



**OUTAGAMIE COUNTY  
CHILD DEATH REVIEW  
TEAM**

**SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:**

- Affinity Behavioral Health
- Appleton Area School District
- Appleton Health Department
- Appleton Medical Center
- Appleton Police Department
- Child Advocacy Center
- Child Care Resource & Referral
- Fox Valley Metro Police Dept.
- Freedom Police Department
- Grand Chute Police Department
- Harbor House
- Head Start
- Infant Death Center of WI
- Kaukauna Police Department
- Oneida Social Services
- Outagamie County:
  - Citizen Review Panel
  - Coroner Office
  - District Attorney Office
  - Health & Human Services Dept.
  - Probation & Parole Office
  - Register of Deeds
  - Sheriff' Department
- Parent Connection
- ThedaCare Behavioral Health
- ThedaCare Physicians
  
- Ad Hoc Members:
  - Black Creek Police Department
  - Bureau of Early Care Regulation
  - Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin
  - Children's Hospital of Wisconsin
  - Combined Locks Police Department
  - Gold Cross Ambulance
  - Hortonville Police Department
  - Kaukauna Fire Department
  - Lawrence University
  - New London Police Department
  - Oneida Police Department
  - Shiocton Police Department
  - WI Department of Children & Families
  - WI Department of Health Services
  - WI Department of Justice

*Suicide Prevention Recommendation Subcommittee:*

- Affinity Behavioral Health
- Outagamie County Mental Health
- Boys & Girls club of the Fox Valley
- Outagamie County Public Health

***MISSION:** Through a comprehensive and multidisciplinary review of child and domestic abuse related deaths, we will better understand how and why children and victims of domestic violence die and use our findings to take action to prevent other deaths and improve the health and safety of our community.*

**OUTAGAMIE COUNTY CHILD DEATH REVIEW TEAM  
PREVENTION OF CHILD AND ADOLESCENT SUICIDE  
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Youth suicide is a preventable tragedy. Preventing youth suicide is a community responsibility, requiring collective action to identify other children and youth at risk, assure that systems and supports are available throughout the community for children, youth and their families, and to reduce individual and societal risk factors known to contribute to suicide.

Five Outagamie County teen suicides have been reviewed by the Child Death Review Team in the past two years. A number of risk factors have been identified, both nationally and locally, during the course of the reviews. They include:

**Individual factors:** such as depression and/or other mental illness, previous suicide attempt, alcohol and/or substance abuse and the impulsivity characteristic of young people.

**Family and Interpersonal factors:** such as childhood maltreatment, parental separation or divorce, interpersonal conflicts or losses, lack of support, suicide or suicide attempt by a relative or close friend.

**Environmental factors:** such as access to firearms and other lethal means, bullying, and issues of sexuality and gender identification.

**A Call to Action**

The Team has recommended a set of evidence-based strategies that build on existing systems and capacity within our community. **It is hoped that individuals and organizations throughout the county will become a partner in youth suicide prevention by signing on to support or implement one or more of these recommendations:**

1. Increase awareness of existing mental health services.
2. Utilize social media and other technology of young people to promote mental health resources.
3. Support and sustain “Question, Persuade, Refer” (QPR) gatekeeper training as a component of a community-based suicide prevention program.
4. Support and sustain community initiatives, mental health collaborations and coalitions for the purpose of improving access to mental health services for children and youth, improving coordination and collaboration between providers, decreasing stigma and preventing suicide.
5. Decrease youth access to lethal means, specifically firearms, alcohol and pharmaceuticals.
6. Support and sustain community initiatives, collaborations and coalitions for the purpose of increasing recognition, respect and support for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth and their families
7. Create a community where all people are welcome, safe and valued



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PREVENTION OF CHILD AND ADOLESCENT SUICIDE May, 2011

The Outagamie County Child Death Review Team (OCCDRT) has conducted a review of 5 teen suicide deaths in the past two years. The operating principles guiding the review are:

- The death of a child is a community responsibility
- A child's death is a sentinel event that should urge communities to identify other children at risk for illness or injury

The purpose of the review is to understand why the death occurred and to take action to prevent other deaths. During the course of the reviews, the OCCDRT has identified various risk and protective factors for adolescent suicide. The recommendations presented in this report are evidence-based strategies that build on existing systems and capacity within our community.

### **Scope of the Problem:**

Suicide is death from a self-inflicted act; suicide is preventable. Nationally, suicide is the third leading cause of death for adolescents. The risk for suicide is the highest among young white males. Adolescent females are twice as likely to attempt suicide; however, adolescent males of all races are four times more likely to complete suicide than females. Males tend to use more lethal means when attempting suicide. **Gay or lesbian youth are more than twice as likely to attempt suicide as their heterosexual peers.**

In Wisconsin between 2001 and 2006, there were 608 suicides in children and youth ages 5-24; of these, 45 suicides occurred in children ages 5-14 (0.7 per 100,000) and 498 suicides occurred in youth ages 15-24 (11.6 per 100,000). In addition, the greatest number of hospitalizations and emergency department visits for self-inflicted injuries in Wisconsin occurred in individuals aged 15-24.

