

# Suicide Prevention in Schools

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- Laws
- Scope/Statistics
- Gatekeeper Training
- Classroom Curriculum
- Resources

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# WI Suicide Prevention Laws

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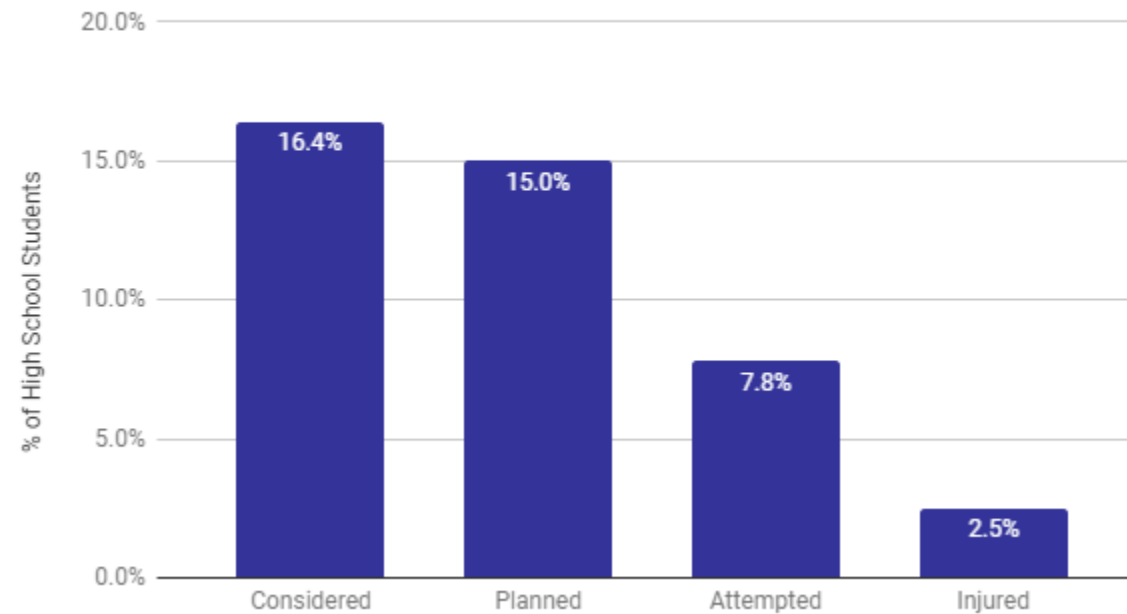
## Suicide Prevention Requirements in Wisconsin Law:

- Educate students
  - 118.01 (Educational Goals): ... schools must address suicide prevention with students. Specifically: conditions that cause and signs of suicidal thinking, the relationship between suicide and the use of alcohol and other drugs, and services available in local communities.
- Health curriculum
  - PI-8.01(2)(j)1: ... requires suicide prevention instruction take place in the health curriculum. DPI encourages classroom collaboration between health educators and pupil services on this topic.
- DPI requirements
  - 115.365 (Assistance to schools for suicide prevention): ... gives direction to DPI—we must train school staff to intervene in youth suicide. It also establishes a clear role for schools in screening for suicidal thinking (detection of signs...), crisis response (proper action...), and referrals to outside agencies and even law enforcement if the student is in crisis. Finally, it requires DPI to make a model annual notice for schools to inform staff about youth suicide prevention resources and directs districts to use DPI's model or make their own annual notice.

