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By: **Delegates Hixson, Heller, Aumann, Barkley, Bartlett, Boschert, Bozman, Cardin, Conroy, Cryor, C. Davis, Dumais, Elmore, Feldman, Gilleland, Goodwin, Healey, Howard, James, Kaiser, King, Marriott, McKee, Montgomery, Murray, Myers, Patterson, Petzold, Ramirez, Ross, and Taylor**

Introduced and read first time: February 10, 2005

Assigned to: Ways and Means

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A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education - Youth Suicide Prevention School Program - Mental Health**  
3 **Programs**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing the Youth Suicide Prevention School Program to  
5 include certain mental health programs; requiring the Youth Suicide Prevention  
6 School Program to develop and implement certain mental health programs;  
7 authorizing the State Department of Education to assist in implementing  
8 certain programs; requiring the State Department of Education to seek certain  
9 federal funds for Youth Suicide Prevention School Programs; and generally  
10 relating to the Youth Suicide Prevention School Program and mental health  
11 programs.

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
13 Article - Education  
14 Section 7-504 and 7-505  
15 Annotated Code of Maryland  
16 (2004 Replacement Volume and 2004 Supplement)

17 Preamble

18 WHEREAS, More children and young adults die from suicide each year than  
19 from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, and chronic lung disease  
20 combined; and

21 WHEREAS, More people die from suicide than murder and more than 4,000  
22 young people take their lives each year, making suicide the third leading cause of  
23 death among individuals between the ages of 10 and 24 years; and

24 WHEREAS, More than 800,000 teens in the United States suffer from  
25 depression each year and more than 500,000 make a suicide attempt requiring  
26 medical attention; and

1 WHEREAS, Many suicides are preventable through programs such as the  
2 Columbia University TeenScreen program, peer-to-peer support programs such as  
3 Active Minds, Inc. and high school psychology clubs; and

4 WHEREAS, The ultimate goal of TeenScreen is to make mental health  
5 screening as accepted and routinely implemented as school-based screenings for  
6 vision and hearing and pediatrician screenings for tuberculosis and scoliosis; and

7 WHEREAS, The Columbia University TeenScreen program provides, at no  
8 charge, education, staff training, screening tools, technical support, and consultation  
9 in the development and implementation of a screening program; and

10 WHEREAS, President Bush established the New Freedom Commission on  
11 Mental Health to evaluate and address problems in the mental health service  
12 delivery system in the United States. On July 22, 2003, the Commission found that  
13 public schools are in a key position to identify mental health problems early and to  
14 provide a link to appropriate services. The Commission further determined that early  
15 detection, assessment, and links to treatment are key to preventing many mental  
16 health problems from worsening; and

17 WHEREAS, Active Minds, Inc., a nonprofit 501(c)(3) public charity  
18 headquartered in Washington, D.C., offers mental health awareness, education, and  
19 advocacy programs run by students; and

20 WHEREAS, The mission of Active Minds, Inc. is to utilize peer outreach to  
21 increase students' awareness of mental health issues, provide information and  
22 resources regarding mental health and mental illness, encourage students to seek  
23 help as soon as it is needed, and serve as a liaison between students and the mental  
24 health community; and

25 WHEREAS, Under the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act, the United States  
26 Congress authorized \$82 million to states, Indian tribes, and colleges and universities  
27 for the development of youth suicide prevention programs; now, therefore,

28 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
29 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

30 **Article - Education**

31 7-504.

32 (a) (1) The Department shall adopt regulations that set eligibility guidelines  
33 for State funding of Youth Suicide Prevention School Programs under this subtitle.

34 (2) The regulations shall:

35 (i) Establish procedures for developing local programs, in  
36 cooperation with local education agencies, youth service bureaus, and community  
37 mental health centers; and

- 1 (ii) Establish standards and policies for programs to offer:
- 2 1. Individual, family, and group counseling related to youth
- 3 suicide prevention;
- 4 2. Referral, crisis intervention, and information for students,
- 5 parents, and school personnel; and
- 6 3. Training for school personnel, and others responsible for
- 7 counseling or supervising student activities.

8 (b) A Youth Suicide Prevention School Program established under this subtitle

9 shall plan, fund, and implement educational programs, which may include any of the

10 following:

11 (1) Classroom instruction designed to achieve any of the following

12 objectives:

13 (i) Encourage sound decision making and promote ethical

14 development;

15 (ii) Increase pupils' awareness of the relationship between drug and

16 alcohol use and youth suicide;

17 (iii) Teach pupils to recognize signs of suicidal tendencies, and other

18 facts about youth suicide;

19 (iv) Inform pupils of available community youth suicide prevention

20 services;

21 (v) Enhance school climate and relationships between teachers,

22 counselors, and pupils; and

23 (vi) Further cooperative efforts of school personnel and community

24 youth suicide prevention program personnel;

25 (2) School or community based alternative programs outside of the

26 classroom, including:

27 (i) Positive peer group programs;

28 (ii) A 24-hour "hotline" telephone service, staffed by trained

29 professional counselors;

30 (iii) Programs to collect data on youth suicide attempts;

31 (iv) Intervention and follow-up; [and]

32 (V) MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS SUCH AS TEENSCREEN AND

33 ACTIVE MINDS, INC. TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND ENCOURAGE

34 PUPILS TO SEEK HELP AS SOON AS IT IS NEEDED; AND

1 [(v)] (VI) Parent education and training programs; and

2 (3) Teacher training programs.

3 (c) Any Program established under this subtitle shall:

4 (1) Assist in increasing the awareness, among school personnel and  
5 community leaders, of the incidence of teenage suicide;

6 (2) Train school personnel in individual and schoolwide strategies for  
7 teenage suicide prevention;

8 (3) Develop and implement school-based teenage suicide prevention  
9 programs and pilot projects; [and]

10 (4) DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT SCHOOL-BASED PILOT MENTAL HEALTH  
11 PROGRAMS SUCH AS TEENSCREEN AND PEER-TO-PEER SUPPORT TO ADDRESS THE  
12 NEEDS OF STUDENTS SUFFERING FROM MENTAL ILLNESS; AND

13 (5) Through cooperative efforts, utilize community resources in the  
14 development and implementation of teenage suicide prevention programs under this  
15 subtitle.

16 (D) THE DEPARTMENT MAY ASSIST LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN  
17 IMPLEMENTING PILOT TEENSCREEN AND PILOT PEER-TO-PEER MENTAL HEALTH  
18 AWARENESS PROGRAMS.

19 7-505.

20 (a) The Department shall:

21 (1) As to each program receiving State funding:

22 (i) Monitor its operations; and

23 (ii) Evaluate annually its effectiveness.

24 (2) Review and either approve or disapprove the application for State  
25 funding of a proposal program.

26 (b) (1) The funding of an eligible program shall be a shared responsibility of  
27 this State and local education agencies.

28 (2) Each eligible program shall submit to the Department a proposed  
29 annual budget for review and approval, at the times that the Department specifies.

30 (3) The proposed budget of the Department shall list the eligible  
31 programs and estimate the amount of State funds to be allocated to each.

1                   (4)       THE DEPARTMENT SHALL SEEK FEDERAL FUNDS FOR YOUTH  
2 SUICIDE PREVENTION SCHOOL PROGRAMS UNDER THE GARRET LEE SMITH  
3 MEMORIAL ACT.

4       (c)       The State funds designated for Youth Suicide Prevention School Programs  
5 may be included in the budgets of:

6                   (1)       The Department; and

7                   (2)       The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

8       SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
9 October 1, 2005.