
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**

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Assigned to: Ways and Means

Committee Report: Favorable

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 22, 2005

CHAPTER _____

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Article - Education

2 7-504.

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

5 (2) The regulations shall:

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

9 (ii) Establish standards and policies for programs to offer:

10 1. Individual, family, and group counseling related to youth
11 suicide prevention;

12 2. Referral, crisis intervention, and information for students,
13 parents, and school personnel; and

14 3. Training for school personnel, and others responsible for
15 counseling or supervising student activities.

16 (b) A Youth Suicide Prevention School Program established under this subtitle
17 shall plan, fund, and implement educational programs, which may include any of the
18 following:

19 (1) Classroom instruction designed to achieve any of the following
20 objectives:

21 (i) Encourage sound decision making and promote ethical
22 development;

23 (ii) Increase pupils' awareness of the relationship between drug and
24 alcohol use and youth suicide;

25 (iii) Teach pupils to recognize signs of suicidal tendencies, and other
26 facts about youth suicide;

27 (iv) Inform pupils of available community youth suicide prevention
28 services;

29 (v) Enhance school climate and relationships between teachers,
30 counselors, and pupils; and

31 (vi) Further cooperative efforts of school personnel and community
32 youth suicide prevention program personnel;

33 (2) School or community based alternative programs outside of the
34 classroom, including:

- 1 (i) Positive peer group programs;
- 2 (ii) A 24-hour "hotline" telephone service, staffed by trained
3 professional counselors;
- 4 (iii) Programs to collect data on youth suicide attempts;
- 5 (iv) Intervention and follow-up; [and]
- 6 (V) MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS SUCH AS TEENSCREEN AND
7 ACTIVE MINDS, INC. TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND ENCOURAGE
8 PUPILS TO SEEK HELP AS SOON AS IT IS NEEDED; AND

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

10 (3) Teacher training programs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

24 (D) THE DEPARTMENT MAY ASSIST LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN
25 IMPLEMENTING PILOT TEENSCREEN AND PILOT PEER-TO-PEER MENTAL HEALTH
26 AWARENESS PROGRAMS.

27 7-505.

28 (a) The Department shall:

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

30 (i) Monitor its operations; and

31 (ii) Evaluate annually its effectiveness.

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

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

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

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

9 (4) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL SEEK FEDERAL FUNDS FOR YOUTH
10 SUICIDE PREVENTION SCHOOL PROGRAMS UNDER THE GARRET LEE SMITH
11 MEMORIAL ACT.

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

14 (1) The Department; and

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

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