



Re: The Jason Flatt Act – KS / SB 323

To House / Representatives Education Committee,

Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for young people ages 10-24 in Kansas. Specifically for ages 12-18, your middle and high school age youth, suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for Kansas youth only surpassed by “unintentional injuries”. Nationally, suicide is listed not only as one of the “**leading causes of death**” for our youth...but one of the “leading causes of **PREVENTABLE** death” for our youth. According to the 2013 Youth Risk Behavioral Survey – CDC / Kansas:

- ❖ 16.4% of surveyed youth in Kansas reported “seriously considering suicide” in the past twelve months. ***If nothing is done differently*** to affect this percentage, that will mean over 34,145 youth in Kansas will “seriously consider suicide” in the coming twelve months.
- ❖ 8.4% of the surveyed youth in Kansas answered “YES” when asked if they had attempted suicide in the past twelve months. ***If nothing is done differently*** to affect this percentage that will mean over 17,489 youth in Kansas will come to a point in the next twelve months that will lead to a suicide attempt.

It is ***doing something differently*** that I want to ask your support. Education and awareness are the basis for building the foundation for the prevention of youth suicide. The training of teachers, as a primary goal, is listed as part of the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. Providing educators with the information, tools and resources to better recognize and respond to at-risk students for suicidal ideation will save lives! Four out of five youth who will attempt suicide will demonstrate “warning signs” before the attempt. This training **IS NOT** to make educators / teachers into counselors, but to help enable them to better be able to recognize and assist in getting help for possible at-risk students.

The Jason Flatt Act – KS / SB 323, modeled after The Jason Flatt Act now passed in 16 states, will provide training for educators that will help equip them with the information, tools and resources to help identify and assist at-risk youth who may be struggling with suicidal thoughts. Done as The Jason Flatt Act, this life-changing / life-saving training can be done with no-fiscal note as it has been done in 15 of the 16 states who have passed it (CA law requires a fiscal note on required legislation).

I apologize for not being able to be there in person to share with you, but I hope you will support this important legislation that will without a doubt save young lives in Kansas. I know of first hand this tragedy as I lost my 16 year old son to suicide. Please help to prevent another family from being impacted by this tragedy or another young person thinking suicide is the only answer to their problems.

Thank you for your time and I hope support.

Regards,

Clark Flatt

President, The Jason Foundation, Inc. and “Jason’s Dad”

Educational Programs and Seminars in Awareness and Prevention of Youth Suicide

18 Volunteer Drive • Hendersonville, Tennessee 37075

Phone: 615-264-2323 • Fax: 615-264-0188 • Toll-Free: 1-888-881-2323 • www.jasonfoundation.com