



**WINNEBAGO COUNTY
CHILD DEATH REVIEW TEAM**

Supporting Organizations:

CESA 6
Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin
Children's Hospital Child Advocacy
Children's Hospital Fox Valley
Christine Ann Center
Community for Hope
Fox Cities Victim Crisis Response Team
Gold Cross Ambulance
Infant Death Center of Wisconsin
Menasha City Police Department
Menasha Health Department
Neenah City Police Department
Neenah Joint School District
NEW Mental Health Connection
Oshkosh Area School District
Oshkosh City Fire Department
Oshkosh City Police Department
Parent Connection, Family Services
Samaritan Health Counseling
Trauma Center at Theda Care
Town of Menasha Police Department
Winnebago County:
Coroner Office
Department of Human Services
District Attorney Office
Health Department
Sheriff Department

Contact:

Teresa Paulus, RN/Belinda DeGoey, RN
Winnebago County Health Dept
Child Death Review Team
Co-Coordinators
920-232-3000

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

February 2016

Dear Community,

Tragically, there have been a number of youth suicides in Winnebago County over the past several years, and most recently in January 2016. The Winnebago County Child Death Review Team (CDRT) has reviewed these deaths and identified risk factors for youth suicide in our county as well as protective factors.

As noted above, the mission of the CDRT is to prevent deaths and improve the health and safety of our children. Suicide is a preventable tragedy. Prevention of youth suicide is a community responsibility requiring collective action to identify youth at risk, assure support is available to youth and their families and reduce risk factors known to contribute to youth suicide. The Winnebago County CDRT has identified a set of recommendations in the accompanying attachment to guide the community with these efforts.

It is hoped that individuals and organizations throughout the county will partner in the prevention of youth suicide. Please consider what recommendations you can implement. Your action will make a difference in the lives of the youth and families in your community.

We thank you for your efforts! Please use the contact listed below for further discussion and questions.

Please take a moment to let us know what prevention efforts you plan to address or are currently working on so that we may assist with/promote community-wide efforts. Please use the contact listed below.

With gratitude,

Teresa Paulus, RN
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Winnebago County Child Death Review Co-Coordinator
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Winnebago County Child Death Review Team

Suicide Prevention Subcommittee Recommendations

February, 2016

Problem statement: The Winnebago County Child Death Review Team (CDRT) has conducted a review of 12 deaths by suicide in youth through age 19 from 2010 through 2014. There were no youth suicides in 2015. However, suicide in youth continues in Winnebago County with the most recent in January of 2016. Preventing suicide and reducing risk factors for suicide through community action is essential for the health and survival of our youth.

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) data related to youth suicide in Winnebago County exceeds the state of Wisconsin average. According to 2013/2014 YRBS data for students in grades 9-12 in Winnebago County (Wisconsin data is in parentheses):

- 26.1% (WI=24.6%) of students reported feeling so sad or helpless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities. This is **1381 students** in Winnebago Co.
- 18.6% (WI=13.2%) of students reported having seriously considered attempting suicide in the last 12 months. This is **984 students** in Winnebago Co.
- 16.1 % (WI=12.1%) of students reported having made a plan about how they would attempt suicide. This is **852 students** in Winnebago Co.
- 13.9 % (WI= 6.0%) of students reported having attempted suicide at least once. This is **735 students** in Winnebago County.

From 2010-2014, **271 youth** through age 19 were hospitalized for intentional self-inflicted injury in Winnebago County. There were **212 visits by youth** through age 19 to emergency rooms in Winnebago County for intentional self-inflicted injury. These numbers do not include those youth who expressed intent to harm self, but did not carry out the self harm. (Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health)

Risk factors for suicide identified for Winnebago County youth include:

- Depression, mood disorder, and/or other mental illness
- Relationship problems with family/friends
- Parental separation or divorce
- Breakup of boyfriend/girlfriend relationship
- Alcohol abuse and/or substance abuse
- Physical/sexual/emotional abuse
- Access to firearms and other lethal means
- Suicide or suicide attempt by a relative or close friend
- Bullying
- Issues of sexuality
- Impulsivity of young people
- Suicide ideology/pact
- Feelings of failure at school, socially or academically
- Law enforcement, court or human services involvement

Protective Factors in preventing suicide include:

