

YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM  
FOR  
THE DEKALB COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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## SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

It is the policy of the DeKalb County School System to develop and maintain an effective youth suicide prevention program. A copy of the Youth Suicide Prevention Program for the DeKalb County School System shall be sent to each school principal and counselor and available on the DeKalb County School System's website. The program shall include

1. A written plan of suicide referral procedures.
2. A list of area referral agencies.
3. The provision of a yearly in-service program for new and/or continuing staff members.
4. The designation of the building principal and the counselor as primary contact people within each school to provide information on youth suicide or to refer a suicidal student to a referral agency.

## INTRODUCTION

In response to the adoption of a resolution on June 12, 1987, by the Alabama State Board of Education which required the State Superintendent of Education to emphasize to local school systems the importance of implementing the activities of the *Guidance and Counseling State Plan for Excellence in Alabama's Public Schools* dealing with emotional maturity and wholesome mental health by directing each local school system to provide training for all teachers to enable them to recognize indications of suicidal intention and to increase their awareness of the means of coping with potentially suicidal youth, the DeKalb county School System has developed a Youth Suicide Prevention Program. The following pages present a Youth Suicide Prevention Program for the DeKalb County School System. A number of individuals assisted with the information or by direct involvement in the writing of it.

## **Suicide Referral Procedures**

School staff who have reason to believe, either through direct knowledge or through a report for another person, that a student is in danger of attempting suicide or has actually attempted suicide must report this information immediately.

The procedure for reporting is as follows:

1. Contact the building principal and/or counselor. Do not leave the student alone for any amount of time. If the student's life is in immediate danger, appropriate officials should be called to transport the student to the nearest hospital emergency room. The person making the referral should stay with the student until personnel qualified to provide treatment are available.
2. The building counselor should contact the student's parents and request that they meet immediately. The parents should be informed that their child has attempted or is planning to attempt suicide. This meeting may take place at the school, at a referral agency, or at a hospital depending on the severity of the immediate threat to the student's life.
3. If the danger to the student's life is not assessed to be immediate, the building counselor should urge the parents to involve an appropriate referral agency.
4. The student's parents shall be given a list of referral agencies by the counselor at the called meeting.
5. After the initial referral is accomplished, the principal and counselor should evaluate the situation and decide on the proper role for the school to take in assisting the student.
6. The building counselor shall maintain a written record of the potential suicide report/release form.
7. The building counselor should monitor and provide follow-up support to the student as needed.
8. Procedures for special education students are the same as for all students.

The list following may be helpful for parents/ guardians. The parent/guardian of the student will be responsible to the referral agency for any service rendered to the student.

**Referral Agencies**

Student's Family Physician	DeKalb County Children's Advocacy Center P.O. Box 680173 104 Alabama Ave., NW Ft. Payne, AL 35968 256-997-9700
CED Mental Health Center 301 14 <sup>th</sup> St. NW Ft. Payne, AL 35967 256-845-4571 24-Hr. 256-492-7800	Family Life Center 300 Gault Ave. So. Ft. Payne, AL 35967 256-997-9356
Mountain View Hospital 3001 Scenic Hwy Gadsden, AL 35904 800-245-3645 256-546-9265	Alabama Dept. of Public Health Social Worker, Penny Pierson 2401 Calvin Dr. Ft. Payne, AL 35967 256-845-8685
ParkRidge Valley Hospital 2200 Morris Hill Rd. Chattanooga, TN 37421 423-894-4220	Dept. of Human Resources 2301 Briarwood Ave. Ft. Payne, AL 35968 256-844-2700
DeKalb Regional Medical Center Alice Parker, Director of Nursing 320 Medical Center Drive Ft. Payne, AL 35968 256-845-3150	Behavioral Medicine Center 2205 Beltline Rd. SW. Decatur, AL 35603 256-306-4000 800-937-3873
Children's Behavioral Health 1600 7 <sup>th</sup> Ave. So. Suite 500ACC Birmingham, AL 35233 205-939-9193	Southern Behavioral 701 Gault Ave. N. Suite B Ft. Payne, AL 35967 256-845-8227
Bradford Health Services For Psychiatric and Chemical Dependency Boaz, AL 35957 256-593-9152 1-888-265-2373	Sand Mountain Christian Counseling Center, LLC 8043 AL Hwy 71, Suite A Henagar, AL 35978 256-657-6556

### **In-service Program**

A yearly in-service program will be conducted for new and/or continuing staff members. The program will address the following topics:

1. Recognizing cues to the suicidal youth.
2. How to refer suicidal youth to help.
3. Available resources to help suicidal youth.

### **School Contact Person**

The building principal or the counselor will serve as primary contact people within each school. It will be their responsibility to provide information on youth suicide to faculty and parents.