

The logo for the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network is a dark blue silhouette of the state of Tennessee. Inside the silhouette, the words "Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network" are written in a white, serif font. The text is arranged in three lines: "Tennessee Suicide" on the top line, "Prevention Network" on the middle line, and a blank space on the bottom line.

# Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network

## Tennessee's Youth Suicide Prevention Plan

The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) was created to spearhead suicide prevention efforts on a statewide level. While suicide is the eleventh cause of death among all ages, it is the third leading cause of death among youth aged 10-24. The objective of the TSPN Youth Initiative is to lower the rate of fatal and nonfatal suicidal behaviors among youth. To accomplish this, each state region will engage in activities that address the public's attitudes and knowledge about suicide and mental illness as well as suicide intervention skills.

### Objectives:

The objective of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network's Youth Initiative is to lower the rate of these fatal and nonfatal suicidal behaviors among youth aged 10-24. By 2010, this program aims to reduce the reported suicide attempt rates among high school students from the current 9 percent to 8.5 percent by 2005, to 8 percent by 2007, and to 7.5 percent by 2009. The numbers of youth aged 10-24 requiring hospitalization will also be reduced to less than 1/2 percent of high school students. By 2010, the suicide death rate among Tennessee's African American males will be reduced by 15%. The risk of suicidal behavior among youth in state custody will be reduced by 5%.

### Approach:

The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) will address the problem of suicidal behavior in youth by:

1. Creating and distributing an up-to-date list of existing suicide education programs to all school personnel, colleges, mental health providers, crisis centers, faith-based communities, juvenile courts, and social service providers.
2. Training college personnel, middle school and high school personnel, youth pastors, and students the warning signs and signs of concern about suicide. The training program(s) would be of their choosing from the list created and distributed by TSPN in approach #1 above.
3. Reduce the stigma associated with being a consumer of mental health, substance abuse, and/or suicide prevention services through billboard campaigns and by developing teams of survivors and professionals in each of the eight regions to train and speak to groups of professionals and gatekeepers who come into contact with youth.
4. Collaborate and network with existing professional conferences to include youth suicide prevention workshops.
5. Helping each school and college write a suicide intervention plan and follow-up services for those at immediate risk using the American Association of Suicidology Guidelines for Postventions.

6. Create a Tennessee Suicide Prevention Resource Directory for each of the eight regions of the state and distribute this information to key people such as school personnel, colleges, mental health providers, crisis centers, faith-based communities, juvenile courts, and social service providers.
7. Address lack of access/insurance/waiting lists for treatment/transportation to mental health services for children in state custody and children not in state custody.
8. Training Department of Children's Services staff, contracted agencies, and foster parents in ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training), Question/Persuade/Refer (Q.P.R.), SPIRAL, etc.
9. Create regional response teams to provide postvention services (short-term grief counseling and aftercare services) to schools where a suicide has occurred in each of the eight regions, using postvention guidelines of the American Association of Suicidology (AAS).
10. All suicide prevention programs and efforts will stress the importance of enhancing protective factors for youth and young adults as a strategy to prevent youth suicide (Development of Assets for All Youth).

**Evaluation:**

Program objectives will be measured by tracking data from the above cited data sources such as annual Youth Risk Behavior Studies, Centers for Disease Control, American Association of Suicidology, statistics from the Tennessee Department of Health, hospital discharge data, and other sources. Client and consumer feedback, surveys, interviews, and anecdotal evidence will also be continually reviewed by the Statewide Suicide Coordinator and the chairs of each of the state's eight regions.

Results will be posted on the TSPN website [www.tspn.org](http://www.tspn.org), exhibit displays at conferences, and the TSPN newsletter.