



CABINET FOR HEALTH  
AND FAMILY SERVICES

**Interim Joint Committee on Health Services  
Suicide Prevention, Intervention, Postvention**

**Beck Whipple, MSW**

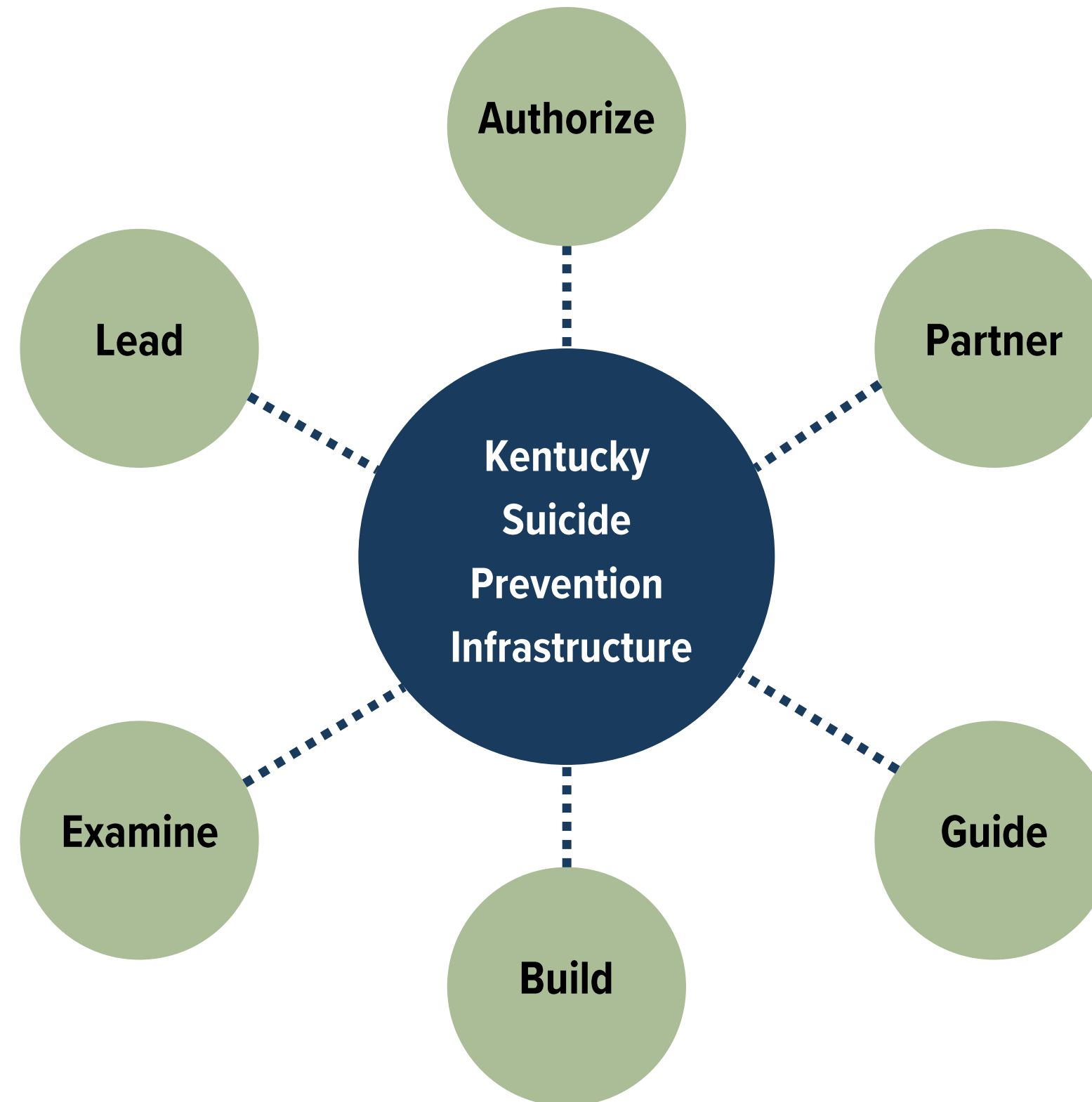
**6/18/2025**

# Take Care of Yourself

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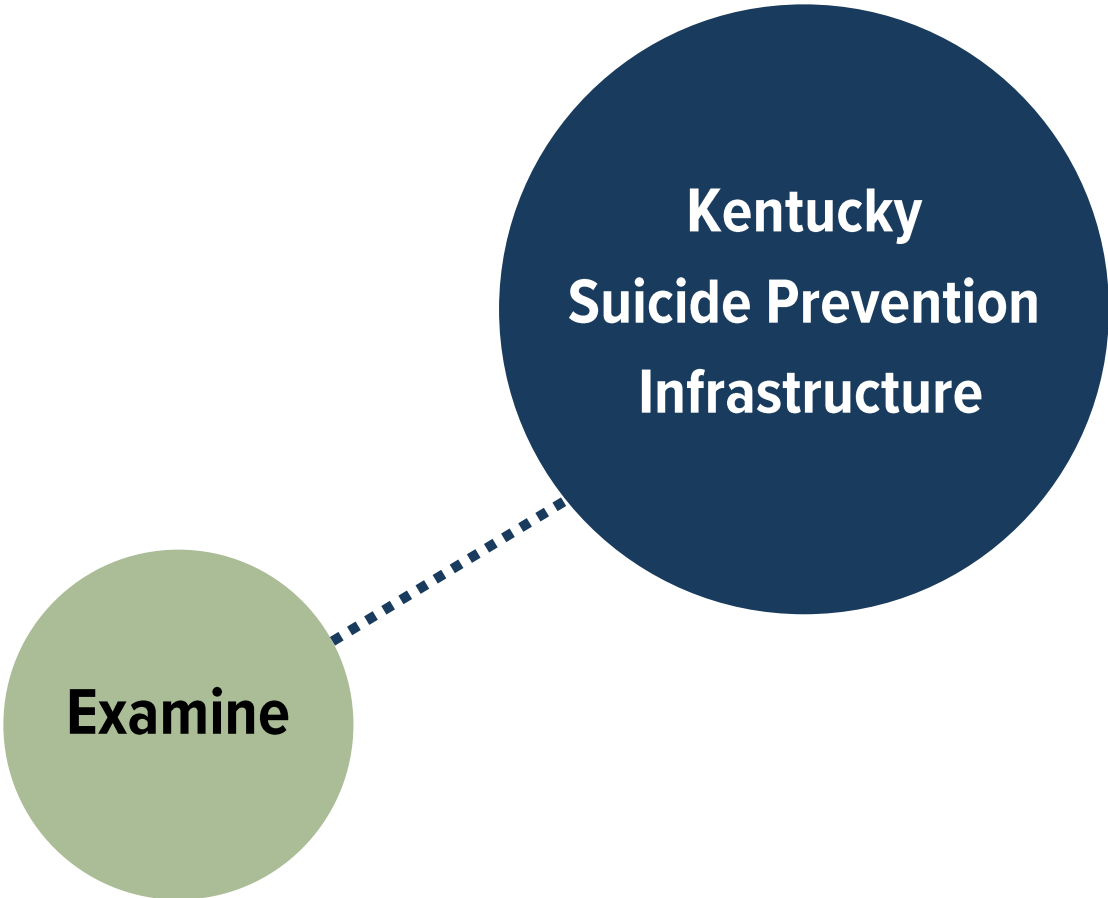
# Kentucky's Suicide Prevention Infrastructure



# Why are we here, talking about suicide?

## Examine

- Kentucky 988 data dashboard\*
- Kentucky behavioral health dashboard \*
- Kentucky Safety and Prevention Alignment Network (KSPAN) injury data\*
- Weekly Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE) reports
- Louisville Suicide Fatality Review
- Child fatality reviews



