

DYERSBURG STATE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE



**Suicide
Prevention
Plan**

04 - 2026

Dyersburg State Community College Suicide Prevention Plan and Protocol

College students are in a state of life transition and can be overwhelmed with new opportunities and new responsibilities. Lifestyle changes, such as sleep deprivation and substance abuse, can contribute to suicidal behavior.

- In 2020, the U.S. had one death by suicide every 11 minutes.
- For people ages 10–34, suicide is a leading cause of death.
- Suicide is the **second** leading cause of death for college students
- Approximately **1,100** college students die by suicide every year
- **6%** of college students report they have seriously considered suicide over the past year; **90%** of those students created a suicide plan, **14%** actually attempted suicide, and **60%** continued to have thoughts of suicide. Visit tspn.org for more information.

As such, and in compliance with the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-7-1, Dyersburg State Community College (DSCC) has developed a suicide prevention plan and an associated protocol that engages in a variety of initiatives to improve crisis services.

PREVENTION

- Suicide or Mental Health Wellness Syllabus Course Handbook/Statement: All faculty syllabus documents, or program handbooks will prominently display the following statement:

If you or someone you know at DSCC feels overwhelmed, hopeless, depressed, or is thinking about dying by suicide, supportive services are available and effective. For immediate help, contact the **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**. More information and local resources are located online at <https://www.dsccl.edu/counseling-services/>

- Relationships: DSCC has two mental health counselors who provide annual suicide prevention education and outreach, programming, and/or prevention screenings.

DSCC has a relationship in place with the following community agencies, hereby referred to as Agency, to provide the noted services:

Professional Care Services of West Tennessee Inc. provides Suicide Awareness Training and emergency response contact information: Professional Care Services of West Tennessee Inc., 1997 Hwy 51 S Covington, TN 38019, 901.622.1671

DSCC has a relationship with an online service provider, One to One Health. Student contacts the DSCC Counselor for a referral for a few free online counseling appointments.

Information regarding such relationships at DSCC is available online at <https://www.dsccl.edu/counseling-services/>. A comprehensive list of partners and services are available to members of the DSCC community including crisis referral services, prevention screenings, training programs, etc.

- Training: DSCC will provide bi-annual suicide prevention training to regular full and part-time faculty and staff, provided by Professional Care Services of West Tennessee Inc and/or Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network.
- Yearly training for student leaders will be provided during the, Student-Athlete Orientation and Student Government Association Orientation by the DSCC mental health counselors. The DSCC mental health counselors will provide training to adjunct faculty during a fall or spring adjunct faculty workshop.

- Dissemination of Information: DSCC will promote the available resources related to suicide prevention services to include, but not be limited to, its partnership relationships, campus resources, the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline on the DSCC website. Additionally, information will be provided in the following ways:
 - A flyer that includes information about suicide, warning signs, appropriate responses, ways to refer suicidal persons, and a list of resources with contact information including DSCC counselors and professionals who are able to assist suicidal persons, will be included in in-person new student orientation information packets and nursing student orientation.
 - Brochures approved by the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network will be included in the mental health literature racks;
 - Posters approved by the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network that include the 988 number will be displayed in buildings on DSCC property;
 - DSCC counselors will present suicide awareness and prevention information including warning signs, appropriate responses, ways to refer suicidal persons, and a list of resources with contact information in DSCC's first year experience (FYE) course, ORN 1010 Orientation: Learning to Succeed, each semester.
 - DSCC Nursing faculty will present suicide awareness and prevention information to all nursing programs.

- DSCC will disseminate via the email address provided by DSCC to faculty, staff, and students a link to the DSCC Suicide Prevention Plan and Protocol each academic term. The Dean of Student Services will be responsible for disseminating the plan and recording each dissemination.

- Gatekeeper Training: Provided during FYE course or orientation. See the Higher Education Suicide Prevention Outreach and Curriculum Infusion Tool Kit (page 28) for a sample template of information that may be included within a presentation.

- Educate student/faculty/staff in training to become mental health social service or health care providers on identification and treatment of individuals at high risk for suicide

- DSCC will distribute and encourage mental health/suicide curriculum infusion ideas for all general education courses to be provided to all General Education faculty.

INTERVENTION

SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS

There is no typical suicidal person. No age group, ethnicity, or background is immune. Fortunately, many troubled individuals display behaviors that deliberately or inadvertently signal their suicidal intent. Recognizing the warning signs and learning what to do next may help save a life.