In Outagamie County between 2001 and 2006, 1 suicide occurred in a child between the ages of 5-14 and there were 12 suicide deaths in individuals between the ages of 15-24. Since 2008, 5 suicide deaths have been reviewed in teens ages 15 to 17.

Data from the 2009/2010 High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey for Outagamie County schools indicate that 13.8% of students seriously considered suicide during the past 12 months. 11.8% made a plan about how they would attempt suicide, 12.5% actually attempted suicide at least one time, and 3.7% of those students sustained injuries that required medical care.



## Protective and Risk Factors:

**Suicide is an outcome of complex interactions among biological, genetic, psychological, social, cultural, and environmental factors. Multiple protective and risk factors interact in suicide prevention.**

The *protective factors* in preventing suicide include:

- ◆ Strong connections to family and community support
- ◆ Support through ongoing medical and mental health care relationships
- ◆ Learned skills in problem solving, conflict resolution, and nonviolent handling of disputes
- ◆ Effective clinical care for mental, physical, and substance use disorders
- ◆ Easy access to a variety of clinical interventions and support for help-seeking
- ◆ Restricted access to highly lethal methods of suicide
- ◆ Cultural and religious beliefs that discourage suicide and support self-preservation
- ◆ Safe, supportive and welcoming community environments

The *risk factors* that have been identified, both nationally and locally, include:

- Depression, mood disorder and/ or other mental illness
- Previous suicide attempt
- Alcohol abuse and or substance abuse
- Childhood maltreatment
- Parental separation or divorce
- Access to firearms and other lethal means
- Interpersonal conflicts or losses without social support
- Suicide or suicide attempt by a relative or close friend
- Bullying
- Issues of sexuality
- Impulsivity of young people

## Evidence-Based Prevention Strategies:

Effective prevention strategies include:

- Assessment and Referral Training
- Gatekeeper Training
- Increasing awareness and education about suicide
- Skills Training
- Crisis Intervention and Postvention
- Crisis hotlines and 211 referral network
- Restricting lethal means
- Media guidelines for reporting
- Access to mental health treatment
- Cultural tailoring of prevention messages
- Integration of services
- Broad based community coalition action



## Existing Local Resources:

The OCCDRT invited community agencies and advocacy groups to attend the May, 2010 team meeting to explore suicide prevention strategies and discuss existing programs, community resources, as well as identify gaps. These additional agencies included:

City of Appleton, Diversity Office  
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley, Center for Grieving Children & Runaway Program  
Community for Hope of the Fox Cities  
Community for Hope of Oshkosh  
Harmony Café, GLBT Services  
Kaukauna Police Dept  
Kaukauna High School  
NAMI Fox Valley  
Outagamie County PreAction Network  
Outagamie County-Youth & Family Services  
United Way 2-1-1  
United Way Fox Cities

The current local activities, the gaps identified, and a review of best practices served as the basis for the following recommendations:

### **Recommendation 1: Increase awareness of existing mental health services among:**

- (a) Professionals serving children and youth, and
- (b) Children, youth and the community

**Strategy 1:** Develop magnets promoting “211” and Outagamie County Crisis hotline for distribution to physician offices, schools, and community agencies by 6/30/11.

**Strategy 2:** Develop posters with tear off cards promoting “211” and Outagamie County Crisis hotline and make them accessible to children, youth, and the community by 6/30/11

**Strategy 3:** Conduct Street Outreach to connect with youth

**Strategy 4:** Increase awareness of the United Way Mental Health Continuum of Care  
<http://www.unitedwayfoxcities.org/unitedway/mental+health+continuum/default.asp>

### **Organizations to take action:**

- The OCCDRT will fund printing for magnets and posters
- The OCCDRT will develop a distribution list to enable follow-up with agencies, and to evaluate effectiveness of strategy.
  
- Health care systems will disseminate magnets to primary care providers and supply posters to public areas
- Schools will disseminate magnets to school personnel and posters to common areas



- The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley will distribute runaway crisis hotline posters, and “Street Smart Resource Guides” throughout the community. Street and school-based outreach as well as classroom and community presentations will reach 7,000 youth annually
- Community agencies will distribute magnets to staff and posters to public areas
- Health care entities, schools, community agencies and businesses will provide a link to the Mental Health Continuum of Care on their websites

**Recommendation 2: Utilize social media and other technology of young people to promote mental health resources**

**Strategy 1:** Outagamie County Mental Health Crisis will promote the crisis hotline number via social media sites

**Strategy 2:** Promote on-line access to resources and services targeting youth

**Strategy 3:** Increase knowledge among youth serving organizations about internet resources for suicide prevention

**Organizations to take action:**

- Outagamie County Department of HHS will revise policies regarding use of social media sites in order to promote crisis hotline services to youth by December, 2011
- The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley and at least two other youth-serving organizations will promote the Outagamie County Crisis Hotline and resource guides for youth on their social media sites, and/or website by December, 2011
- The OCCDRT will develop an internet resource list as an appendix to these recommendations

**Recommendation 3: Support and sustain a first responder /referral process training as a component of a community-based suicide prevention program.**