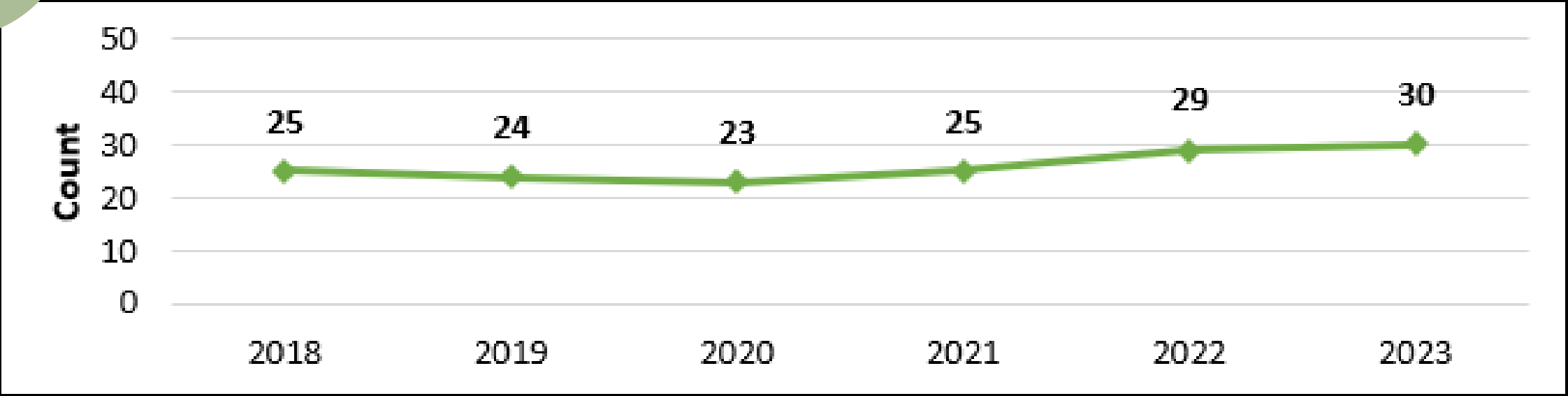
**Kentucky  
Suicide Prevention  
Infrastructure**

