

## UPDATE:

Washington State PTA is pleased to share that a statewide, 24/7 Youth Safety Tip Reporting System was funded at \$2.4M at the end of the 2021 legislative session. The effort to implement the YES youth tip line and associated phone application has already begun within the Office of the Attorney General. This tool will:

- Be a program for receiving and responding to tips regarding risks or potential risks to the safety and well-being of youth,
- Provide timely assistance to youth,
- Offer connection through multiple platforms, including a phone line, texting function, phone app, and website,
- Allow youth to share safety concerns about themselves or others,
- Prevent tragedies and violence, and
- Be trauma-informed, anti-racist and informed by youth voice<sup>1</sup>.

The rollout is slated for Fall of 2022. It will be incumbent upon each school district to onboard to this platform and PTA members should advocate to their school boards for transparent processes and communications on the implementation plans.

***WSPTA recognizes the need for implementing a 24/7 statewide Youth Safety Tip Reporting System to allow students to confidentially report safety concerns about themselves or others. Each safety concern would receive individual follow up to ensure the student receives the urgent help they need.***

## Background

- Suicide is the second-leading cause of death in youth.<sup>2</sup>
- 70% of those who commit suicide tell someone.<sup>3</sup>
- When youth tell someone, it is often a friend or a sibling, not an adult.
- COVID-19 has caused increased anxiety, depression, and isolation in our youth. COVID-19 has caused increased thoughts of suicide and self-harm in ages 11-24.<sup>4</sup>
- Top reasons why youth report safety concerns are due to suicidal ideation, bullying and drug use.<sup>5</sup>
- In Oregon, over 30% of safety tips received are urgent or critical in nature.<sup>6</sup>
- Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Education and Department of Health and Human Services published a 2018 school safety report recommending the implementation of an anonymous reporting system.<sup>7</sup>

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### For More Information

Lizzy Sebring, WSPTA Advocacy Director  
[ptaadvocacydir@wastatepta.org](mailto:ptaadvocacydir@wastatepta.org)

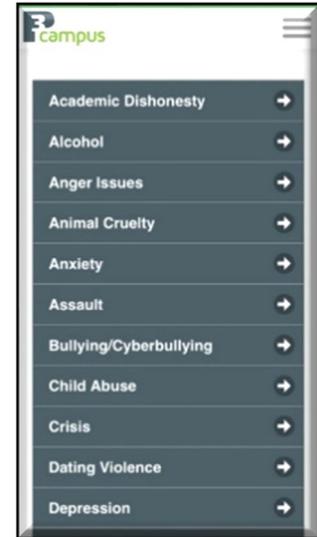
Marie Sullivan, WSPTA Legislative Consultant  
[legconsultant@wastatepta.org](mailto:legconsultant@wastatepta.org)

***For more information on the WSPTA advocacy program, please visit our website ([www.wastatepta.org](http://www.wastatepta.org)).***

- Twenty states have already implemented a statewide youth safety tip system.<sup>8</sup>
- The 988 national suicide hotline does not have a digital platform that meets the unique needs of our youth.<sup>9</sup>
- Tip reporting systems have been proven to save lives.<sup>10</sup>

## Proposed Solution

Washington State PTA shall support the implementation of a confidential statewide youth safety tip reporting system aimed at serving youth <24 years of age. Students shall be able to submit a safety tip using a phone app, by text, using a web page or by calling. Each tip is triaged by a live person 24/7, and then routed as appropriate to school administrators, law enforcement, to a multi-disciplinary team of mental health professionals, or the Department of Children, Youth and Families for individual follow up.



## Citations

1. 2021 Supplemental Operating Budget (ESSB 5092), pages 25-27.  
<https://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2021-22/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Passed%20Legislature/5092-S.PL.pdf?q=20210428145030>
2. [Youth Suicide Prevention, Intervention, & Postvention | OSPI \(www.k12.wa.us\)](http://www.k12.wa.us)
3. Robins, E., Gassner, S., Kayes, J., Wilkinson, R.H. & Murphy, G.E. (1959). The communication of suicidal intent: A study of 134 consecutive cases of successful (completed) suicide. *Am J Psychiatry*, 115 (8), 724-733.
4. [Mental Health, Substance Use, and Suicidal Ideation During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, June 24–30, 2020 | MMWR \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6912a1.htm)
5. [More Schools Are Using Anonymous Tip Lines to Thwart Violence. Do They Work? \(edweek.org\)](http://edweek.org)
6. [Results - Safe Oregon \(Click on 2019-2020 Annual Report\)](http://www.safeoregon.org)
7. [Final Report of the Federal Commission on School Safety \(PDF\) \(Chapter 5\)](https://www.fcschoolsafety.com)
8. [A year after Parkland shooting, can anonymous tip lines help students keep schools safer? PBS NewsHour. February 12, 2019.](http://www.pbs.org/newshour)
9. [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988 to become 3-digit number to reach hotline by 2022. CNN Politics. July 16, 2020.](http://www.cnn.com)
10. [2019 OK2SAY Annual Report \(michigan.gov\)](http://www.michigan.gov)