

COMBATING THE NATIONAL SUICIDE CRISIS

Signing Jake's Law

“Insurance companies should be covering mental health, just like they cover an annual physical. And we’re going to make sure they do.”

Governor Doug Ducey

Background

- Nearly 4 Arizonans die each day from suicide – that is higher than the number of deaths from car crashes.
- Groups at higher risk of suicide include seniors, teens, veterans, and Native Americans.
- Studies have found that over 50% of individuals with mental illness do not receive the behavioral health services they need.

Recent Action

- The FY2018 budget added \$3 million (\$10M Total Funds) to expand behavioral health services on school campuses, funding over services for 15,810 Arizona public school students, a 700% increase.
- In the 2018, Governor Ducey signed The Mitch Warnock Act, requiring suicide prevention training for public school employees.
- The FY2020 budget included \$20 million for schools to hire additional counselors and SROs. The FY2021 Executive Budget includes an addition \$38 million for schools to hire even more positions.
- In 2020, ADHS released the Suicide Prevention Action Plan to collect new data, improve mental health and ensure access to treatment.

“This Action Plan calls for a whole community approach to prevent suicide.”

Arizona Department of Health Services Director

Dr. Cara Christ

S.B. 1523 **Jake's Law**

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- Requires insurance companies cover mental health treatment, just like they would an annual physical.
- Creates the Children's Behavioral Health Services Fund and provides \$8 million for behavioral health services for children who are uninsured or underinsured.
- Prohibits insurance companies from denying coverage for services that are covered by the plan simply because they are delivered in an educational setting.
- Establishes a mental health parity advisory committee to ensure that all parties including families, providers, advocacy organizations, and insurers have a voice at the table.
- Creates a suicide mortality review team to review deaths by suicide and provide policymakers with improved data and recommendations.
- Helps increase follow-up services for patients at risk for suicide.