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Texas Education Agency Update



September Mental & Behavioral Health Newsletter

Texas Education Agency sent this bulletin at 09/14/2023 11:50 AM CDT



Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education

September 2023

Mental & Behavioral Health Newsletter



Greetings from the Mental and Behavioral Health Team!

Please join us in observing Suicide Prevention Awareness month. Below are some resources provided by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, an inspiring school district highlight from Project AWARE Texas, and a few wellness tips for your consideration.



Texas Health and Human Services (HHSC) Suicide Prevention Awareness Month Webinar Series

The Texas Health and Human Services (HHSC) Suicide Prevention Awareness month Webinar Series will offer important learning experience regarding topics in suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. For more information email:

suicide.prevention@hhs.texas.gov

- Voices of lived experience 9/15/2023 from 1pm to 2:30pm: [Register Here](#)
- Making a Vet Sweat- Utilizing Physical Fitness and Nutrition to Combat PTSD and Suicide Among Military Veterans 9/22/2023 from 10am to 11am: [Register Here](#)
- HHSC Suicide Prevention Team: Language Matters 9/29/2023 from 10am to 11am: [Register Here](#)



Suicide Prevention Awareness Month Resources

- **Texas Health and Human Services (HHSC) Suicide Prevention Resources:** <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/mental-health-substance-use/mental-health-crisis-services/suicide-prevention>
- **The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)** was established in 1987 by a group of families who each lost someone to suicide. These families joined with scientists to work toward their vision of establishing a private source of support for suicide research and education so that essential suicide prevention efforts could be sustained in the future. [Learn more about the AFSP by clicking here.](#)
- **The Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)** is the only federally supported resource center devoted to advancing the implementation of the [National Strategy for Suicide Prevention](#). SPRC is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) (SAMHSA). [Click here to learn more.](#)
- **The 988 Lifeline** is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the United States. [Click here to access the 988-partner toolkit](#)
- **The Prevention and Early Intervention Division at the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)** shares a variety of information for professionals, parents and children to support strong and thriving families. This month's resources include [suicide prevention awareness opportunities](#), training available from the [Texas School Safety Center](#), information on the statewide [One Pill Kills Campaign](#) for fentanyl awareness, and other helpful resources for children and families to explore. See their resources here for: [Connected Communities, Supportive Partnerships, Thriving Families.](#)
- **Accessible Mental Healthcare Services are Now Available to Every Texas Public School.** Many children are struggling with mental health concerns and many parents have limited access to mental health assessment and treatment services. The Texas Legislature has ensured that every Texas public school has an [opportunity to enroll](#) in Texas Child Health Access through Telemedicine (TCHAT) at [no cost to the school or parent](#). [Reach TCHAT here](#) to learn more and prepare your school to help.



LEA Highlight

It's a new school year and for [Refugio ISD](#), that ignites the spark of another potential football championship. Friday nights in this small town are spent at the football stadium, cheering on their hometown team. One tradition is for the cheerleaders to throw footballs into the stands when the team scores a touchdown. This year, these footballs will look a little different and carry with them an important number. September is Suicide Prevention Awareness month. These footballs will help get the word out to the community that "Bobcats Believe that Your Life Matters" as it informs them of the new National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number of 988. As Refugio ISD finishes out its last months of the [Project AWARE \(Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education\) Texas](#) grant, they want their community members to know that there is help and how to access it. Their football program will also include an advertisement page that showcases this national hotline number.

Mental & Behavioral Health Tips

The return to school can be a stressful time, whether it's a child's first day of kindergarten, a transition to middle or high school, or just the end of the freedoms of summer. It's normal for children to feel anxious about these changes. Here's how you can help ease their worries:

- **Communicate:** Encourage your child to express their feelings about going back to school. Acknowledge their fears, make them feel understood, and reassure them that it's perfectly normal to feel anxious about these changes.
- **Create Routines:** A consistent routine fosters a sense of security in children. Establishing a regular sleep schedule, eating healthy meals, and setting aside time for homework and relaxation can help children adjust to the rhythm of the school year.
- **Encourage In-person Social Interactions:** Facilitate interaction with classmates to rekindle old friendships and make new ones. This may be one of the first years of schooling for many children without the COVID-19 pandemic interrupting normal social interactions. Social relationships can make the transition smoother and more enjoyable.

Excerpt from "[Back to School and Mental Health: Supporting Our Children for a Successful Year Ahead](#)" by [Sunny Patel, M.D., M.P.H., Center for Mental Health Services](#)

Please subscribe to our Safe and Supportive Schools Division Newsletter for updates from Restorative Practices and Discipline, Students Supports, and Mental Health and Wellness: Subscribe to Newsletter Here:

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