



REDUCING YOUTH SUICIDE IN RURAL NEVADA

COMMITTING TO THE MENTAL HEALTH OF NYE COUNTY YOUTH

After identifying gaps in mental health services within our middle and high schools, the NyE Communities Coalition launched the Signs of Suicide screening and assessment tool, along with training for school support staff and community counselors. Positive results were evident after just 1 year, and more students are getting the mental health support they need.

FAST FACTS

THE IMPACT OF SUICIDE ON NEVADA YOUTH IS SIGNIFICANT:

- **85,477** FELT SAD OR HOPELESS FOR 2 OR MORE WEEKS
- **43,853** SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED ATTEMPTING SUICIDE
- **39,146** MADE A PLAN TO ATTEMPT SUICIDE
- **24,280** ATTEMPTED SUICIDE

SOURCE: 2015 YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY

CHALLENGE

Identifying youth with depression and suicidal tendencies before they act out their feelings through attempted or completed suicide is a problem for most middle and high schools. National data estimate that 1 in 5 students will experience a mental health issues before graduating high school. In Nevada, suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for youth age 15–24.

The percentage of Nevada students who demonstrate a high risk of suicide through the Brief Screen for Adolescent Suicide hovers at 33%. In Nye County, however, a rural SS/HS community, similar testing in the first year of grant funding revealed that *42% of screened youth were at high risk.*

Clearly, youth depression and suicide were urgent issues in need of a comprehensive solution.

SOLUTION

Through the Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant, the NyE Communities Coalition (NyECC) implemented a three-pronged approach:

1) The SOS Signs of Suicide Screening Program was implemented. This universal, school-based depression awareness and suicide prevention program is designed for middle- and high-school students.

2) Five clinical mental health counselors were placed in district schools. These Safe Schools Professionals provide critical early intervention and mental health services for students.

3) Ongoing opportunities for training, education, and support were offered to schools, community agencies and organizations, parents, and youth.

Some of the support programs have included:

- Love Never Dies, a monthly parent grief support group
- Suicide Awareness Team, meeting monthly
- Mental Health Support Group, meeting weekly

School staff were also trained in the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports program as well as safeTALK. Schools also began utilizing [SafeVoice](#), an anonymous tip line to report bullying and violence in Nevada schools.

→ RESULTS

SIGNS OF SUICIDE GOALS

1. Increase student understanding of suicide and depression
2. Encourage help-seeking
3. Reduce stigma
4. Engage parents and schools as partners in prevention
5. Encourage school–community partnerships to support student mental health

NyECC's hard work and three-pronged approach has yielded outstanding results, proving that—with the right programs and partnerships—a rural community can enthusiastically come together to support youth and families. Some of the many highlights include the following:

1,525 students were screened through Signs of Suicide, with 278 receiving additional assessment and counseling.

An average of 364 students were served by the Safe Schools Professionals each month.

261 people were trained in safeTALK, a program to provide prevention and early intervention to students, their families, and community members.

253 people were trained in Adult and Youth Mental Health First Aid.

Over 30 community and school presentations (with thousands of attendees) were given in topics ranging from suicide prevention to prescription drug abuse to “The Dark Side of Social Media.”

Together, these and other efforts have resulted in the most important finding of all:

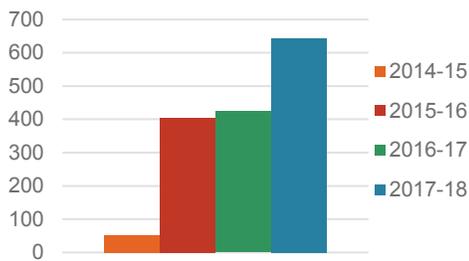
The percentage of youth screened for a high risk of suicide in Nye County has dropped from 42% in 2014–2015 to only 16% in 2017–2018—significantly lower than the state’s 33% average.

→ SUSTAINING SUCCESS

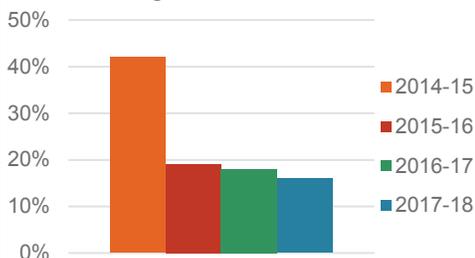
The NyE Communities Coalition has partnered with additional community providers to continue the Signs of Suicide Program and to sustain screening within the district. NyECC has partnerships with community agencies and organizations that have collaborated to fund and sustain these innovative programs and services.

Community outreach will also continue through NyECC, with ongoing and special events like the annual Pahrump “Walk in Memory, Walk for Hope”—an annual remembrance.

Number of Students Screened



Percent of Screened Students at High Risk for Suicide



For more information about the program, contact:
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