# Scope of the Issue

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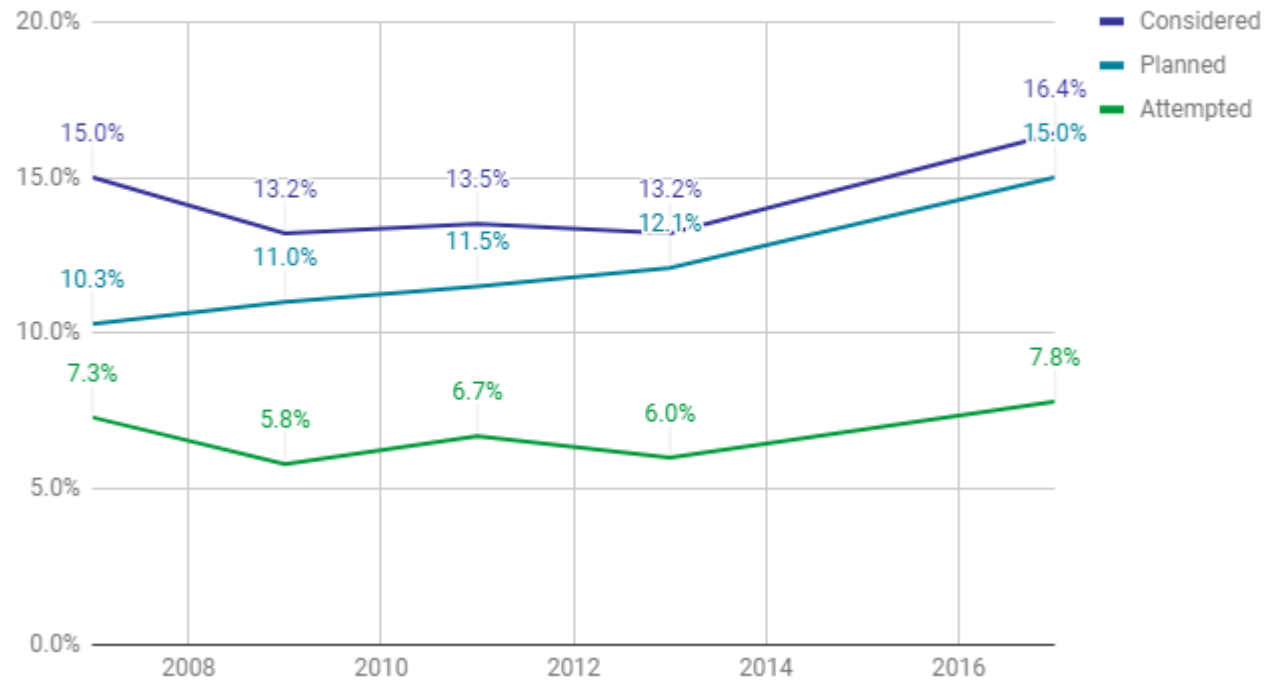
Suicide-Related Questions from 2017 YRBS



