



Year 3 Highlights: July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Office of Suicide Prevention (OSP) was created by [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 2112](#) in July 2021. The mission of the OSP is to address the root causes of suicide and self-harm injuries through strong partnerships, dissemination of data, and promotion of evidence-informed public health prevention strategies that create safe and healthy communities across California.

OSP Data Related Activities

Data Dissemination — The OSP routinely produces several suicide and self-harm data resources and reports, which can be found on the [Suicide Prevention Program webpage](#). Recently published reports include:

- [CalVDRS White Paper](#)
- [Suicide Trends in 2021 Data Brief](#)
- [PowerPoint doc with updated data for Suicide Trends in 2021](#)
- [Veteran Suicide in 2021 Data Brief](#)
- [California Violent Death Reporting System \(CalVDRS\) Fact Sheet: Suicide in California, 2021](#)
- [California Violent Death Reporting System \(CalVDRS\) Infographic: Suicide in California, 2021](#)
- [Youth Suicide Prevention Program Annual Highlights Sheet](#)
- [Tele-Mental Health for Children \(Ages 0-17\) in California](#)
- [Older Adult Suicide in California in 2020](#)

CDPH Suicide Prevention Data Dashboard Updates— A new [data dashboard](#) feature was added to the [California Violent Death Reporting System \(CalVDRS\) webpage](#), which includes data on circumstances surrounding suicide deaths in participating counties, from various data providers (i.e., vital records, law enforcement, and coroners/medical examiners) in one secure and confidential database. The CDPH Injury and Violence Prevention Branch, in which the OSP is housed, also hosts [EpiCenter](#), which is available to run data queries related to suicide deaths and self-harm emergency department visits in California from 2016-2022, as well as the [Firearm Injury Data Dashboard](#).

Technical Assistance — The OSP responded to 20 requests for data from partners and stakeholders, including those representing local health offices and state-wide agencies. Technical assistance focused on using data to guide decision-making and program planning related to suicide prevention. Counties that received technical assistance include Butte, Humboldt, Kern, Mendocino, Placer, Nevada, Sutter, San Joaquin, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus, and Yuba. In addition, six presentations were provided to inform various groups, such as local offices of education, state and federal agencies (such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), and stakeholders about OSP activities and suicide and self-harm data trends in California.



OSP Strategic Priorities

OSP Biennial Needs Assessment

In Spring 2023, the OSP conducted the Office's first biennial Partner Needs Assessment. The Assessment was comprised of an online survey and follow-up interviews, which gathered information about OSP partners' recent successes, challenges, lessons learned, and ongoing needs related to suicide and self-harm prevention efforts. The next needs assessment will be conducted in Spring 2025. You can access the summary of the 2023 Partners Needs Assessment on the [OSP webpage](#).

The OSP developed four core strategic priority areas:

Communications; Creating Safe and Protective Environments; Postvention; and Continuing Education and Training. These are based on OSP's biennial needs assessment findings and current activities, and are in alignment with [California's Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention, Striving for Zero](#), produced by the **Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission**.

Communications

Partnership Building — In year 3, the OSP continued focusing on fostering partnerships with internal programs and external suicide prevention partners and stakeholders to collaborate and coordinate suicide prevention activities taking place throughout California, and to ensure focus on groups disproportionately impacted by suicide, including youth, Tribal populations, older adults, Veterans and LGBTQ+ individuals. For example:

- The OSP participated in monthly Tribal Information Sharing Meetings hosted by CDPH's Office of Health Equity and the CA Health and Human Services Agency to provide data, resources, and opportunities to address suicide among Tribal populations.
- The OSP collaborated with relevant partners focused on suicide prevention among students through coordinated efforts with the CDPH Office of School Health, participation in the CA Department of Education's Student Mental Health Policy Workgroup, the monthly Suicide Prevention Partners Meeting hosted by County Offices of Education, and via presentations to the statewide County Offices of Education Mental Health & Wellness Collaborative.
- The OSP partnered with the Office of Health Equity to provide education and resources on suicide prevention during the Native American Heritage Commission's 57th Annual Native American Day.
- The OSP team participated development of the state's draft 988 implementation plan - [Building California's Comprehensive 988-Crisis System: A Strategic Blueprint](#) – through participation in a number of different CalHHS 988-Crisis Workgroups, providing input on data, communications, and standards development.
- The OSP worked with the [Violence Prevention Initiative \(VPI\)](#) on the Public Health Policy Roadmap for Violence Prevention project, helping determine selection criteria for communities with higher burdens of gun violence.