**Examine**

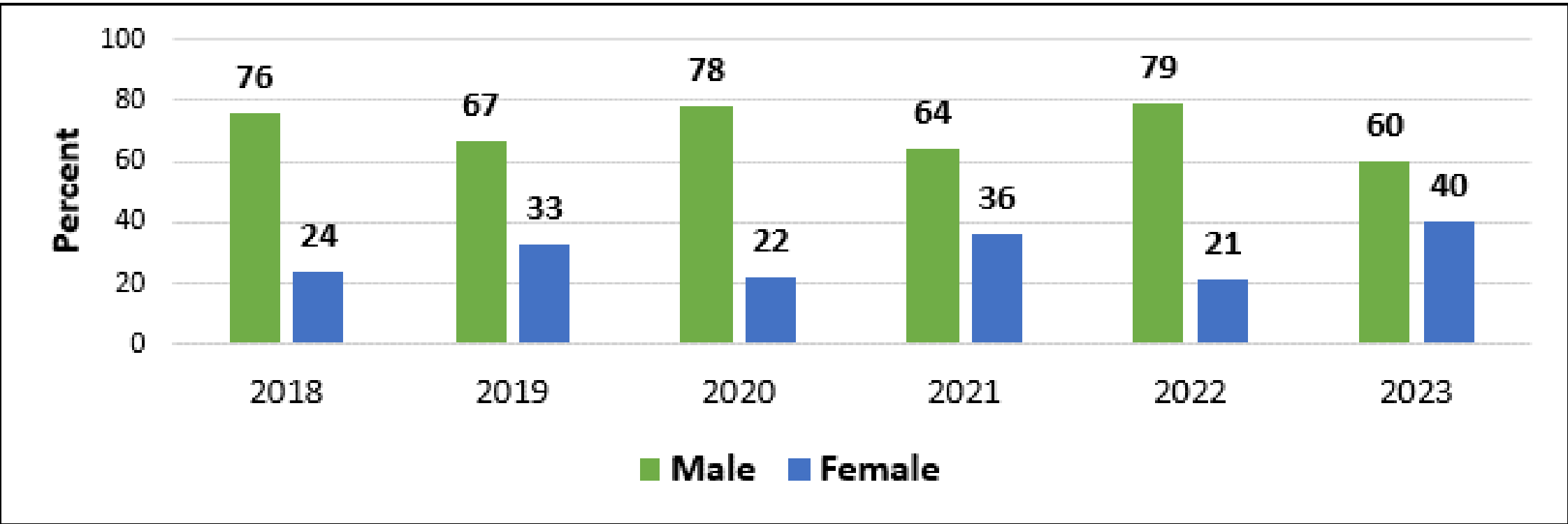
\*= Publicly available



Number of Suicide Deaths to Children 8-17 Years of Age; Kentucky, 2018-2023



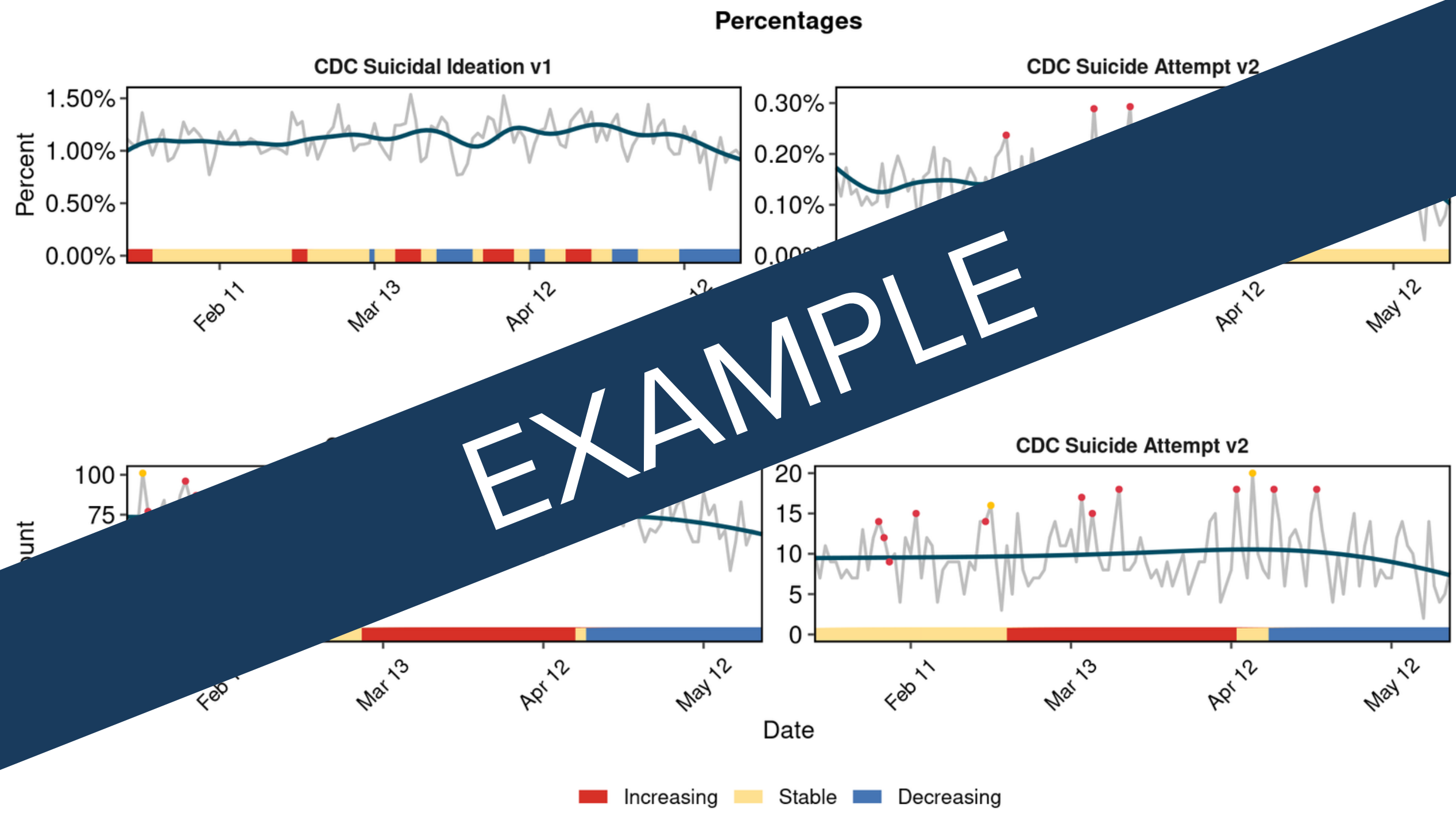
Percent of Suicide Deaths to Children by Sex; Kentucky, 2018-2023



