

[First Reprint]
ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION
No. 26

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
218th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2018 SESSION

Sponsored by:

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District 11 (Monmouth)

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District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)

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Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblymen Wimberly, Moriarty, Chiaravalloti, Assemblywomen Lopez, Murphy, Swain, Assemblymen Tully, Freiman, Armato and Mazzeo

SYNOPSIS

Designates September of each year as “Youth Suicide Prevention Awareness Month” in New Jersey.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Assembly Women and Children Committee on February 1, 2018, with amendments.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/31/2019)

- 1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** permanently designating September as
2 “Youth Suicide Prevention Awareness Month” in New Jersey.
3
- 4 **WHEREAS**, Suicide is the third leading cause of death for youth ages
5 10 to 24 in the State of New Jersey, and the second leading cause of
6 death for youth in that age group in the United States; and
- 7 **WHEREAS**, Youth suicide statistics from the American Association
8 of Suicidology show that in the United States, one young person
9 under the age of 24 dies of suicide every one hour and 43
10 minutes, and for every suicide death, it is estimated that
11 approximately 200 teens and young adults make suicide
12 attempts; and
- 13 **WHEREAS**, According to the Youth Suicide Report released by the
14 Department of Children and Families in 2015, between 2012 and
15 2014, 4,796 young people ages 10 to 24 made suicide attempts
16 that resulted in hospitalization, and 265 of these attempts were
17 fatal; and
- 18 **WHEREAS**, Of the 256 completed suicides, 197 of these deaths
19 involved youth ages 19 to 24, with young men completing
20 suicide at a rate approximately 3.6 times higher than young
21 women. The number of deaths by suicide among male youth ages
22 10 to 18, at 52, was also higher than female youth in the same
23 age category, at 16; and
- 24 **WHEREAS**, Among New Jersey youth ages 10 to 24, non-Hispanic
25 White and Black youth complete suicide at nearly the same rate,
26 with the rate for Non-Hispanic White youth just slightly higher.
27 Hispanic youth complete suicide at a rate 25 percent lower than
28 the overall Statewide rate; and
- 29 ¹**WHEREAS**, Hanging, strangulation, and suffocation were the most
30 common means of suicide among New Jersey youth from 2012
31 to 2014; and
- 32 **WHEREAS**, Compared to national statistics, New Jersey has a
33 relatively high number of suicides by train. While New Jersey
34 has three percent of the nation’s population, approximately 13
35 percent of the nation’s suicides by train occur in New Jersey;
36 and¹
- 37 **WHEREAS**, There are many risk factors for youth suicide, including
38 trauma, abuse, prior suicide attempt, and a history of family
39 members committing or attempting to commit suicide; and
- 40 **WHEREAS**, Data from the Youth Suicide Report also show that
41 among New Jersey youth who completed suicide, mental health,
42 relationships, and substance abuse were prevalent challenges;
43 and

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Assembly AWC committee amendments adopted February 1, 2018.

1 **WHEREAS**, Although New Jersey has a lower suicide rate in
2 comparison to the rest of the United States, suicide affects youth
3 in the entire State, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or
4 economic background; and

5 **WHEREAS**, Youth suicide's impact reverberates through families,
6 friends, and communities, and many suicide attempts that do not
7 result in death do end in serious injury to the victims and lifelong
8 trauma to their family and those who know them; and

9 **WHEREAS**, A young person considering suicide may exhibit
10 behavioral warning signs prior to a suicide attempt; and

11 **WHEREAS**, Suicide warning signs include: previous suicide
12 attempts; current talk of suicide or making a plan to attempt
13 suicide; a strong wish to die or a preoccupation with death;
14 giving away prized possessions; moodiness; increased alcohol or
15 other drug use; hinting at not being around in the future; or
16 saying good-bye to family and friends; and

17 **WHEREAS**, Early identification of these warning signs as well as
18 recognition by family, friends, and members of the community of
19 depressive behavior and other mental or behavioral health issues
20 may help reduce the number of teens and young adults who
21 commit or attempt to commit suicide; and

22 **WHEREAS**, Increased public awareness of the risk factors and
23 warning signs for youth suicide and community involvement in
24 creating strategies to prevent teens and young adults from taking
25 their own lives are key factors in youth suicide prevention and in
26 the development of Statewide comprehensive anti-suicide
27 initiatives; now, therefore,

28

29 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
30 of New Jersey:

31

32 1. September of each year is designated as "Youth Suicide
33 Prevention Awareness Month" in New Jersey in order to increase
34 public awareness of the risk factors and warning signs for youth
35 suicide, increase community involvement in creating strategies to
36 prevent teens and young adults from taking their own lives, and to
37 encourage the development of Statewide comprehensive anti-
38 suicide initiatives.

39

40 2. The Governor is respectfully requested to annually issue a
41 proclamation recognizing September as "Youth Suicide Prevention
42 Awareness Month" in New Jersey and calling upon public officials,
43 the citizens of the State, and other interested groups to observe the
44 month with appropriate activities and programs.

45

46 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.