6% of high school students in Wisconsin who took the survey reported seriously considering suicide in the past year.
- According to the same data, about 8% of high school students who took the survey attempted suicide at least once in the same period.

Several factors contribute to the risk of youth suicide. These include mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety. Other significant risk factors include:

- Substance abuse: Many adolescents who die by suicide have a history of drug or alcohol abuse.
- Family history of suicide: A family history of suicide or mental illness increases the risk for young people.
- Bullying: Both cyberbullying and in-person bullying are significant contributors to suicidal thoughts and behaviors.
- Access to firearms: The availability of firearms in the home is a critical risk factor, as firearms are the most common method of suicide among youth.
- Peer pressure and academic stress: The pressures of fitting in and academic expectations can lead to overwhelming stress and feelings of hopelessness.

Recognizing the signs and symptoms of suicidal thoughts can be crucial in preventing youth suicide. Some common indicators include:

- Expressing feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness
- Withdrawal from friends, family, and activities
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Unexplained physical complaints, such as headaches or stomachaches
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself
- Giving away prized possessions

(The above information was obtained from a compilation of websites including the Mayo Clinic and [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#).)

There are numerous resources available to support youth struggling with suicidal thoughts and behaviors in Wisconsin. Some key resources include:

For immediate medical emergency services: Dial 911

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#)

This three-digit dialing code, 988, provides an easy-to-remember number for accessing mental health crisis support. It offers immediate assistance, connecting individuals with local resources, including crisis intervention, counseling, and support services. The lifeline operates 24/7, ensuring that help is always available when needed. Whether it's a young person in distress or a concerned friend or family member, 988 serves as a critical tool in the fight against suicide, offering hope and support to those in their darkest moments.

[Center for Suicide Awareness](#)

The Center for Suicide Awareness brings help, hope, and resources to families and individuals in our communities via outreach programs that meet people where they are, precisely when they need it. Among its diverse programs and endeavors, the nationwide expansion of HOPELINE™ stands out, offering individuals across the country free emotional support at any moment, from any location, by texting HOPELINE™ to 741741.

[The Trevor Project](#)

Trained counselors understand the challenges LGBTQ+ young people face and are available for support 24/7.

[Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#)

Provides resources and information on mental health services and suicide prevention in the state.

[Youth Suicide Prevention](#)

This web page on the DPI website provides information and resources on youth suicide prevention for school staff, administrators, school boards, parents, and other members of the school community. It also has links to crisis hotlines.

Check the **Online Resource section** of this newsletter for links to several local organizations that offer counseling, support groups, and crisis intervention services for youth and their families.

UPCOMING WI FACETS EVENTS

[IEP 7: Redacción del IEP- Parte 3](#)

Date: May 1, 2025

Presenter: Nathaly Silva, WI FACETS

[Supporting Literacy at Home During the Summer](#)

Date: May 13, 2025

Presenter: Jan Serak, Serak Consulting Services

[DVR Transition Services 101 / División de Rehabilitación Vocacional \(DVR\) 101 Servicios de transición](#)

Date: May 14, 2025

Presenters: Amy May and Sarah Kuehn, DVR

[IEP 8: Redacción del IEP- Parte 4](#)

Date: May 15, 2025

Presenter: Nathaly Silva, WI FACETS

What's After High School?

Date: May 21, 2025

Presenter: Danielle Tolzmann, Family Voices of Wisconsin

Actividades de lectura en el verano

Date: May 22, 2025

Presenter: Alejandra Loeza, WI FACETS

Navigating Transition – Together

Date: May 28, 2025

Presenters: Tim Markle, Waisman Center and Hunter Markle, Young Adult

IEP 9: Revisiones del IEP y Año Escolar Extendido

Date: May 29, 2025

Presenter: Nathaly Silva, WI FACETS

HOME LEARNING



Tips to Support Early Math Learning at Home.

- Play number games during everyday activities, such as counting the number of steps, the number of trucks you see while driving, or counting the number of items going in the laundry.
- Read the calendar and determine the number of days until an upcoming event.
- Young children can count the number of items that you bought at the store. If you buy multiples of 1 item (such as 10 cans of cat food), practice counting by 2's, 3's, or higher numbers.
- Have your child count the change needed to pay for an item.
- Watch your child play to understand her mathematical knowledge. When your child counts, does she touch each object once?
- Have your child distribute cookies or toys to family members, with each person getting an equal number.

3 Questions for Teaching Young Kids About Money (from PBS Kids)

Learning the basics of money in an age-appropriate way is important for kids. By the time a child is 5 years old, the [Consumer Finance Bureau](#) recommends children start learning:

- Why you need money
- How you earn money
- Waiting for things you want
- The difference between needs and wants

[Check out these three questions](#) when teaching kids about money.



