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## **New Required Training Aimed at Reducing High State Teen Suicide Rates**

*By Tami Silverman, President & CEO, Indiana Youth Institute*

Our kids are going back to school and many of us are thinking about backpacks, school supplies and physicals. With bus schedules, class schedules and afterschool activities, our kids can easily get stressed about the beginning of a new school year. For some children, especially teens, this stress and anxiety exists at a dangerous level.

In Indiana suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for youth ages 15-24 and the 4th leading cause of death for youth ages 5-14. Experts and teens list several reasons for the increase, including insufficient mental health screening, poor access to mental health services and resistance to seeking care. Suicide ideation and attempt rates are also found to be higher during the school year than in the summer.

Sadly, Hoosier youth are significantly more likely to consider or attempt suicide than their peers nationally, and Indiana faces significant disparities in youth suicide among vulnerable groups.

- 1 in 5 Indiana high school students seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year. The percentage of students who seriously considered suicide increased from 18.0% in 2005 to 19.8% in 2015.
- Indiana ranks 2nd out of 34 states in the percentage of students who made a suicide plan and ranks 3rd out of 37 states in the percentage of students who seriously considered attempting suicide.
- Among our neighboring states, Indiana has the highest percentage of students who seriously considered attempting suicide and the highest percentage of students who made a suicide plan.

For more data on Youth Suicide in Indiana, read IYI's latest [Data Brief](#).

Based on these pressing needs, the Indiana General Assembly has passed youth suicide prevention legislation in the past two sessions. Effective June 30, 2018, all teachers and educators for students in grades 5-12 are required to participate in at least two hours of youth suicide awareness and prevention training every three years.

For details about the required training, school responses and effective interventions, go to the [Indiana Department of Education's website](#).