
HOUSE BILL 2194

State of Washington

53rd Legislature

1994 Regular Session

By Representatives L. Johnson, Dellwo, Wood, Cothorn, Jones, Brown, J. Kohl, H. Myers, Wineberry, Flemming, Roland, Romero, Eide, Johanson and Anderson

Read first time 01/11/94. Referred to Committee on Health Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to suicide prevention; adding new sections to
2 chapter 28A.300 RCW; and making an appropriation.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that suicide is one of
5 the most serious and tragic phenomena affecting children and youth, the
6 third leading cause of death of young persons from fifteen to twenty-
7 four years of age, and the second leading cause of death for youth from
8 fifteen to nineteen years of age, following unintentional injuries and
9 homicide. The suicide rate among teenagers, in today's age of rage
10 where anger is turned inwards in the form of depression, has increased
11 forty percent from 1980 to 1990. Over forty percent of teenage girls
12 and twenty-five percent of teenage boys have seriously considered
13 suicide; and one out of every seven teenagers has attempted suicide at
14 least once. Between 1979 and 1988, according to national figures, the
15 suicide rate for the ten to fourteen year old age group alone increased
16 seventy-five percent, while the murder rate increased forty-two
17 percent.

18 Suicide is a dimension of violence that is directed towards self
19 instead of others, an implosion rather than an explosion, in response

1 to a sense of hopelessness from troubling problems associated with drug
2 and alcohol abuse, loneliness, depression, and relationship
3 difficulties in a society increasingly characterized by dysfunctional
4 families, new economic realities, and the widening gap between rising
5 youthful aspirations and fewer opportunities.

6 Suicide can be preventable through intervention strategies that
7 involve crisis intervention through trained professionals; attention
8 towards the amelioration of those personal conditions that engender
9 anger and related depression; and education programs for managing
10 personal problems that augment self-esteem. It is imperative to
11 address this tragic phenomenon not only as a serious public health and
12 safety problem, but in the interests of assuring the future of American
13 society with healthy role models fully capable of participating and
14 contributing to the welfare of their own families and the community.

15 The purpose of this act is to establish a state-wide suicide
16 prevention program that develops and implements strategies for
17 addressing youth suicide through the schools and throughout the
18 communities.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** Unless the context clearly requires
20 otherwise, the following definitions apply throughout sections 2
21 through 8 of this act:

22 (1) "Department" means the department of health.

23 (2) "Program" means a youth suicide prevention program established
24 under section 3 of this act.

25 (3) "Secretary" means the secretary of the department of health.

26 (4) "Youth services bureau" means a program established under
27 sections 2 through 8 of this act.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) A state-wide youth suicide prevention
29 program is established to be administered by the secretary in
30 consultation with:

31 (a) The superintendent of public instruction;

32 (b) The department of community, trade, and economic development;

33 (c) The department of social and health services;

34 (d) Local community agencies involved in suicide prevention;

35 (e) Local community mental health programs; and

36 (f) Such other entities as the secretary deems appropriate.

1 (2) The secretary may develop the suicide prevention program,
2 including:

3 (a) An assessment of data and identification of the populations at
4 risk, including effective programs currently available, and review of
5 literature for models that have proven effective;

6 (b) Policy development for strategies in addressing youth suicide,
7 including demonstration programs;

8 (c) An assurance function providing ongoing evaluation of the
9 overall effectiveness of the youth suicide prevention program; and

10 (d) The establishment of an interagency cooperative work group,
11 appointing such participants as the secretary deems appropriate to
12 facilitate the implementation of sections 2 through 8 of this act.

13 (3) The secretary may establish demonstration youth suicide
14 prevention programs in cooperation with local school districts.

15 (4) Any local political subdivision of the state may apply to the
16 secretary for assistance or grant funds to establish a local youth
17 suicide prevention program.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) The department shall adopt rules setting
19 eligibility guidelines for state funding of youth suicide prevention
20 programs under sections 2 through 8 of this act.