# Ten Year Trends

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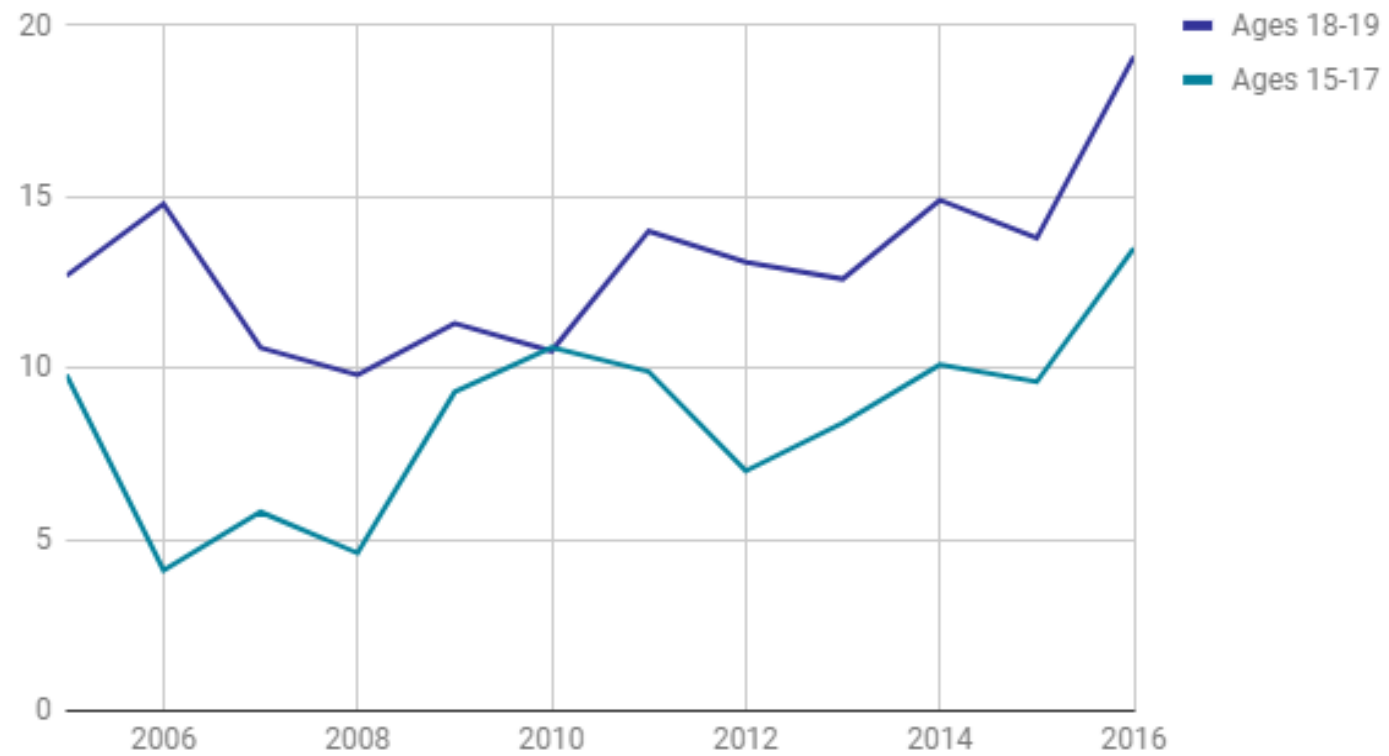
YRBS Trends in Suicidality, 2007-2017



# Increase in Death Rate

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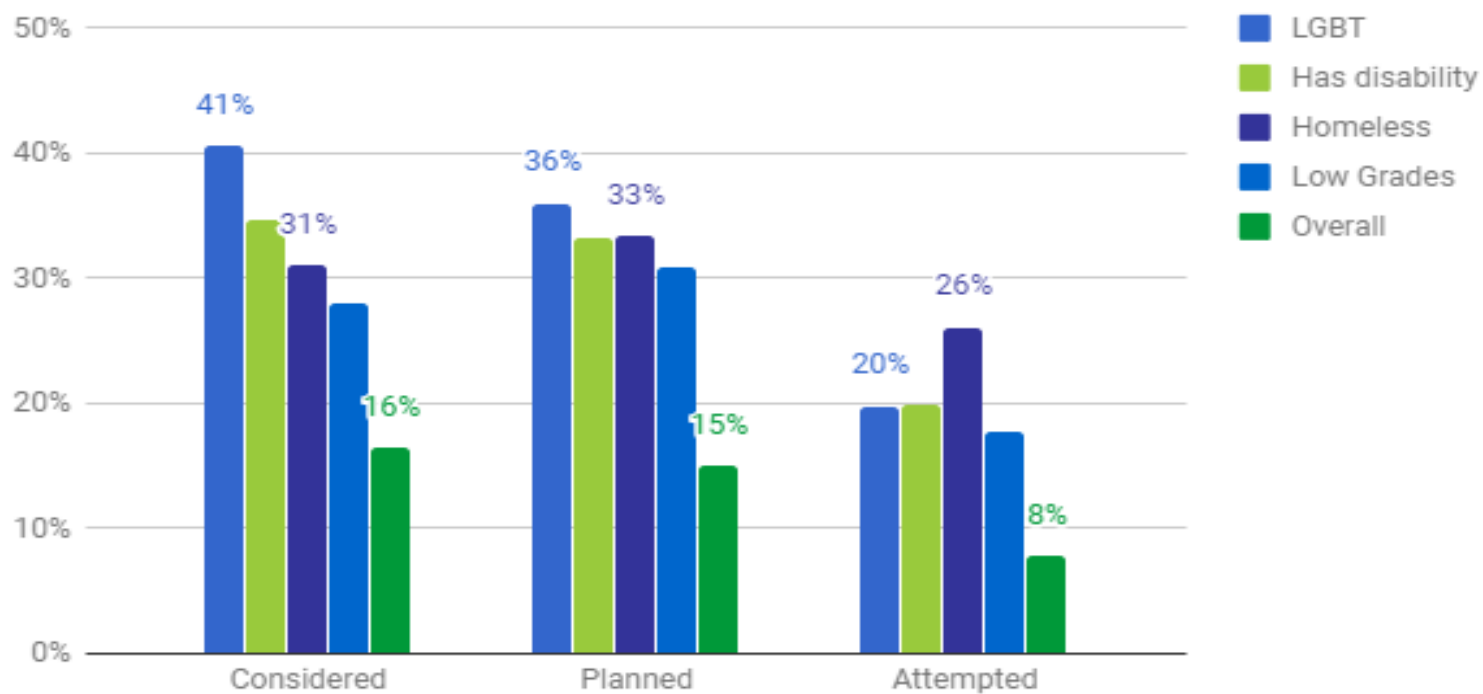
Wisconsin Suicide Death Rates, 2005-2016 (per 100,000)