Spring Themed Literacy Activities

- Print out this [Spring Bucket List](#), and have kids cross off these fun, literacy-themed activities as they do them this season.
- Kids will love to color and decorate these [spring-themed bookmarks](#) to make reading even more fun!
- Have kids practice reading while completing this fun [Spring Scavenger Hunt](#). They will get some fresh air as well.
- See how many words your child can make from the letters in "butterfly." Complete this [Butterfly Word Activity](#) to find out.



Mothers Day - May 11, 2025

If you are looking for an easy [Mother's Day craft](#) that will be cherished for many years... this is definitely one to add to your list. It is mess free with only glue sticks and paper required. It would make a great keepsake for a mom, grandparent, or any other significant person in your child's life. Also check out [55 Best Mother's Day Crafts You Can Make as a Family](#).

[Poems of Parenting](#), a book of relatable poems that'll have any new or seasoned parent laughing, crying, and feeling ALL the things. It perfectly captures what it's like to be a parent in today's world in hilarious but emotional sentiments!



Memorial Day - May 26, 2025

Memorial Day is the last Monday in May. It is a [federal holiday](#) for honoring those who have served—and passed—as part of the armed forces. Children can honor service members by writing letters to people they know who served in the armed forces (or the family members of the fallen), such as: Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, Cousins or close family friends.

If you don't have anyone in your circle who has served, that is okay, too. Send your children's letters to [A Million Thanks](#). They will send them to active or veteran soldiers on your behalf. This is a great activity to do together with your child.

UPCOMING STATE EVENTS

[Circles of Life Conference](#)

Dates: May 8-9, 2025

Location: Wilderness Resort, Wisconsin Dells, WI

Circles of Life is Wisconsin's annual conference for families who have children with disabilities and for the professionals who support them.

Empowering Preschool Educators & Leaders:

A Deep Dive into Addressing the Behaviors That Challenge Us

Educators and leaders will be empowered to implement strategies to promote skill development and positive behavior outcomes for all learners.

Dates: June 19-20, 2025

Location: Hyatt Regency, Green Bay, WI

29th Annual Wisconsin American Indian Studies Summer Institute

Dates: July 28-August 1, 2025

Location: Unity School District, Balsam Lake, WI

The annual Wisconsin American Indian Studies Summer Institute is an active, highly participatory, week-long workshop designed to increase participants' understanding of issues related to the histories, cultures, and tribal sovereignty of the American Indian nations and tribal communities in Wisconsin.

2025 Endless Possibilities Conference

Bridging Success: Empowering Every Learner!

Date: Tuesday, August 5, 2025

In person – Location: [Waukesha County Technical College, Pewaukee Campus](#)

Registration is open!

We also have limited space for Exhibit Tables: [Exhibit Registration](#)

Teamwork makes the dream work! We've all heard this phrase, but how can we develop teams to make that dream a reality? The Endless Possibilities conference will provide resources and tools to build your knowledge to support all of our students with disabilities to succeed in school as well as in life!

This year we welcome Mike Hipple as our keynote speaker to share his first-hand experience and talk about technology and accommodations for students. We will also hear from young adults with lived experience in special education, delve into dynamic discussions around how to support engaged readers, learn what others are doing to support positive outcomes for students with disabilities to achieve their goals, and much more. Please visit our [conference site](#) for more information.

By working together, educators and families can help students thrive in school and prepare for success after school. Please join us! Spanish Interpretation Available.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The Friendship Circle of Wisconsin

The Friendship Circle of Wisconsin is offering [safeTALK Suicide Prevention Training](#). This is a one-time, four-hour training to prepare anyone over age 13 to become a suicide-alert helper and play an immediate role in saving lives in the community. Check this [registration link](#) to see dates and locations. This information is under "workshops" and has a drop-down menu.

The Friendship Circle is offering the training for free through September 2025 [in honor of Milwaukee Alderman Brostoff](#). He was a close friend and supporter of Friendship Circle who died by suicide this past Fall. When registering, skip entering your credit card and billing information to take advantage of this limited time offering.

NOTE: More training sessions will be available on a rolling basis. They can also bring this training to any group or location that can provide a space for it and a minimum of 10 participants.

Tracking Federal Funding: The Effect on Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction [has launched a new webpage](#) dedicated to providing real-time updates, critical information, and resources related to federal funding for public schools and libraries across the state. The tools available on the webpage include real-time updates on current funding cuts at the federal level and [an interactive map](#) that enables the public to view district-specific data on the impact of federal funding. This map provides detailed breakdowns from the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, showing the total amount of federal funds received, the number of full-time educators supported by U.S. Department of Education funding, and the percentage of federal funding relative to each district's revenue limit.