- Strong connections to family and community support with emphasis on healthy relationships
- Learned skills in problem solving, conflict resolution and nonviolent handling of disputes
- Restricted access to highly lethal methods of suicide, including firearms and prescription or illegal drugs
- Effective access to a variety of clinical interventions and support including clinical care for mental, physical and substance use disorders
- Safe, supportive and welcoming community environments

Effective Prevention Strategies:

- Educating parents and community members
- Gatekeeper training such as QPR
- Screening programs such as Connected Community Wellness Screen
- Peer support groups
- Teaching adaptive skills
- Student curriculum addressing suicide
- Strategies for responding to a suicidal crisis, including planning and training
- Restriction of access to lethal means of suicide including removal of firearms in homes of high-risk teens
- Broad based community coalition action
- Communication among all providers involved for continuity of care

Resources

Community for Hope: www.communityforhope.org

Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wish/index.htm>

Youth Risk Behavior survey 2013/2014 Winnebago County Schools:

<http://www.co.winnebago.wi.us/health/units/administration/community-health-data/youth-risk-behavior-survey-yrbs/2013-2014-yrbs>

Prevent Suicide Wisconsin: www.preventsuicidewi.org

Mental Health America of Wisconsin: www.mhawisconsin.org

Suicide Prevention Resource Center: www.sprc.org

Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin: www.chawisconsin.org

Winnebago County Child Death Review Team Suicide Prevention Subcommittee Members:

- Jackie Schoening, MSSW, LCSW, CSSW. Coordinator of CESAs 6,2,3, WI Safe & Health Schools Training & Technical Assistance Center
- Kathi Hegranes, Injury Prevention and Outreach Coordinator, Trauma Center at Theda Care
- Kim Maki and Barry Busby, Winnebago County Coroner's Office
- Kristin Mahoney, School Counselor, Neenah High School
- Sarah Bassing- Sutton, Samaritan Counseling Center
- Debbie Peters, Director, Community for Hope
- John Holland, Education Outreach, Oshkosh Fire Department
- Lynnsey Erickson, AmeriCorps Member, Winnebago County Health Department
- Teresa Paulus, RN and Belinda DeGoey, RN , Winnebago County Health Department

Contact for this Document

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CDRT Winnebago County Suicide Prevention Recommendations

February, 2016

1. Suicide/Mental Health Data from Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is very concerning. Distribute YRBS data and summaries (including actual numbers of students, not just percentages) to students, parents, and the community to raise awareness about the seriousness of youth mental health issues/suicide in Winnebago County.

Plan

- Include raw numbers as well as percentage when providing mental health/suicide data on YRBS. This information can be obtained through the Winnebago County Health Department <http://www.co.winnebago.wi.us/health/units/administration/community-health-data/youth-risk-behavior-survey-yrbs/2013-2014-yrbs>
- Community agency/organization needed to create white paper/fact sheet about trends in adolescent mental health using YRBS data and what can be done about this data.
- Community agency/organization needed to provide above information to professionals and volunteers serving our youth such as in schools, church organizations, service organizations, youth groups, YMCA, media, etc.
- Schools should ensure that all staff are aware of YRBS data as it can be useful to incorporate into teaching plans. (Examples: YRBS data can help determine areas of focus in At-Risk Student Programs, Family Living, Health education/PE class, English-issues for student to focus on in papers, speeches.)

Suggested Stakeholders: Public Health, Schools, CESA 6, NEW Mental Health Connection, Zero Suicide Coalition, NAMI, Community for Hope, Counseling Services, Health Care Systems, Samaritan Counseling Wellness Screen and QPR Advisory Board.

2. Suicide prevention is a community responsibility. Equip those who are in a position to reach youth with skills to teach resiliency, how to identify mental health concerns, and how to seek help for youth experiencing mental health crises.

Plan:

- Talk with youth in identifying how best to engage/communicate with youth about these topics
- Identify and promote protective factors (refer to report included with these recommendations)
- Promote Best Practices including Youth Mental Health First Aid, QPR training, Connected Community Wellness Screen, Sources of Strength, to parents, caregivers, teachers and leaders of groups involved with youth such as Youth Groups/Service Clubs, Athletic Groups, Young-life, faith based groups, Homeless liaisons, etc.
- Promote upstream/preventative approaches in schools and other youth-serving organizations, such as trauma-informed/sensitive care and ACEs (adverse childhood experiences): <http://traumasensitiveschools.org/>
- Promote suicide awareness programs to educate teachers and other school personnel about the symptoms of depression and the causes of suicidal behavior in youth.
Resource: <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Preventing-Suicide-A-Toolkit-for-High-Schools/SMA12-4669>
- Engage media in suicide prevention: http://www.sprc.org/library_resources/items/guide-engaging-media-suicide-prevention and <http://www.preventsuicidewi.org/media>