# High Risk Groups

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Suicide Questions For Selected High Risk Groups



# Gatekeeper Training for Adults

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## Systematic training for all adults who interact daily with students

- Basic statistics about youth suicide
- Warning signs of suicide: **FACTs**
- How to respond: **ACT**
- *NEW* interactive gatekeeper training module:  
[https://media.dpi.wi.gov/sspw/av/suicide-prevention/story\\_html5.html](https://media.dpi.wi.gov/sspw/av/suicide-prevention/story_html5.html)

# Gatekeeper Training for Youth

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**Can be done with a small group or as a classroom refresher.**

Same topics:

- Warning signs of suicide: **FACTs**
- How to respond: **ACT**
- Provide a school-based system to support & supervise peer gatekeepers

**- This does not take the place of curriculum!**



# Peer to Peer Support/Gatekeeper Options: Hope Squad and Sources of Strength

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- **Hope Squad:**

- Is a school-based peer support program that empowers selected students to take action to improve the school environment.
- Elementary, middle and HS components.
- Is based on research which indicates that most youth who are suicidal talk with peers about their concerns rather than with adults, yet as few as 25 percent of peer confidants tell an adult.
- Partners with QPR.
- Year two training teaches resiliency skills. ~\$5,000 cost.

- **Sources of Strength:**

- Middle and High School universal prevention and peer gatekeeper training.
- Relationship based (students-caring adults) with an emphasis on changing norms.
- \$5,000 cost

# Gatekeeper Training Efficacy

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- Empowers people to help
- Can end fear of asking—paralysis
- ↑ capacity to identify, support, & refer at-risk & high-risk youth
- 1 year after training, 1 in 7 staff had asked about a student's suicidal intent

# Classroom Instruction

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- As was mentioned--required by state law  
<http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/mental-health/youth-suicide-prevention/laws>
- Instruction, discussions, &/or skills training can effectively reduce suicide attempts
- Partner health educator & pupil service professional for most effective delivery! (deliver content, monitor process)
- Coordinate with other education efforts (i.e. SEL, PBIS)

# Context for Classroom Instruction

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- ONLY raising suicide awareness can raise risk, especially among high-risk kids. Instruction must also develop SKILLS around how to get help.
- DO NOT have assemblies or guest speakers as a one-time, stand-alone event. Need processing time.
- Student Programs and Curriculum covered at: <http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/mental-health/youth-suicide-prevention/student-programs>

# DPI's Revised Curriculum: A Closer Look

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## Unit Lessons:

1. What is Your Depression/Suicide IQ? (2 parts)
2. Tech Messages: Scripts, Tweets, and Pings Related to Suicide Warning Signs
3. SOS – It's Time to ACT (video)
4. Mirror, Mirror
5. Lights! Camera! Action! and The Crisis Card (2 parts)

