



OCCAP

Oregon Council of
Child & Adolescent
Psychiatry

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The Oregon Council of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (OCCAP), the council of Oregon physicians who specialize in pediatric psychiatry, supports SB 48, the bill for continuing education for professionals on suicide risk assessment, treatment and management.

Despite efforts on many fronts for many years, Oregon continues to have a major problem with suicide, throughout the lifespan of Oregonians. Suicide is the #2 cause of death of Oregon youth, ages 10-24. We are pleased with the breadth of professionals noted in SB 48 who will be required to complete this continuing education. The results of the bill will help professionals better understand both risk and protective factors in suicide, as well as factors involved in the professional assessment and treatment of suicidal Oregonians. Please note that our neighbors to the north, Washington state, has already passed a similar bill in an effort to save lives due to suicide. Oregon needs to do the same.

Our reservations with the bill include the number of hours (six) for the training, as we believe an effective training can be done in four hours. Given the impact of youth suicide on families, schools and communities, and the many years lost when youth die by suicide, we believe there needs to be some focus specifically on youth suicide prevention in the continuing education. Several of our members have long-standing expertise on youth suicide prevention, and we would like to help develop practical continuing education for physicians and other professionals as part of this bill.

OCCAP's efforts on youth suicide prevention date back to the Governor's Task Force on Youth Suicide Prevention in 1996, Oregon's first statewide Youth Suicide Prevention Conference in 1997, Oregon's first Youth Suicide Prevention Plan: A Call to Action in 2000 and most recently the Youth Suicide Prevention and Intervention Plan published last year, youth suicide prevention brochures for teachers as well as parents of school-age and college-age youth, and the Suicide Prevention Checklist encouraging communication among healthcare professionals when working with suicidal youth.

I will be unable to provide testimony on the bill later today as I am giving a presentation on youth suicide prevention to school-based professionals in several school districts in Washington state this afternoon. Please let me know if we can be of further help with aspects to the bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Kirk Wolfe, MD, FAACAP, FAPA

Distinguished Fellow of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

OCCAP President, 2001-2

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