Suggested Stakeholders: Community for Hope, Schools, NEW Mental Health Connection, Zero Suicide Coalition, Public Health, Counseling agencies, NAMI, Health Care Systems, Parents, adult/youth leaders of youth groups, media

3. Parents/guardians have an obligation to promote mental health wellness and address mental illness with youth at all ages. Provide resources to parents/guardians regarding the following areas with their children:

- a) How to communicate with youth, especially how to create an environment to support youth to ask for help
- b) What is mental wellness?
- c) How to promote protective factors
- d) How to be a positive role model
- e) How to identify/support youth who are at risk for mental illness and/or suicide
- f) How to talk about mental illness including anxiety, stress and depression
- g) Mental illness vs. typical teen development and normal emotions
- h) Local treatment resources for youth

Plan:

- Educate parents/guardians about protective factors and resiliency among youth.

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/promoting/protectfactors/>

<http://promising.futureswithoutviolence.org/files/2014/01/Promising-Futures-Infographic-FINAL.jpg>

-Promote the Real Happy Hour program. Contact Winnebago County Health Dept for further information

health@co.winnebago.wi.us Phone: 920-232-3000

-Teen Tips put out by Samaritan Counseling Center's Wellness Screen program is a valuable resource to provide to parents. <http://samaritan-counseling.com/newsletter/>

-Educate adults on how to listen (listen to listen, not listen to respond)

-“Car Conversations” or “Feed them First Talks” **Need someone to develop these scripts**

-Job site programming (lunch and learns, newsletter information) to reach parents/guardians

- Promote Suicide Prevention Resource Center best practices: ex. Parents as Partners, Not My Kid www.sprc.org

Suggested Stakeholders: Schools, Public Health, Counseling Services, CESA 6, NEW Mental Health Connection, Zero Suicide Coalition, Family Services, Behavioral Health, Health Care Systems

4. Provide education to youth about their responsibility in suicide prevention and increase competence about suicide risk factors and safe practices.

Youth responsibility in Suicide Prevention:

Means for Safe/anonymous reporting of concerns

Responsible social media use (to prevent cyberbullying)

Peer to peer training for suicide prevention

Plan:

- Promote education about responsible social media use in schools, youth-serving organizations, and at home (<http://cyberbullying.org/resources/parents/>)
- Promote programs for peer to peer education about the symptoms and risks of depression, anxiety, substance abuse, conduct disorder and other mental health issues.
- Promote peer to peer education on resiliency and protective factors.
- Promote QPR Instructor training for youth to provide QPR Gatekeeper trainings to their peers.
- Educate teens about how to report concerns to their school and/or law enforcement. Provide frequent reminders on this throughout the school year.
- Work with identified youth teams or form a youth team to address areas mentioned above.

Suggested Stakeholders: Schools, law enforcement, Winnebago Co. Social Media Coalition, Winnebago Co. Teen Safety Team, Community for Hope, Zero Suicide Coalition, Public Health, Health Care Systems

5. Provide means for early identification of youth with mental health concerns

Plan:

- Provide mental health/emotional wellness screenings and counseling/case management in all Winnebago County high schools (e.g., Connected Community Wellness Screen)
- Provide depression screening of youth at all healthcare visits of any kind with referral to appropriate resources
- Provide ASQ-3 screenings (Ages and Stages Questionnaire that parents complete)
- Equip healthcare and families with current resources for referral

Suggested Stakeholders: NEW Mental Health Connection, Counseling agencies, Public Health, Health Care Systems, Zero Suicide Coalition, Schools

6. Prevent access to lethal means (an object utilized to carry out a destructive act such as firearm, medications) to all youth. Ensure elimination of access to lethal means to those identified as being at risk for suicide/self-harm.