# Another Classroom Curriculum: SOS

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- SOS (Signs of Suicide) is the source of ACT
  - DPI Curriculum uses SOS video as a lesson!
- Strong evidence base
- Adult delivered youth gatekeeper
- Materials for students, parents & staff
- Screening forms for parents and student
- Enough materials for 300 students, \$495
- Each CESA has at least one MS & one HS kit

[www.mentalhealthscreening.org/programs/youth-prevention-programs/sos/](http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org/programs/youth-prevention-programs/sos/)

# Instruction for Elementary

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- PBIS to teach social skills & problem-solving & improve climate <http://www.wisconsinpbisnetwork.org/>
- DPI's Bullying Prevention Curriculum <https://pubsales.dpi.wi.gov/product-category/bullying/>

# Instruction for Elementary

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- Collaborative for Academic, Social & Emotional Learning (CASEL) for related curriculum  
<http://casel.org/>
  - DPI Social/Emotional Competencies can be embedded into existing curricula across subjects
- One study showed kids who were taught “The Good Behavior Game” in 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grades had HALF the rates of suicidal ideation & attempts (n=178) at ages 19-21!



# Other Curriculum: Skill-building

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## Curricula that build skills w/at-risk youth:

- Reduce suicide risk factors and build protective factors!
- Pupil Services & others are using:
  - *Violence Prevention: Think First*
  - *Problem-Solving: Think Good/Feel Good*
  - *Coping: Taking Action—Depressed Youth*
  - *Conflict Resolution: Stop & Think*
- See skill-building for at-risk students:  
<http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/mental-health/youth-suicide-prevention/student-programs>

