



OHIO PROGRAM *for*
**CAMPUS SAFETY
& MENTAL HEALTH**
A NEOMED CCoE

The Campus Connection

September 2026

Upcoming Training Opportunities

Interested in becoming a certified **Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR)** Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper? Sign up for a free session via Zoom today!

[October 13th, 2026 12pm-1pm EST](#)

Reserve your spot for our upcoming [virtual Mental Health First Aid](#) training! **Space is limited!**

[October 22nd, 2026, 9am-4:30pm EST](#)

[Click here](#) to join the **OPCSMH listserv** and be the first to find out about upcoming events and news!

The Meaning Behind the Official Colors of Suicide Prevention Awareness

Teal and purple are the colors of suicide prevention and symbolize healing, hope, courage, and strength. Teal represents compassion, understanding, and support for those experiencing mental health challenges, while purple represents resilience and the courage to challenge mental health stigma. Together, these colors represent a commitment to creating supportive and safe environments where people feel comfortable seeking help.



SUICIDE PREVENTION AWARENESS MONTH



September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness, encourage meaningful conversations, and remind college students that support is available. The transition to college can bring exciting opportunities, but it can also introduce challenges such as academic pressure, financial stress, and social isolation. These experiences can affect students' mental health, making suicide prevention an important part of campus wellness.

Colleges and universities play a vital role in creating supportive environments where students feel comfortable seeking help. Through mental health education, awareness campaigns, peer support, and accessible counseling services, institutions can help reduce stigma and encourage students to recognize when they or someone they know may need assistance. Suicide prevention requires ongoing attention and collective action. By promoting open conversations, fostering compassion, and ensuring students know where to find help, colleges can strengthen their communities and support student well-being throughout the academic year.

Congratulations to Madison Gaskill on Earning Her LPC!



Madison Gaskill, M.Ed., Program Coordinator II, recently received official certification of her Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) license! Congratulations Madie!



How the Campus Community Can Support Students as They Return to Campus This Fall

As students return to college campuses this fall, institutions have an important opportunity to prioritize mental health and well-being. The transition back to campus can bring excitement and new opportunities, but it may also create stress as students adjust to academic responsibilities, social expectations, financial pressures, and changes in their daily routines. Colleges can help students navigate these challenges by providing accessible resources, promoting supportive campus environments, and encouraging students to seek help when needed.

One of the most important steps colleges can take is to make mental health resources visible and accessible. Students may experience anxiety, depression, loneliness, or financial stress, but they may not know where to find help. Colleges can address these concerns by expanding awareness of available counseling services, offering virtual mental health support, and providing practical assistance such as food pantries and financial counseling. Institutions should communicate available resources during orientation and throughout the semester, ensuring students understand how to access support when they need it.

Click [here](#) to continue reading!



Get in touch with The OPCSMH!



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Suicide and First Episode Psychosis in the College Age Population

As September highlights Suicide Awareness Prevention Month, we wanted to share some information as it relates to college students and psychosis:

- Psychosis often begins in young adulthood when a person is in their late teens to mid-20s (NIH, 2023)
- Suicide is a leading cause of death among individuals diagnosed with schizophrenia spectrum disorders, with suicide rates that are approximately 13–20 times greater than the general population (Zaheer et al., 2020)
- A recent large population study demonstrated that one in 58 individuals with schizophrenia spectrum disorders died by suicide within the first 4 years after their initial diagnosis (Zaheer et al., 2020)
- There is an increased risk of suicide in the first several weeks following discharge from a psychiatric hospital (Miller & Black, 2020)
- Suicide attempts in participants with bipolar disorder are more lethal, with a ratio of attempts to death by suicide of 3:1 (compared to 35:1 in the general population) (Miller & Black, 2020)
- Suicide is a well-known risk for people diagnosed with Major Depressive Disorder. However, when psychosis co-occurs with depression, the risk of suicide attempts and self-harm are considerably higher (Gournellis et al., 2018; Heslin et al., 2016)

Read the [full article](#) to learn more!

Special thanks to Crystal N. Dunivant, MSW, LSW, FIRST Consultant & Trainer, BeST Center and Nick Dunlap, M.Ed., LPCC, Consultant & Trainer, Coordinated Specialty Care for First Episode Psychosis, BeST Center for writing this article to share with our readers!