



SB 52: Adi's Act Youth Suicide Prevention in Oregon Schools

Youth suicide is a tragedy that can impact any family, school, and community. For many years in Oregon, we lost approximately 50 people aged 10-24 to suicide each year. In 2016, that number grew to 98 young people, reflecting steady growth nearly every year for the past 4 years. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) youth are at an even higher risk of suicide because of stigma and discrimination. The Oregon Health Authority's 2017 Healthy Teens Survey uncovered a startling reality:

- Nearly half lesbian, gay or bisexual 8th graders have contemplated suicide
- Close to a quarter of lesbian, gay or bisexual 8th graders have attempted suicide
- Almost a third of transgender 8th graders have attempted suicide

Many LGBTQ youth are isolated because of harassment, bullying and family rejection. They often have few people to turn to. However, having just one supportive adult can greatly reduce the risk of suicide. Many times, students feel most comfortable confiding in the adults that they interact with every day – teachers and school personnel.

Effectively Responding in Our Schools

Schools need to be ready with the right knowledge, tools, and resources to address the issue of youth suicide. Unfortunately, Oregon is one of only three states that do not have suicide prevention regulations for schools in statute and many schools do not have access to national best practices around suicide prevention.

Basic Rights Oregon is advocating for a youth suicide prevention concept that:

- Provides all school districts in Oregon with a model suicide prevention policy, based on national best practices.
- Requires school districts to have a suicide prevention policy including procedures relating to suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.
- Address populations at higher risk for youth suicide – like LGBTQ students.

This legislation mirrors California law and builds off of Oregon's Safe Schools Act of 2009 that requires anti-bullying policies in K-12 schools.