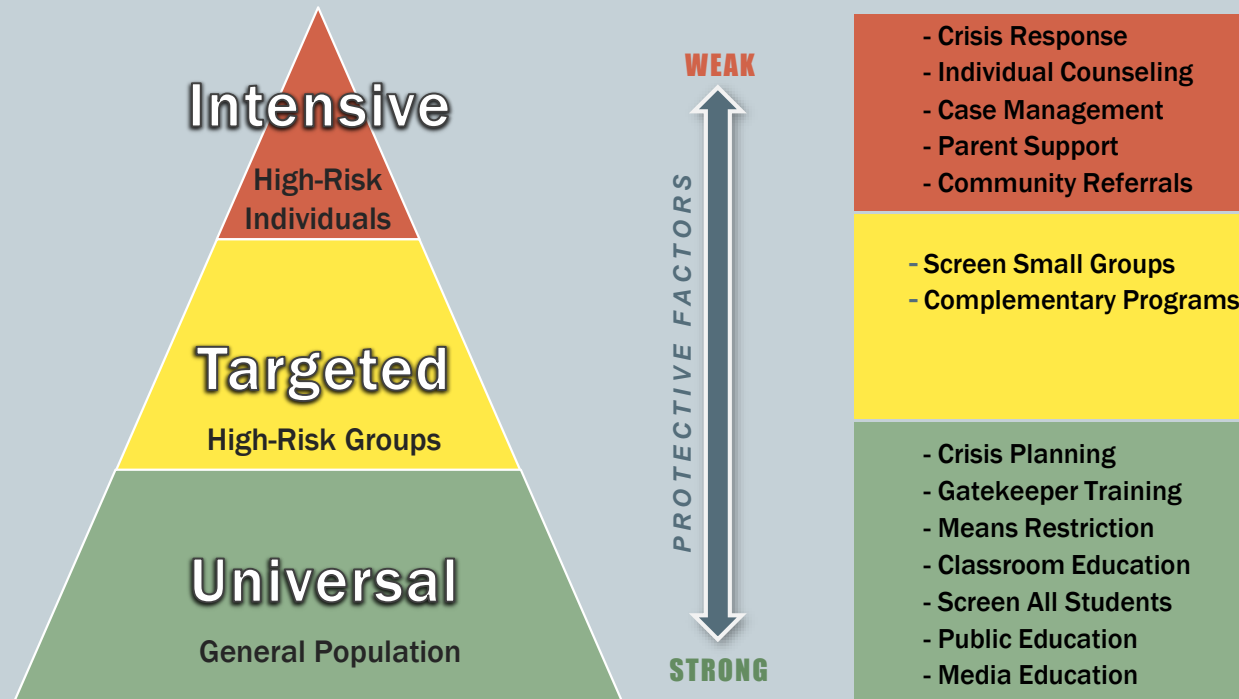
# Other Curriculum: Bullying Prevention

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- Prevent & intervene in bullying
  - Victims
  - Bullies
- Model policy - prevent & intervene in bullying:  
<http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/safe-schools/bullying-prevention>
- DPI Bullying Prevention Curricula  
<https://pubsales.dpi.wi.gov/product-category/bullying/>
- Webcast  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hjc7Osf-RL8&feature=channel>

# School-Based Suicide Prevention: The 3-tiered Framework

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# Trevor Helpline: 866.4.U.TREVOR

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- The Trevor Project is a national organization focused on crisis and suicide prevention efforts among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth.
- The Trevor Project operates an AAS-accredited, nationwide, around-the-clock crisis and suicide prevention helpline for LGBTQ youth. The website also has a one-page fact sheet, a sample suicide prevention policy, and a webinar.

<http://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

# facebook

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- Launched a new suicide prevention tool
- A direct link to an online chat with counselors who can help
- Friends can report suicidal behavior anonymously
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline provides link and online chat.
- LGBTQ youth can also be linked to the Trevor Project.
- Access: Help – Report a Problem



Connected Community

WELLNESS  
SCREEN

# Connected Community Wellness Screen Program

Amy D'Addario, MS, CSW, SAC

Jen Parsons, Wellness Screen Program Director

# Connected Community Wellness Screen Program

- Connected Community Wellness Screen (CCWS) is an emotional health screening program. Its main focus is early identification of and intervention in highly treatable emotional wellness concerns.
  - Roughly 20% of students that are screened are identified with a concern*
- The nationally recognized public domain tool used by CCWS is the Pediatric Symptom Checklist-Youth “Plus” Self-Report. This tool identifies highly treatable emotional wellness concerns that are linked to increased suicide risk and can interfere with academic and daily functioning.
- Free, confidential and voluntary for students and families.
- Case Management assists families in getting connected to community resources, if needed, and follows the student and family through 1 completed appointment, or for up to 90 days.
- Students can take the screening even if they’ve taken before, this provides “check-up” on their mental health.
- Simple, normative and most often provided in the classroom– just like eye checks, hearing checks, etc.

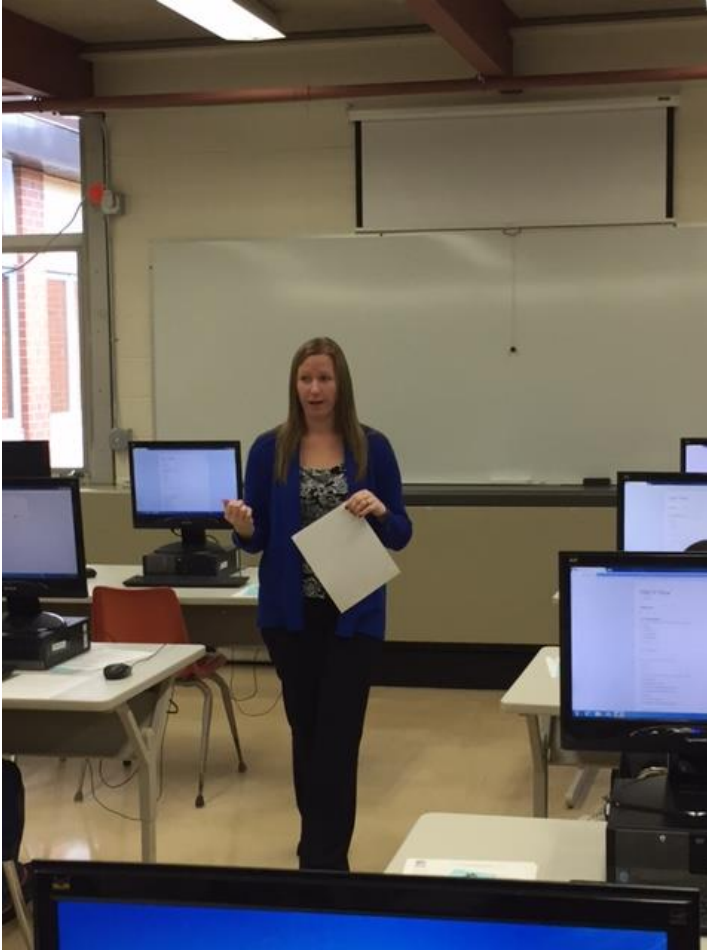
# In the beginning...