ONLINE RESOURCES: Youth Suicide Prevention



[Center for Parent Information and Resources \(CPIR\)](#)

The website has links to organizations that can assist in a crisis. It has quick fact sheets, and information about Medicaid benefits for mental health disorders. The website also has links to organizations that support specific disorders.

[Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction \(DPI\)-School Mental Health](#)

This website has a multitude of links to resources related to improving mental health among students.

[Wisconsin School Mental Health Framework: Building and Sustaining a Comprehensive System](#)

In this framework, districts and schools partner with students, families, and the community to build a comprehensive school mental health system (CSMHS). A CSMHS provides a continuum of services and supports to promote student and staff mental health and wellbeing. A CSMHS is not limited to treating mental illness or substance use disorders. Rather, it includes services and supports that promote social and emotional wellbeing, foster positive mental health and school culture, and eliminate systemic barriers to wellbeing and success for all students.

[Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools Center](#)

The Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools Training and Technical Assistance Center builds the capacity of Wisconsin public school districts to implement programs in prevention and intervention of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse, mental health, and school safety. All of these programs are intended to reduce barriers to learning.

[Mental Health America of Wisconsin \(MHA\)](#)

MHA of Wisconsin is dedicated to improving the mental health of all individuals through advocacy, education, and service.

[National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)

NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness.

[NAMI Wisconsin](#)

The mission of NAMI Wisconsin is to improve the quality of life of those affected by mental illness and to promote recovery. The website has many resources related to mental health as well as links to educational programs and support groups.

[Wisconsin Family Ties](#)

Wisconsin Family Ties provides support, education, training, and advocacy regarding children experiencing social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health problems. They have staff who are located regionally throughout the state. Their [Facebook page](#) has many links to articles related to mental health needs.

[Youth Suicide Prevention](#)

This web page on the DPI website provides information and resources for youth suicide prevention to school staff, administrators, school boards, parents, and other members of the school community. It also has links to crisis hotlines.

[Prevent Suicide Wisconsin](#)

Prevent Suicide Wisconsin (PSW) is a statewide public-private partnership whose mission is to reduce the number of people who attempt and/or die by suicide in Wisconsin.

[Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#)

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of

the nation. SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. The website has an abundance of resources related to mental health issues.

[National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health \(NFFCMH\)](#)

NFFCMH is a national family-run organization linking more than 120 state and local affiliates and national partners. It focuses on the issues of children and youth with emotional, behavioral, or mental health needs and substance use challenges and their families. The website has links to many [resources](#) related to mental health.

Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports ([PBIS](#)) is a strategy schools use to teach children expected behavior. Check this [article](#) for more detailed information on PBIS.

[Improve Your Child's Life and Future Using Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports](#)

This online video module is a 12-minute educational resource provided by the Utah Parent Center, designed to teach parents about the benefits and practices of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) for their children. The module specifically explains the PBIS framework, which aims to promote positive behaviors in children by teaching expected actions and providing consistent support. This module is also available in [Spanish](#).

RESEARCH

Secondary Principals' Perceptions and Practices for Implementing Student Suicide Prevention Programs

Porter, D. M., Nadelson, L. S., & Mullins, S. H. (2024). Secondary Principals' Perceptions and Practices for Implementing Student Suicide Prevention Programs. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 13(1), 51-62.

[Read Full Article](#)

The authors explored secondary school principals' knowledge of suicide prevention programs, their perceptions of the logistical and cultural barriers associated with suicide prevention program adoption, and their justification for adopting (or not adopting) suicide prevention programs in their schools. Principals, as positional leaders of schools, can lead the adoption and support of school-based suicide prevention programs for their students. The authors conducted semi-structured interviews of eight secondary school principals working in public schools in the south-central United States. The principals readily identified the importance of supporting students' mental health to enhance their learning as a justification for implementing suicide prevention programs for their students. They shared how limited staffing, time, perception of school responsibility for student mental health, and lack of knowledge of available suicide prevention resources were logistical, cultural, and knowledge barriers to adopting suicide prevention programs for students. The authors believe research has implications for practice.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Newsletter Topics:

June: ADD/ADHD

July: Speech and Language

August: Other Health Impairment

To submit contributions of articles, events, or resources you may use the [Word document](#). Send submissions to [Wendy Overturf](#). If you are unable to access the form, you may send the information in an email.

Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles.

This monthly update is provided by Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement. If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, please email [WI FACETS](mailto:WI.FACETS).

The WI FACETS Family Engagement E-Newsletter can be found online: www.servingongroups.org/newsletter



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