DON'T FORGET

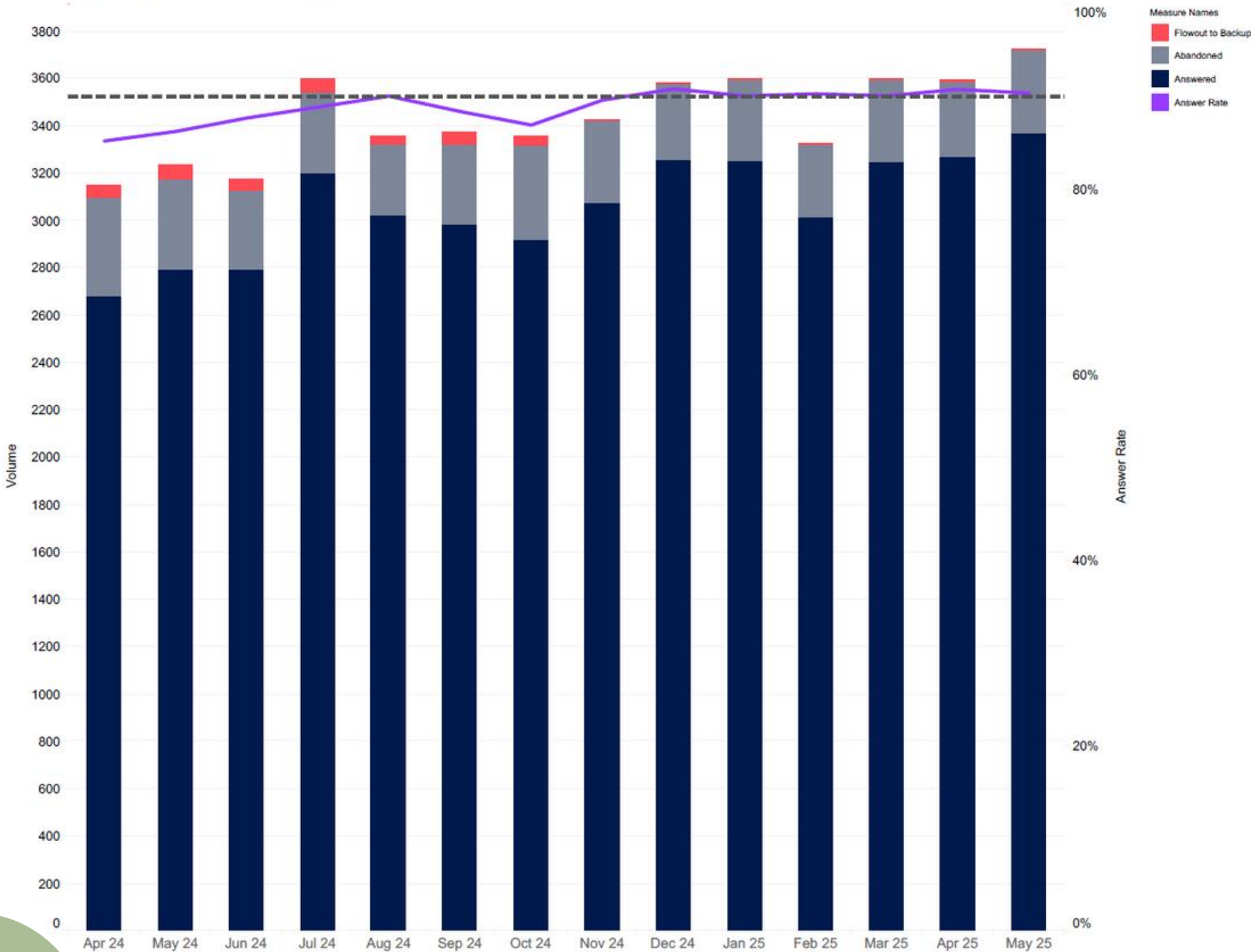
These numbers reflect actual Kentucky youth, who are still loved and deeply missed.