- Began as Teen Screen
  - Columbia University
  - National mental health and suicide risk screening initiative for middle- and high school age students
- Teen Screen terminated November 2012
- Advisory Committees (Winnebago & Outagamie Counties)
- Development of current Wellness Screen Program





# Over the Years...



***2012: 23 screens (one semester pilot)***

***2012-13: 232 screens***

***2013-14: 381 screens***

***2014-15: 721 screens***

***2015-16: 1731 screens (4364 offered)***

***2016-17: 2685 screens (5749 offered)***

***In 2017-18 approximately 12,200 screening  
questionnaires will be offered***

Wellness Screen Clinician, *Cassie Lauters*, provides a debriefing interview for a group of students at Oshkosh West High School.

*Fall 2016*

# School Information

- **10 school districts**

- Winneconne
- Omro
- Seymour
- New London
- Kaukauna
- Little Chute
- Neenah
- Oshkosh
- Appleton
- Hortonville



# Why Screen?

Epidemiologic studies report that between 2-25% of all American school-age children and 13% of preschoolers have an emotional and/or behavioral disorder.



(Costello et al., 1988; Brandenburg et al., 1990; Lavigne et al., 1993; Costello et al., 1996)

# How it works...

- Youth Report Process:
  - Parent consents to/opts out of screen
  - Student proceeds through 10 minute questionnaire
  - Follow up interview after positive screen to assess for safety and make recommendations
  - Notify parents and connect to resources that work for the student and family



# How it works...

- Parent Report Process
  - Questionnaire is sent to parent
  - Parent provides consent by completing and returning the questionnaire
  - Follow up interview after positive screen to assess for safety and make recommendation
  - Connect to resources that work for the student and family



# Screening Questionnaire

- Pediatric Symptom Checklist
  - Improve the recognition and treatment of psychosocial problems in children
  - 35-items
  - Parent or Youth Report
  - Available in more than a dozen languages
- “Plus” Version

# Recommendations

- Mental Health Evaluation
- Continued treatment with Mental Health Provider
- School Counselor/ Psychologist
- Medical Professional
- Other resources



**RECOMMENDED**

# Case Management

- Initial Parent Contact
- Information Sharing
- Follow-Up Contact
  - Through initial appointment
  - 90 days
- Other resources





# Mental Health Partnerships

- Catalpa Health
- PATH (Providing Access to Healing)
- Memorandum of Understanding with Mental Health Providers



# Data

- 11,109 screens offered
- 46% participation (5,144)
- 26% positive screening result
- 3% negative screening result, requesting referral
- 91% connection to services



# Student and Parent Quotes

- “It’s very interesting, it feels good just to put this out there and I feel comfortable answering these questions” -**8<sup>th</sup> grade student**
- “As much as my son was willing to participate in this program offered for free, I really appreciate the help you provided to him. Thank you... His grades were back to A's and he also participated in sports activities, as well as responsibilities around the house. Thank you, thank you, and more thank you... Happy mom! :)” -**Parent**
- “The Wellness Screen was the extra push we needed to seek treatment. Thank you!” -**Parent**

# Questions?

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# Thank you!

Find out more at:

<http://samaritan-counseling.com/>

<http://samaritan-counseling.com/wellness-screen/>