Plan:

Community Agencies/ Coalition needed to promote:

- Lethal means restriction education to parents, students, community
- Emergency Dept personnel, health care providers, counselors, crisis workers should provide lethal means counseling to family and caregivers of youth who are at risk of suicide in addition to those with other mental health illness
- Expansion and improved awareness of drug drop boxes throughout Winnebago County community
- Education on need for close monitoring of the medication used by a youth (limit access to medication and ensure youth is taking medication correctly in order to ensure proper mental health treatment and to prevent overdose)
- Resources: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/means-matter/saves-lives/>
- Resources: CALM training(Counseling on Access to Lethal Means) www.sprc.org/bpr/section-III/calm-counseling-access-lethal-means
- Free Gunlocks available where public frequents (Dr. offices, public health, fairs, etc.)

Suggested stakeholder: Community for Hope, NEW Mental Health Connection, Zero Suicide Coalition, Counseling Services; Healthcare Systems and providers; law enforcement, Winn. Co. Teen Safety Team, Public Health

7. Promotion of ongoing communication between schools and stakeholders is essential to serve our youth with mental health crisis and prevent youth suicides

Plan

- Ongoing meetings between school liaison officers, school counselors/social workers and Winnebago County Crisis Intervention to facilitate communication about the process and concerns related to students in crisis during the school day.

Suggested stakeholder: School liaison officers, School counselors/social workers, Winnebago County Crisis, Community for Hope, Police Dept. CIT groups

8. Provide support to youth who are survivors of suicide loss within their families. Youth with family members who have died by suicide are at great risk for suicide and mental health issues.

<http://www.hopkinschildrens.org/Children-Who-Lose-a-Parent-to-Suicide-More-Likely-to-Die-the-Same-Way.aspx>

Or <http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/7805720>

Plan:

- Identify adults who have died by suicide who are parents /relatives of youth with the goal of providing support to these youth. Community Agency/organization is needed to partner with the Coroner's office to create process to identify and provide support to these youth.
- Provide intentional support and long-term monitoring of youth who are impacted by a family member who dies by suicide
- Community Agency/organization is needed to initiate Adult Suicide Reviews to assist in identifying risk factors and developing prevention strategies for adult suicides
- Community Agency/agency needed to initiate Man Therapy program as a means for prevention resource in adult men

Suggested Stakeholders: Coroner, Mental Health America Wisconsin (Man Therapy), NEW Mental Health Connection, Zero Suicide Coalition, Schools, Counseling Services, NAMI, Public Health, VA Suicide Prevention Coordinator, Employee Assistance Programs.

9. Provide grief support to youth affected by suicide loss. Provide grief support to youth affected by the loss of anyone due to death.

Plan:

- A specific process needs to be place for postvention and grief counseling for loss by suicide including:
Current best practice crisis response policy in place to respond to death of youth by suicide that is consistent in all schools in Winnebago County. Ensure this includes appropriate messaging, identification of trained counselors who specialize in grief after suicide and a process to hold youth survivor of suicide loss groups.
- School are encouraged to have a best practice policy on memorializing of any student death (including death by suicide)
- Schools are encouraged to have a policy in place to respond to any kind of student/staff death and provide support
- Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to seek grief support as needed for their child after a death.
- Promote public awareness of grief support groups related to suicide loss as well as other types of deaths.
- Establish a permanent grief center for youth (such as Center for Grieving Children) in Winnebago County

Suggested Stakeholders: Community for Hope, Schools, Funeral Homes, NEW Mental Health Connection, Zero Suicide Coalition, Oshkosh Boys and Girls Club, Counseling Services, Health Care Systems.

10. Provide Media and schools with guidance on how to appropriately and responsibly address the aftermath of a suicide or other death.

Plan:

- Refer to plan in recommendation #9
Promote or develop toolkit/policy for schools on how to respond after a youth suicide (see examples: https://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/App_Files/Media/PDF/sprc_online_library.pdf and http://www.sprc.org/library_resources/items/after-suicide-toolkit-schools)
- Schools should refer to DPI for required statutes and resources. Please review and update your policy
- Promote toolkit/policy for media on how to respond after a suicide. <http://reportingsuicide.org/about/>

Suggested Stakeholders: Schools, counseling services, Zero Suicide Coalition, Winnebago County Crisis, Community for Hope, Media members

11. Develop a standardized Suicide Report form which can be used by Coroner/EMS/Law Enforcement to record information that would be relevant to identifying risk factors with ultimate goal of effective prevention efforts.

Plan:

-Develop Suicide Report Form.

Suggested Stakeholders: Law enforcement, EMS, Coroner, Child Death Review Team, Zero Suicide Coalition, Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin, Community for Hope, Prevent Suicide Wisconsin

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