The Warning Signs: The following behavioral patterns may indicate possible risk for suicide and should be watched closely. If they are numerous or severe, seek professional help immediately. The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline provides access to trained telephone counselors, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- Talking about suicide, death, and/or no reason to live
- Preoccupation with death and dying

- Withdrawal from friends and/or social activities
- Experience of a recent severe loss (especially a relationship) or the threat of a significant loss
- Experience or fear of a situation of humiliation or failure
- Drastic changes in behavior
- Loss of interest in hobbies, work, school, etc.
- Preparation for death by making out a will (unexpectedly) and final arrangements
- Giving away prized possessions
- Previous history of suicide attempts, as well as violence and/or hostility
- Unnecessary risks; reckless and/or impulsive behavior
- Loss of interest in personal appearance • Increased use of alcohol and/or drugs
- General hopelessness
- Recent experience of humiliation or failure
- Unwillingness to connect with potential helpers: Feelings, Thoughts, and Behaviors

Nearly everyone at some time in his or her life thinks about suicide. Almost everyone decides to live because they come to realize that the crisis is temporary, but death is not. On the other hand, people in the midst of a crisis often perceive their dilemma as inescapable and feel an utter loss of control.

Frequently, they:

- Can't stop the pain
- Can't think clearly
- Can't make decisions
- Can't see any way out
- Can't sleep eat or work
- Can't get out of the depression
- Can't make the sadness go away
- Can't see the possibility of change
- Can't see themselves as worthwhile
- Can't get someone's attention
- Can't seem to get control

What Do You Do?

1. Be aware. Learn the warning signs listed above.
2. Get involved. Become available. Show interest and support.
3. Ask if s/he is thinking about suicide.

4. Be direct. Talk openly and freely about suicide.
5. Be willing to listen. Allow for expressions of feelings and accept those feelings.
6. Be non-judgmental. Avoid debating whether suicide is right or wrong, whether someone's feelings are good or bad, or on the value of life.
7. Avoid taunting the person or daring him/her to "do it".
8. Avoid giving advice by making decisions for someone else to tell them to behave differently.
9. Avoid asking "why." This only encourages defensiveness.
10. Offer empathy, not sympathy.
11. Avoid acting shocked. This creates distance.
12. Don't keep someone else's suicidal thoughts (or your own) a secret. Get help; silence can be deadly.
13. Offer hope that alternatives are available. Avoid offering easy reassurance; it only proves you don't understand.
14. Take action. Removing anything that the person could use to hurt themselves means. Get help from individuals or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention.

Who Can You Talk To?

- A community mental health agency
- A private therapist
- A school counselor or psychologist
- A family physician
- A suicide prevention/crisis intervention center
- A religious/spiritual leader

If you or someone you know is severely depressed, potentially, or actively suicidal, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-237-TALK (8255). Trained counselors in your area are standing by to provide you with the help you need.

Saving College Student Lives in Tennessee:

[Saving College Student Lives in Tennessee is a brochure available through The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network](#): This brochure provides information about signs and risk factors, related to the potential for suicide, as well as resources and information on how to help.

INTERVENTION PROTOCOL

DSCC has an intervention protocol in place with the understanding that some student/, faculty/staff will be thinking about suicide but not be in imminent danger, while other suicidal students, faculty, or staff may have made plans and/or have the means to complete suicide. Appropriate assistance for these students, faculty, or staff varies from acknowledging their thoughts and providing counseling to help them learn coping skills, hospitalization to keep them safe and provide mental health treatments, or

treating them after they have attempted suicide to keep them alive. The counselor or other trained professional can assess the individual thinking about suicide and determine a plan of care.

Information regarding such relationships at DSCC is available online (<https://www.dsc.edu/counseling-services/>) and in the following offices:

- **DSCC Dyersburg Campus -**
Counselor/ADA Coordinator, Mathematics Building Room 156
Assistant Director, Student Support Services, Learning Resource Center - Room 128
- **DSCC Henry County Center –**
Director, Henry County Center, Front Office
- **DSCC Jimmy Naifeh Center at Tipton County –**
Counselor/Career Services Coordinator, Jimmy Naifeh Building - Room 163
Academic Coordinator, Student Support Services, Student Center - Room 164

The aforementioned individuals will have a comprehensive list of partners and services available to members of the DSCC community, including crisis referral services, prevention screenings, training programs, etc.

This process should be followed if an employee encounters a suicidal student, faculty, or staff member.

