Suicide Prevention Awareness and Education Reminders

According to 2019 State Fact Sheets data from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, on average one person dies by suicide every 11 hours in New Jersey. Suicide continues to be the 14th leading cause of death in the state and is the second leading cause of death for New Jersey youth ages 15 to 24.

School administrators and staff are encouraged to purposefully promote suicide prevention awareness and education, as well as support students and parents in learning the warning signs and how to appropriately respond when there is a concern that someone may harm him/herself.

As a reminder, each public school teaching staff member must complete a minimum of two hours of instruction in suicide prevention. This instruction is to be provided by a licensed healthcare professional with training and experience in mental health issues, and shall also include information on the relationship between the risk of suicide and incidents of harassment, intimidation and bullying (N.J.S.A. 18A:6-112).

The Protocol for Reporting Youth Suicide Attempt or Completion outlines a list of professionals who, by law, are required to report attempted or completed suicide by youth. The Youth Suicide Reporting Form is a short online form submitted directly to the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) that is used to statistically report non-identifying demographic information regarding a student or youth who has either attempted or completed suicide (N.J.S.A. 30.9A-24).

Additionally, National Suicide Prevention Week is September 8-14, 2019. Resource materials for students, families and school staff, as well as free suicide prevention education toolkits, are available on the New Jersey Department of Education website.

As always, the Crisis Text Line, the New Jersey Hopeline, the 2nd Floor Youth Helpline, and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline are available 24 hours/7 days a week if you or someone you know is considering suicide.

c: Members, State Board of Education
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