



National Suicide Prevention Month

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, a dedicated time to come together with collective passion and strength around a difficult topic. We can all benefit from honest conversations about mental health conditions and suicide because just one conversation can change a life. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) resource, [It's Okay to Talk About Suicide](#), has more information.

Suicide is a major public health concern. According to the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#), more than 48,000 people die by suicide each year in the United States. Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death overall and the **2nd leading cause for people ages 10-34**. Suicide is complicated and, although tragic, is often preventable.

Kentucky Data

On average, one person died by suicide every 11 hours in the state of Kentucky during 2020. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention resource, [Suicide Facts & Figures: Kentucky 2022](#), has more information.



Kentucky Youth Data

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#), which is completed every two years, shows that in 2021, 19.1% of Kentucky high school students seriously considered attempting suicide, and 9.5% of Kentucky's high school students attempted suicide in the previous 12 months.

The [Kentucky Incentives for Prevention \(KIP\)](#) survey, which is administered biennially, reports data from 2021 that mirrors the CDC's findings. The KIP survey found that in 2021, 11% of Kentucky students felt unsafe while at school. The KIP survey also reports that 6,924 students in Kentucky self-reported to have attempted suicide at least one time within the past year.



988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Since its inception, in July of 2022, [988](#) has received over five million contacts. When people call, text or chat 988, they will be connected to trained counselors that are part of the existing Lifeline network. These trained counselors will listen, understand how their problems are affecting them, provide support and connect them to resources if necessary. In the past year, 988 has expanded to provide specialized

services for Veterans, Spanish speakers and members of the LGBTQI+ community. For more information on how you can help others connect with the services provided by 988, please visit [SAMHSA.gov](https://www.samhsa.gov) (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) to get access to promotional materials and other resources.

Warning Signs of Suicide:

Talking About	Feelings	Behaviors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanting to die • Intense guilt or shame • Being a burden to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empty, hopeless, trapped or having no reason to live • Extremely sad, more anxious, agitated or full of rage • Unbearable emotional or physical pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a plan or researching ways to die • Withdrawing from friends, saying goodbye, giving away important items or making a will • Taking dangerous risks • Displaying extreme mood swings • Eating or sleeping more or less • Using drugs or alcohol more often

Kentucky Specific Resources:

- [Kentucky Department of Education’s Suicide Prevention webpage](#)
- [Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services Provider Directory](#)
- [Kentucky Behavioral Health Crisis Prevention and Intervention Resources](#)

Need to chat?
We are here to listen...
Text KY to 741741
CRISIS TEXT LINE |

Available Training:



The Kentucky Department of Education, in partnership with the Department for Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disabilities, offers Sources of Strength training for schools throughout the state. Sources of Strength is a best practice youth suicide prevention project designed to harness the power of peer social networks to change unhealthy norms and culture, ultimately preventing suicide, bullying and substance abuse.

For information on Sources of Strength training, please contact [Sheila Barnard](#).

This information is targeted to provide support to school and district personnel in their efforts to support students in need. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Student Success at 502-564-4772 for additional information and training opportunities.