- The DSCC Counselor/ADA Coordinator or Counselor/Career Services Coordinator, hereby referred to as Counselor, is to be notified should you encounter a suicidal student, faculty, or staff member. Should the incident occur after hours, call 9-1-1, and notify the Counselor of the situation on the next business day.
- The Counselor will respond to the person who is contemplating suicide by contacting the referral agency. The contact information for Professional Care Services of West Tn Inc., 1997 Hwy 51 S Covington, TN 38019, 901.622.1671.
- Professional Care Services of West Tennessee, Inc. will come to the college. The Counselor or their designee will remain with the student, faculty, or staff member until the person notified or referral agency has arrived to render assistance. A suicidal person should not be left alone.
- If the agency is unable to respond at the college and the student, faculty, or staff member is unable to be transported off college property, the student, faculty, or staff member will be referred to 9-8-8. The Counselor will contact an agency via phone to provide necessary support.
- If the suicidal person has plans and access to a lethal means, is planning to make an attempt very soon, or is currently in the process of making an attempt, this individual is in imminent danger and should not be left alone. Get the person help immediately. Determine who can get there quickly and keep the individual safe. Should you have this concern, call 9-1-1 immediately.
- Document the incident by completing the DSCC Suicide Intervention Report Form. Completed forms should be submitted to the office of the dean of student services, who will review the events and the response with relevant members of the DSCC Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT). People identified at risk for suicide, who have voiced serious suicidal ideation or have attempted suicide, should be reported to the BIT team using the DSCC Suicide Intervention Report Form. [Review “Other Things to Consider” on page 8 and add information where pertinent]

POSTVENTION

Because all student/faculty/staff deaths affect our community, whether that death is accidental, due to illness, or the result of self-inflicted injury, it is important for DSCC to respond to and recognize all deaths in a consistent manner. Campus leadership and the communications department developed a protocol that includes a campus response to a student/faculty/staff suicide to decrease the trauma

experienced by the students and other campus community members left behind and to help prevent further suicides through contagion.

GOALS OF POSTVENTION

The goals of a postvention response after a suicide include:

- Providing resources to those impacted.
- Stabilizing the community and restoring balance and routine to campus at a pre-crisis level of functioning.
- Preventing further suicides through contagion and decreasing the trauma experienced by students.
- Facilitating understanding and processing the emotional impact of grief and loss.

If a student/staff/faculty member is affected by suicide that is not connected to the campus community, the individual should be connected to mental health resources in the area.

PROCEDURE

The following should take place if a student, staff, or faculty member's death occurs by suicide.

- The dean of student services or their designee will be notified immediately, regardless of the awareness of the incident occurring during or after office hours.
- [Title/Position] will lead the response on behalf of the institution. This individual will need to confirm that the death was indeed a suicide, contact outside resources that are now needed on campus, etc.
- [Local and State agencies] will serve as resources to assist the campus community and its members in working to decrease community trauma.

The Higher Education Mental Health Alliance has created the document Postvention: A Guide for Response to Suicide on College Campuses. This document provides information that institutional leadership can use when planning before an incident and when proceeding after one. The document is located at <http://hemha.org/hemhapress/wpcontent/uploads/2018/06/jed-hemha-postvention-guide.pdf>

RESOURCES

CAMPUS and COMMUNITY RESOURCES

[Please complete as appropriate to your campus and community resources]

Please refer to this staff/faculty contact list for all personnel mentioned in this document/resource – name, office, title, contact information, phone, and email. To be updated as staffing changes are made.

College Resources			
Department	Name/Title	Phone	Website/Email
Counseling, Dyersburg & Paris	Sherry Baker, Counselor	731-286-3242	https://www.dsc.edu/counseling-services/ sdbaker@dsc.edu counselor@dsc.edu
Counseling, Covington	Carmen Pfeifer, Counselor	901-475-3137	https://www.dsc.edu/counseling-services/ pfeifer@dsc.edu counselor@dsc.edu

Alcohol & Drug Prevention, Dyersburg & Paris	Sherry Baker, Counselor	731-286-3242	https://www.dsc.edu/counseling-services/ sdbaker@dsc.edu counselor@dsc.edu
Alcohol & Drug Prevention Covington	Carmen Pfeifer, Counselor	901-475-3137	https://www.dsc.edu/counseling-services/ pfeifer@dsc.edu counselor@dsc.edu
Student Health Services			
Dean of Students	Larenda Fultz	731-286-3240	fultz@dsc.edu
Dyersburg Campus Security		731-589-3250	https://www.dsc.edu/security/
Office of Human Resources	Amy Martin	731-286-3316	aemartin@dsc.edu
Employee Assistance Program		1-855-437-3486	

*Please note, email may not be an appropriate method of contact in moments of immediate crisis.