# ESSENCE Data



# 988 Usage in Kentucky

Routed Call Volume and Outcomes - Monthly



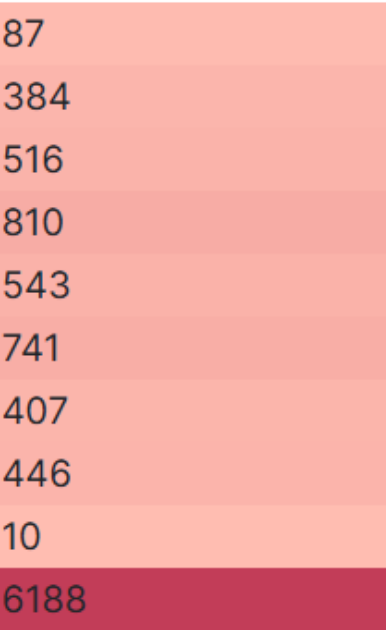
[ky988data.org](http://ky988data.org)



Number of 988 Contacts by Age - 2025 Q1 (Jan-Mar)

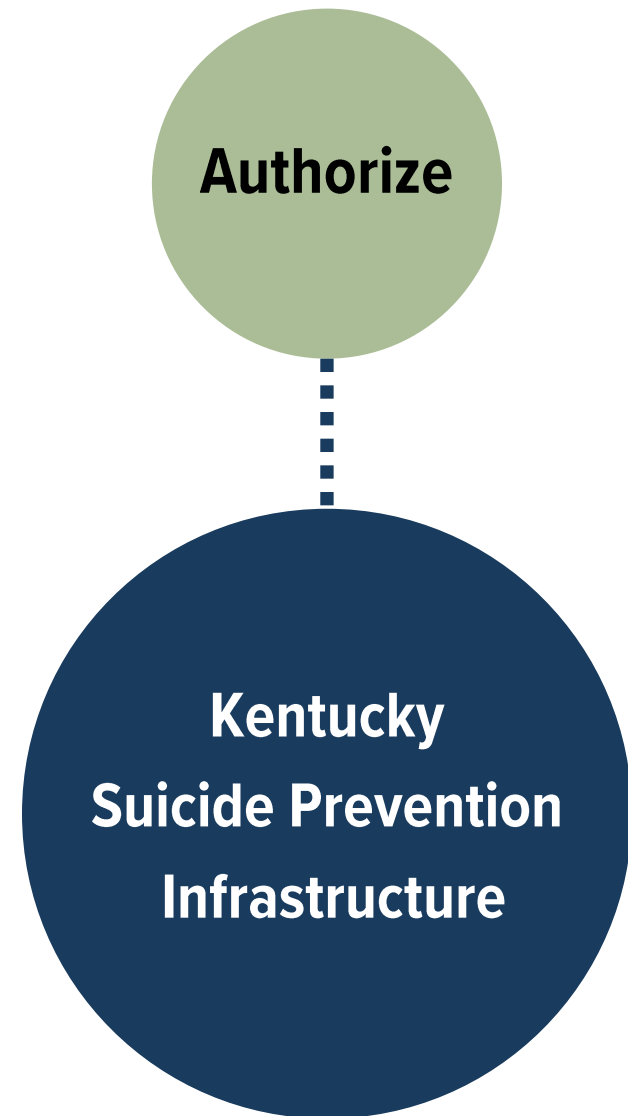
- Age**
- 12 and under
  - 13-18
  - 19-24
  - 25-34
  - 35-44
  - 45-54
  - 55-64
  - 65-84
  - 85 and older
  - Age unknown