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- The OSP collaborated with the CA Department of Veterans Affairs to promote suicide prevention among veterans and participated in the California Veterans Health Initiative Research and Surveillance Team, which is focused on coordinating a statewide assessment of veteran’s mental health and providing recommendations on future prevention, intervention, and post-intervention strategies.
- To promote awareness of their efforts and services, the OSP partnered with the federal Veterans Affairs Community Engagement and Partnerships Coordinator (CEPC) program, which is part of the Veteran’s Health Administration Community-Based Interventions Suicide Prevention Initiative. The program is designed to encourage and support formation of coalitions and other groups that may serve Veterans, promotes secure access to firearms, and provides gatekeeper trainings.

OSP Community of Practice Series — In the 2023 OSP Needs Assessment, suicide prevention partners shared a strong desire for regular convenings across counties, jurisdictions, and disciplines to promote promising practices, provide mentoring and support, and coordinate resources. As a result, the OSP began hosting quarterly virtual Community of Practice (CoP) webinars in March of 2024, with the goal of bringing together OSP partners to connect, collaborate, share, and learn from one another’s successes and challenges working on suicide prevention efforts at the local and state level. The first CoP provided an overview of the [California Violent Death Reporting System](#) (CalVDRS) and how suicide prevention stakeholders can utilize CalVDRS to identify key data for local suicide prevention efforts. This was followed by a June 2024 webinar highlighting the history of Pride Month and a presentation from [The William’s Institute](#) on Minority Stress and Suicide Risk. Both webinars were well attended and participant’s feedback was used to help plan future CoP efforts.

Mental Health Thrival Kits — The OSP purchased 85,271 [Mental Health Thrival Kits](#) (Developed by [Youth Creating Change](#)) provided in English, Spanish, Korean American, and Filipino American languages to youth in California via schools and local health and behavioral health departments throughout the state. Mental Health Thrival Kits can be used to celebrate wellness and promote positive coping skills for youth with easy-to-follow activities to enhance basic skills for social emotional wellness. Kits were distributed in the following counties: Kern, Madera, Los Angeles, Riverside, Sacramento, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, Santa Cruz, San Diego, Siskiyou and Sonoma.

The [Never a Bother](#) Youth Suicide Prevention Media and Outreach Campaign — Launched in March of 2024, Never a Bother is a data-driven, community-based youth suicide prevention campaign co-created with youth.

- Since preliminary media research began in May of 2023, the campaign has engaged over 400 youth in the co-creation process and developed a Youth Advisory Board to gain insight on the look and feel of the campaign, identify priority messaging, and to act as spokespeople for the effort.
- A [campaign launch event held in collaboration with Tribal Partners](#) marked the start of campaign messaging shared via digital ads, [Spotify radio](#), streaming TV, on posters and billboards, and on social media platforms like [Instagram](#) and [TikTok](#). In just the first quarter, Never a Bother generated over 290 million impressions across these platforms.

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- In addition, [funded partners](#) are helping to amplify campaign messaging in their communities and reinforce it through implementation of local youth suicide prevention projects.
- Learn about the warning signs of suicide, crisis resources, and how youth can support themselves or a friend on the [Never a Bother website](#). Visit the [Get Involved](#) page to see partner toolkits, palm cards, and other youth suicide prevention messaging tools.

[Creating Safe and Protective Environments](#)

Lock Box Distribution —The OSP purchased approximately 3,350 gun lock-boxes in Year 3 for 37 Tribal entities throughout the state of California. Lockboxes were distributed with the updated Safe and Secure Storage of Firearms flyer, now available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#). The flyer, created in collaboration with the UC Davis [BulletPoints Project](#), encourages lock box recipients to store firearms and medications safely so that children/youth and adults in crisis are less likely to gain access to these lethal means, and encourages help-seeking for those in crisis.

[Continuing Education and Training](#)

Zero Suicide Webinar — In June 2024, the OSP sponsored the first of two virtual [Zero Suicide Academy](#)[®] Online training, developed by the Education Development Center (EDC), for health and behavioral health organizations seeking to dramatically reduce suicide among those in their care. Five teams participated in the first cohort and had the invaluable opportunity to learn about the Zero Suicide framework, begin strategic implementation planning, and prepare for commonly faced challenges. Organizations that attended included one youth-services nonprofit, one school district, one university health center, and two county behavioral health departments.

[Postvention](#)

The Youth Suicide Reporting and Crisis Response Pilot Program — focuses on developing systems to rapidly report and comprehensively respond to youth suicides and suicide attempts at the local level in schools and community settings.

- The following ten counties are participating: Alameda, El Dorado, Humboldt, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, Sacramento, San Diego, San Joaquin, and Solano.
- The pilot program is unique to each county; however the overarching design and approach complements and expands upon existing supports and services by identifying and shrinking gaps in rapid reporting systems and protocols, aiming to initiate more timely and comprehensive crisis response services.

Pilot program activities include developing system maps, identifying gaps related to their reporting and crisis response systems, and developing local-level evaluation plans. Learn more by visiting the [pilot program resource webpage](#).