Local Emergency Resources		
Name	Phone	Website
Emergency Services	911	
County Coalition	NA	NA
Dyer County Sheriff's Office	731-285-2802	
Dyersburg Police Department	731-285-1212	
Covington Police Department	901-476-5282	
Paris Police Department	731-642-2424	

Local Hospitals		
Name	Phone	Address
West Tennessee Healthcare Dyersburg Hospital	731-285-2410	400 E Tickle St, Dyersburg, TN
Baptist Memorial Hospital-Tipton	901-476-2621	1995 US Highway 51 S, Covington, TN
Henry County Medical Center	731-642-1220	301 Tyson Avenue, Paris, TN

Local Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Treatment Resources		
Name	Phone	Website
Lakeside Behavioral Health	901-377-4700	
Professional Care Services, Inc.	901-476-8967	

Crisis Support		
Hopeline Network	1-800-784-2433	
Trevor Lifeline for LGBT Youth	1-866-488-7386	
Suicide & Crisis Lifeline	988	
Crisis Text Line	Text "TN" to 741-741	
7 Cups of Team -online chat	7cupsoftea.com	

I'm Alive - online chat	Imalive.org	
Lifeline Crisis Chat - online chat	CrisisChat.org	
Adult Statewide Crisis Phone Line	1-855-CRISIS-1 or 1-855-274-7471	

TENNESSEE RESOURCE GUIDE

Region guides found here: <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/program-areas/vipp/2023-TDH-Suicide-Prevention-Resource-Guide.pdf>

Dyersburg State Community College Suicide Intervention Report Form

Date of Report/Name of person reporting: _____ / _____

Student, Faculty or Staff name: _____

DSCC ID: _____

Contact Number: _____

Address: _____

Emergency Contact Name and Number: _____

Who identified the person as being at risk? _____

Reasons for concern: (Please provide detailed information including verbal threats/actions, etc.)

Name of DSCC personnel involved in the response: _____

Describe the response: _____

Send completed forms to the DSCC Dean of Student Services.

Completed forms should be considered part of the student's confidential record subject to the terms of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

[988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) Free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources, including best practices for professionals in the United States.

[Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network](#): The statewide public-private organization responsible for implementing the Tennessee Strategy for Suicide Prevention as defined by the 2001 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. TSPN is a grass-roots association that includes counselors, mental health professionals, physicians, clergy, journalists, social workers, and law enforcement personnel, as well as survivors of suicide and suicide attempts. TSPN works across the state under the direction of our Executive Director to eliminate the stigma of suicide and educate communities about the warning signs of suicide, with the ultimate intention of reducing suicide rates in the state of Tennessee.

[SAMHSA Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#). The resources and information on this page help professionals and others looking for information on understanding the background, history, funding opportunities, and implementation resources for strengthening suicide prevention and mental health crisis services.

[The Jed Foundation](#) is the nation's leading organization working to prevent suicide and promote mental health among college students.

[Jed Foundation's HALF OF US Series](#) Half of us struggle with depression, and all of us have the power to help ourselves and others by fighting the stigma around mental health and speaking up when we need support.

[Suicide.org](#) Suicide Prevention, Awareness and Support

[Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#) Customized information for College Students

[ULifeline](#) Online College Mental Health Services for Students



Dyersburg State Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, ethnicity or national origin, sex, disability, age, status as a protected veteran or any other class protected by Federal or State laws and regulations and by Tennessee Board of Regents policies with respect to employment, programs, and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Equity Officer, equity@dsc.edu, E.B. Eller Administration Building, Room 200, 1510 Lake Road, Dyersburg, TN 38024, Ph: 731-286-3316, or Director of Human Resources, Title IX Coordinator, aemartin@dsc.edu, E.B. Eller Administration Building, Room 200, 1510 Lake Road, Dyersburg, TN 38024, Ph: 731-286-3316. Dean of Student Services, Deputy Title IX Coordinator, fultz@dsc.edu, Student Center, Room 123, 1510 Lake Road, Dyersburg, TN 38024, Ph: 731-286-3234. The Dyersburg State Community College policy on nondiscrimination can be found at <https://www.dsc.edu/non-discrimination-policy/>. PUB 09_24_097