**Strategy:** Train approximately 700 professionals and community members in the “Question, Persuade, Refer” (QPR) method of suicide prevention first responder/referral process by October, 2011

**Organizations to take action:**

- Lawrence University will host QPR “train the trainer” courses for school districts, non-profit agencies, and health and community services agencies - COMPLETED 9/2010.
- With support from their agencies/organizations each QPR trainer will then train 50 individuals within 1 year
- NAMI will coordinate the distribution of manuals supplied by the OCCDRT



- Schools, healthcare organizations, youth-serving organizations and businesses are encouraged to support QPR training for their employees

**Timeline:**

700 individuals will complete QPR training by 10/31/11

**Recommendation 4: Support and sustain community initiatives, mental health collaborations and coalitions for the purpose of:**

- (a) Improving access to mental health services, especially for children and youth
- (b) Improving coordination and collaboration between providers
- (c) Decreasing stigma
- (d) Preventing suicide

**Strategy 1:** Support and sustain the development of an Outagamie County chapter of “Community for Hope” suicide prevention coalition

**Strategy 2:** Support and sustain the Mental Health Summit planning initiative

**Strategy 3:** Support and expand the United Way school-based mental health initiative

**Strategy 4:** Support and sustain youth-focused programming and initiatives

**Organizations to take action:**

- The OCCDRT will disseminate information to community mental health organizations regarding the prevalence and trends regarding child and youth suicide in Outagamie County and prevention recommendations by June 2011
- Health care organizations, community agencies, schools and the business community are encouraged to support and assist local community mental health efforts
- The Tri-County Mental Health Network will promote networking among mental health and youth-serving organizations during bi-monthly meetings and newsletter distribution
- Outagamie County Department of Health & Human Services and Community for Hope will submit a grant proposal to Prevent Suicide Wisconsin for coalition development by July 2011
- Mental Health Summit organizers and attendees will continue efforts to improve access and navigation of the mental health system
- Colleges, universities, local government agencies, health systems and non-profit agencies will continue to host events open to the public about suicide prevention and mental health issues



**Recommendation 5: Decrease youth access to lethal means.**

**Strategy 1:** Decrease youth access to alcohol

**Strategy 2:** Decrease youth access to firearms

**Strategy 3:** Decrease youth access to pharmaceuticals

**Organizations to take action:**

- *Community Action for Healthy Living, a Drug-Free Communities grantee*, will coordinate programs to change the social norm regarding alcohol use in Outagamie County, Promote programs which increase adult and teen awareness of the risks of underage drinking, including "Parents Who Host Lose the Most", and work with local law enforcement agencies to support social host ordinances
- Kimberly High School and Appleton Area School District are addressing social norming
- Healthcare facilities, Public Health, Human Services and community agencies will promote pharmaceutical drop-off sites and events

**Recommendation 6: Support and sustain community initiatives, collaborations and coalitions for the purpose of increasing recognition, respect and support for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, (GLBT) youth and their families.**

**Strategy 1:** Increase safety of GLBT youth

**Strategy 2:** Decrease feelings of isolation of GLBT youth

**Strategy 3:** Create safe spaces for GLBT youth

**Organizations to take action:**

- All youth-serving agencies, schools, Harmony Café, Appleton's Diversity Coordinator
- All youth-serving agencies to receive GLBT Youth Crisis Training
- Youth-serving agencies begin "Safe Space" projects in their schools similar to those on college campuses for GLBT students
- Appleton Diversity Coordinator and community partners will implement Fox Valley GLBT Anti-Violence Project if grant application successfully funded



**Recommendation 7: Change the community norm to create a community where all people are welcome, safe and valued**

**Strategy 1:** Create the expectation that all mental health professionals and community service providers receive training in cultural competency and diversity

**Strategy 2:** Increase community awareness through education, media coverage and promotion of public events that bring people of different backgrounds together

**Organizations to take action:**

- The City of Appleton Diversity Coordinator develops community events that are free and open to the public
- The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley require core cultural competence and GLBT awareness trainings for all employees
- The Fos Cities Rotary Multi-Cultural Center facilitates efforts to educate, promote and celebrate diversity and inclusion
- Universities, colleges and non-profit agencies sponsor community events to promote awareness and inclusiveness
- The LIFE study documents attitudes and perceptions about diversity, community support and inclusiveness

Progress towards these recommendations will be evaluated on a regular basis. The recommendations will be updated to reflect new partners, initiatives, and completion of stated objectives.





## APPENDIX A: INTERNET SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOURCES

Prevent Suicide Wisconsin

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

Mental Health America of Wisconsin

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

Suicide Prevention Resource Center

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

SAMHSA: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

Well Aware – Social Marketing Initiatives to advance prevention of suicide

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



**PARTNER IN PREVENTING YOUTH SUICIDE**

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Our organization will take action on the following recommendation(s):  
Please use additional pages if necessary.

Recommendation # \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation # \_\_\_\_\_

Our organization will participate in the following ways:

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***Thank you for your efforts to prevent teen suicide!***

Please return this form to: Melody Bockenfeld  
[bockenma@co.outagamie.wi.us](mailto:bockenma@co.outagamie.wi.us)  
Fax 920-832-4924