
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that more children and
2 young adults die from suicide each year than from cancer, heart
3 disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, and chronic lung disease
4 combined. Nationally, over four thousand youths take their
5 lives annually, making suicide the third largest cause of death
6 of persons between the ages of ten and twenty-four.

7 In Hawaii, suicide is the second leading cause of death
8 among persons who are fifteen to twenty-four years old. Rates
9 of youth suicide have been on the rise in the last decade among
10 both females and males and among all ethnic groups. In Hawaii,
11 males are more likely than females to commit suicide, and native
12 Hawaiian youths are the most likely ethnic group to attempt or
13 commit suicide.

14 Research demonstrates that youth suicide is linked to
15 underlying mental health problems that can be addressed through
16 early intervention and prevention strategies. The legislature
17 notes that such intervention and prevention strategies have been
18 listed as a national health priority in dealing with rising



1 rates of youth suicide. Furthermore, Congress passed federal
2 legislation in 2004, and appropriated \$82,000,000 over the next
3 three years, for statewide programs designed to help prevent
4 youth suicide. Many states have already developed comprehensive
5 statewide youth suicide early intervention and prevention
6 strategies that seek to provide effective early intervention and
7 prevention services.

8 Suicide is a serious public health tragedy affecting
9 children and young adults in Hawaii. The legislature declares
10 that preserving and protecting the lives of children and young
11 adults is a priority for the State. The legislature further
12 finds and declares that preventing youth suicide is necessary
13 for the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the
14 State. Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish a
15 youth suicide early intervention and prevention program for
16 Hawaii.

17 SECTION 2. Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
18 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
19 and to read as follows:

20 **"§321- Youth suicide early intervention and prevention**
21 **program.** (a) The department of health shall establish and
22 operate a statewide youth suicide early intervention and



1 prevention program that focuses upon, but is not necessarily
2 limited to, persons between the ages of ten and twenty-four to:

3 (1) Create public awareness for issues relating to youth
4 suicide prevention;

5 (2) Build community networks concerning youth suicide
6 prevention; and

7 (3) Carry out training programs for suicide prevention for
8 law enforcement personnel, providers of health care,
9 school and University of Hawaii employees, and other
10 persons who have contact with individuals at risk of
11 suicide.

12 (b) The department of health shall provide appropriate
13 research, training, and technical assistance to carry out the
14 purposes of this section, including:

15 (1) Providing oversight on youth suicide early
16 intervention and prevention strategies;

17 (2) Identifying and understanding causes and associated
18 risk factors of youth suicide;

19 (3) Analyzing the efficacy of new and existing youth
20 suicide early intervention techniques and
21 technologies;



- 1 (4) Examining trends in youth suicidal behaviors and
2 nonfatal suicide attempts;
3 (5) Evaluating and disseminating outcomes and best
4 practices of mental and behavioral health services at
5 institutions of higher education; and
6 (6) Other activities deemed appropriate by the director of
7 health.

8 (c) Research, training, and technical assistance resources
9 shall be provided, but shall not be limited, to:

- 10 (1) Political subdivisions of the State;
11 (2) Native Hawaiian health and community organizations;
12 (3) Institutions of higher education;
13 (4) The department of education;
14 (5) Public organizations;
15 (6) Private nonprofit organizations; and
16 (7) Health and social service organizations.

17 (d) The department of health may develop and submit
18 proposals for funding from federal agencies and private
19 organizations to support the purposes of this section.

20 (e) The department of health may adopt rules in accordance
21 with chapter 91 to implement the purposes of this section."

22



1 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

2 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2020;

3 provided that this Act shall be repealed on June 30, 2022.



Report Title:

Youth Suicide Prevention

Description:

Establishes a statewide youth suicide early intervention and prevention program. (SD2)

