

2.13 Youth Suicide Prevention

Resolution passed 2005; amended 2013; amended 2019

Whereas, an increasing number of Washington youth report feeling sad, hopeless, or anxious, or having suicidal thoughts; and

Whereas, suicide is the second leading cause of death for people aged 15-19 nationally, with American Indian and Alaskan Natives at the highest risks for suicide. In addition, LGBTQ+ are at an increased risk for suicide, with the transgender suicide rate the highest of that population; and

Whereas, adolescents with access to firearms are 2.6 times as likely to die by suicide as adolescents without access to firearms; and

Whereas, the detection of the warning signs of suicide and the reduction and restriction of suicide means can make the difference between life and death.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate to ensure staffing levels in schools are funded to meet student need and to support student learning and well-being, and encourage the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to emphasize the importance of knowing the warning signs of suicide among youth with our Washington state education service districts, school and district administrators, educators and staff, students, families and caregivers; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils support culturally and linguistically appropriate programs, projects and training for youth suicide prevention, including awareness of the warning signs of suicide and risk factors like anxiety, depression, stress, and destructive behaviors; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for the creation of funding for suicide prevention and intervention programs, including support services for survivors of suicide attempt and for families that have lost someone to suicide; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils support youth suicide prevention research, programs, and policies that include the reduction of access to the methods for attempting and completing suicide, including firearms and prescription and non-prescription medication.