

# Kentucky Fall 2020 School Suicide Prevention Delivery Guidance

While COVID-19 has impacted the in-person start date for schools in Kentucky, increased anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues among students compels us to recommend that all students – especially middle and high school students – receive suicide prevention interventions.

Mental health experts highlight that we are currently living in a crisis situation that is equivalent to the time after 9/11, natural disasters like tornados and floods, and other traumatic events. The difference is we have no idea how long this crisis will last.

This ongoing crisis increases the risk that youth do not feel safe.

**Students who don't feel safe have a 4X increased risk of suicide.  
Students who don't feel safe can't learn.**

**Schools can support the feeling of safety among students by providing students resources to:**

- acknowledge their emotions of grief and loss in this time
- increase their resilience and coping skills
- identify trusted adults to whom they can reach out should they find themselves in crisis
- access 24/7 crisis resources (741741, Crisis Text Line; 1-800-273-8255, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline; or local crisis lines, [MY3 app](#)).

**Recommendations for delivery are:**

- Train staff before sharing information with students.
- Share developmentally appropriate video lesson with their students via their Google Classroom, Zoom, or other platform of choice and then discuss the content using discussion guides that will be provided.
- Focus on intervention model instead of prevention model (Brown Stanley Safety Plan model).
- Provide additional adults during delivery to monitor for increased anxiety and signs of distress.
- Follow up with students who choose not to share their videos.
- Notify parents before providing information.
- Deliver video lesson 2-3 weeks after school start to allow time for trust building between students and teachers.
- Schedule a booster session in the December-February to support continued awareness of mental health needs of students.

**One resource to address student risk/meet legislative mandate:  
*Navigating Back to School* series by the Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide**

**To access all videos:**

- Navigate to: [sptsusa.org](https://sptsusa.org)
- Click on educators in the light blue box at the top of the screen
- Click on online training; this will take them to the login page for the sptsuniversity.org.
- Log in if you have a password or register to create a login if you don't.
- Once logged in, the videos are on the first row of training: **Navigating Back to School**

**For additional support in planning delivery for your school, contact  
Kentucky State Suicide Prevention Coordinator Beck Whipple at [beck.whipple@ky.gov](mailto:beck.whipple@ky.gov)**