



## Kognito K-12 Suicide Prevention Training

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 10 and 17. There was an underlying mental illness in 90% of the youth who have completed suicide. MN suicide rate for 10-19 year olds is higher than the national rate (7.0 per 100,000 compared to 5.3 per 100,000). In Minnesota, 48 youth aged 10-19 died by suicide in 2016. According to the 2016 Minnesota Department of Education Student Survey, 9,352 11<sup>th</sup> graders, 4,997 9<sup>th</sup> graders, and 4,967 8<sup>th</sup> grade public school students reported seriously considered suicide in the last year. Properly trained teachers can play an invaluable role in engaging youth with mental illnesses and reducing the risk of suicide.

The Minnesota Legislature passed a law in 2016 requiring all teachers to take one-hour of evidence-based suicide prevention training as part of renewing their teacher's license. Changes in teacher licensure in 2017 kept this requirement for all Tier IV and V licenses. The Minnesota Department of Health has supplemented this effort through a grant that allows schools to apply to have access to the online Kognito PK-12 At-Risk Suicide Prevention Training. Through this grant, administered by NAMI Minnesota, 30 school districts and over 1,000 teachers received suicide prevention training this past year.

### Kognito At-Risk Training

Kognito's online training contains role-playing simulations where teachers interact with animated students exhibiting symptoms of mental distress. Teachers learn to use evidence-based techniques to engage in a conversation with a student experiencing a mental health crisis and to encourage that student to seek additional help when necessary. This training can be completed in an hour and is available 24/7 to anyone with internet access. In addition to providing the teacher with evidence-based techniques to interact with their students, the Kognito platform also provides a link to information about local mental health resources.

### Proven Outcomes

Kognito At Risk for High School Educators is on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) registry of evidence-based practices for mental health promotion with three proven outcomes:

- Preparedness to recognize, approach, and refer students exhibiting signs of psychological distress.
- Likelihood of approaching and referring students exhibiting signs of psychological distress.
- Confidence in one's ability to help students exhibiting signs of psychological distress

Kognito is an effective program that is already being used by teachers in over 8,000 school districts nationwide, leading SAMHSA to give the training a perfect score on its readiness for dissemination rating. Of the Minnesota teachers who have completed the Kognito Training, 95-97% would recommend taking the course to a colleague.

### Low Costs

This effective training could be made accessible to every school district in Minnesota with a modest investment:

- A 2-year contract with Kognito for the State of Minnesota would be \$273,000, or about \$44 per school.
- A 1-year contract with Kognito costs \$183,000, or about \$56 per school-district.

The Kognito At-Risk Training will prepare Minnesota teachers across the state to recognize the symptoms of mental distress, have a meaningful conversation about suicide with their students, and know when it's time to refer the student for additional support. Kognito offers a cost-effective platform to meet the need for suicide prevention training for Minnesota teachers.

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