21 (2) The rules shall:

22 (a) Establish procedures for developing local programs, in
23 cooperation with local education agencies, youth services bureaus, and
24 community mental health centers; and

25 (b) Establish standards and policies for programs to offer:

26 (i) Individual, family, and group counseling related to youth
27 suicide prevention;

28 (ii) Referral, crisis intervention, and information for students,
29 parents, and school personnel; and

30 (iii) Training for school personnel, and others responsible for
31 counseling or supervising student activities.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) A youth suicide prevention program
33 established under sections 2 through 8 of this act shall plan, fund,
34 and implement educational programs, which may include any of the
35 following:

36 (a) Classroom instruction designed to achieve any of the following
37 objectives:

- 1 (i) Encourage sound decision making and promote ethical
2 development;
- 3 (ii) Increase pupils' awareness of the relationship between drug
4 and alcohol use and youth suicide;
- 5 (iii) Teach pupils to recognize signs of suicidal tendencies, and
6 other facts about youth suicide;
- 7 (iv) Inform pupils of available community youth suicide prevention
8 services;
- 9 (v) Enhance school climate and relationships between teachers,
10 counselors, and pupils; and
- 11 (vi) Further cooperative efforts of school personnel and community
12 youth suicide prevention program personnel;
- 13 (b) School-based or community-based alternative programs outside of
14 the classroom, including:
 - 15 (i) Positive peer group programs;
 - 16 (ii) A twenty-four-hour hotline telephone service, staffed by
17 trained professional counselors;
 - 18 (iii) Programs to collect data on youth suicide attempts;
 - 19 (iv) Intervention and follow-up; and
 - 20 (v) Parent education and training programs; and
- 21 (c) Teacher training programs.
- 22 (2) A program established under sections 2 through 8 of this act
23 shall:
 - 24 (a) Assist in increasing the awareness, among school personnel and
25 community leaders, of the incidence of teenage suicide;
 - 26 (b) Train school personnel in individual and school-wide strategies
27 for teenage suicide prevention;
 - 28 (c) Develop and implement school-based teenage suicide prevention
29 programs; and
 - 30 (d) Through cooperative efforts, use community resources in the
31 development and implementation of teenage suicide prevention programs
32 under sections 2 through 8 of this act.

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The department shall:

- 34 (1) As to each program receiving state funding:
 - 35 (a) Monitor its operations; and
 - 36 (b) Evaluate annually its effectiveness; and
- 37 (2) Review and either approve or disapprove the application for
38 state funding of a proposed program.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** The department shall submit a report to the
2 legislature regarding the current status and effectiveness of the
3 programs established under sections 2 through 8 of this act.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** (1) A youth services bureau is a community-
5 based entity that operates to provide community-oriented youth suicide
6 prevention, ameliorate conditions that breed youth suicide, and
7 function as an advocate of youth needs.

8 (2)(a) The department shall adopt rules establishing eligibility
9 guidelines for state funding of youth services bureaus.

10 (b) The rules shall require that each state-aided youth services
11 bureau provide, at no cost, at convenient hours:

12 (i) Individual, family, and group counseling;

13 (ii) Referral and information services;

14 (iii) Crisis intervention, including intervention relating to youth
15 suicide prevention;

16 (iv) Informal counseling; and

17 (v) Community education, including training and information
18 relating to youth suicide prevention.

19 (3) The department shall:

20 (a) As to each youth services bureau receiving state funding:

21 (i) Monitor its operations;

22 (ii) Evaluate annually its effectiveness; and

23 (iii) Stop funding a youth services bureau that is ineffective or
24 that, for two years, fails to meet the eligibility guidelines for state
25 funding; and

26 (b) Review and either approve or disapprove the application for
27 state funding of a youth services bureau or proposed youth services
28 bureau.

29 (4)(a) The funding of an eligible youth services bureau shall be a
30 shared responsibility of the state and of local governments. The state
31 share shall be seventy-five percent of the funding of an eligible youth
32 services bureau, as provided in the omnibus appropriations act.

33 (b) Each eligible youth services bureau shall submit to the
34 department a proposed annual budget for review and approval, at the
35 times the secretary specifies.

36 (c) The proposed budget of the department shall list the eligible
37 youth services bureaus and estimate the amount of state funds to be
38 allocated to each.

1 (d) At the option of the local governmental authority that provides
2 the matching funds for an eligible youth services bureau, the state
3 funds for the support of the eligible youth services bureau shall be
4 paid directly to its private sponsor or to the local governing body.
5 Before the state funds are paid, the fiscal officer of the local
6 governmental authority shall certify, in writing, the source of the
7 twenty-five percent local funds.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** Sections 1 through 8 of this act are each
9 added to chapter 28A.300 RCW.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** The sum of dollars, or as
11 much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the biennium
12 ending June 30, 1995, from the general fund to the department of health
13 for the purposes of this act.

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