**Contacts**



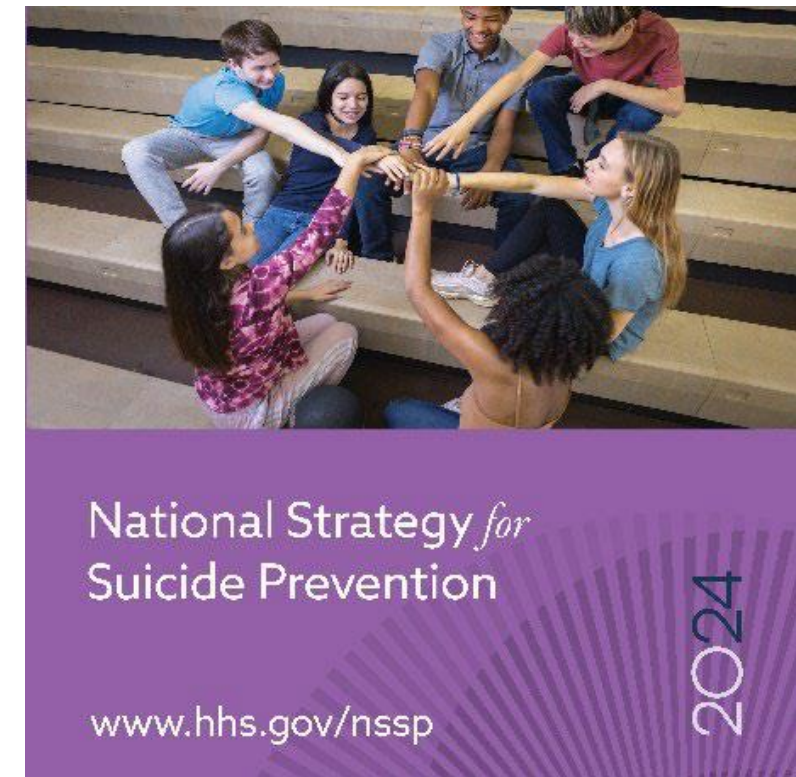


# Kentucky's Suicide Prevention Infrastructure



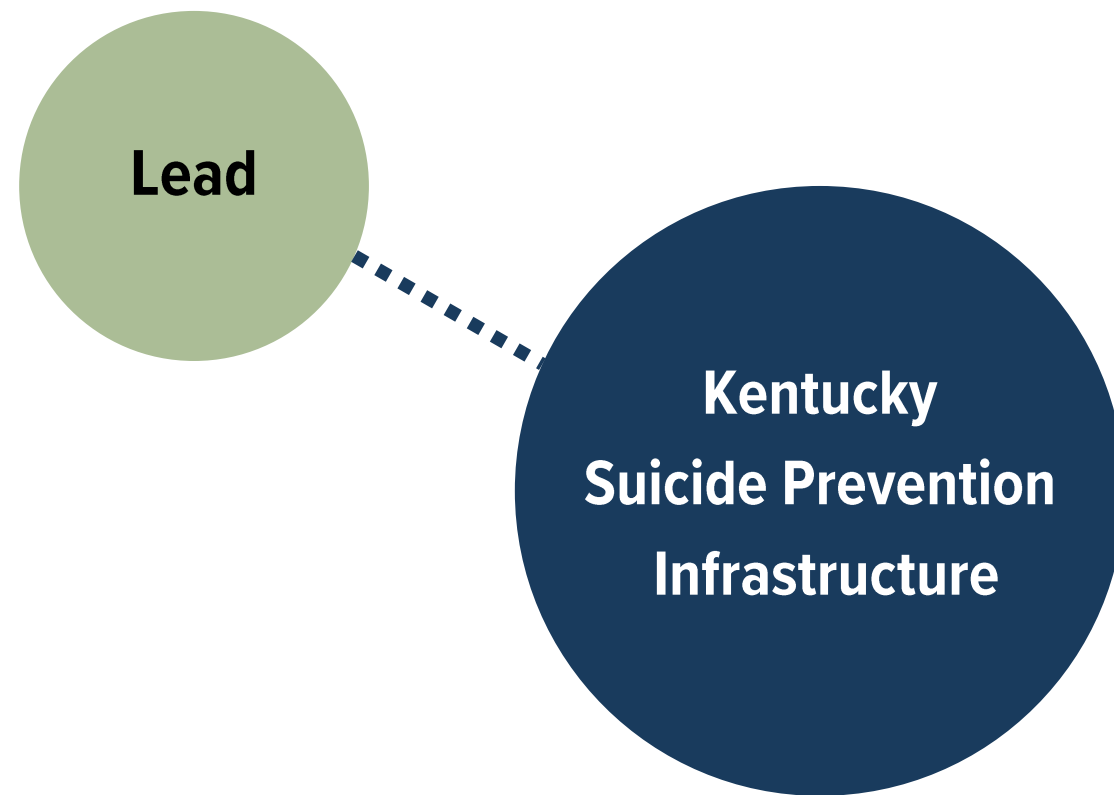
## Authorize

- Lead division for suicide prevention in Kentucky
- Maintains the State Suicide Prevention strategic plan
- State authority for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) federal grants
  - Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) Grant
  - National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (NSSP) Grant
  - Zero Suicide (ZS) Grant
  - 988 Capacity Building Grant





# Kentucky's Suicide Prevention Infrastructure



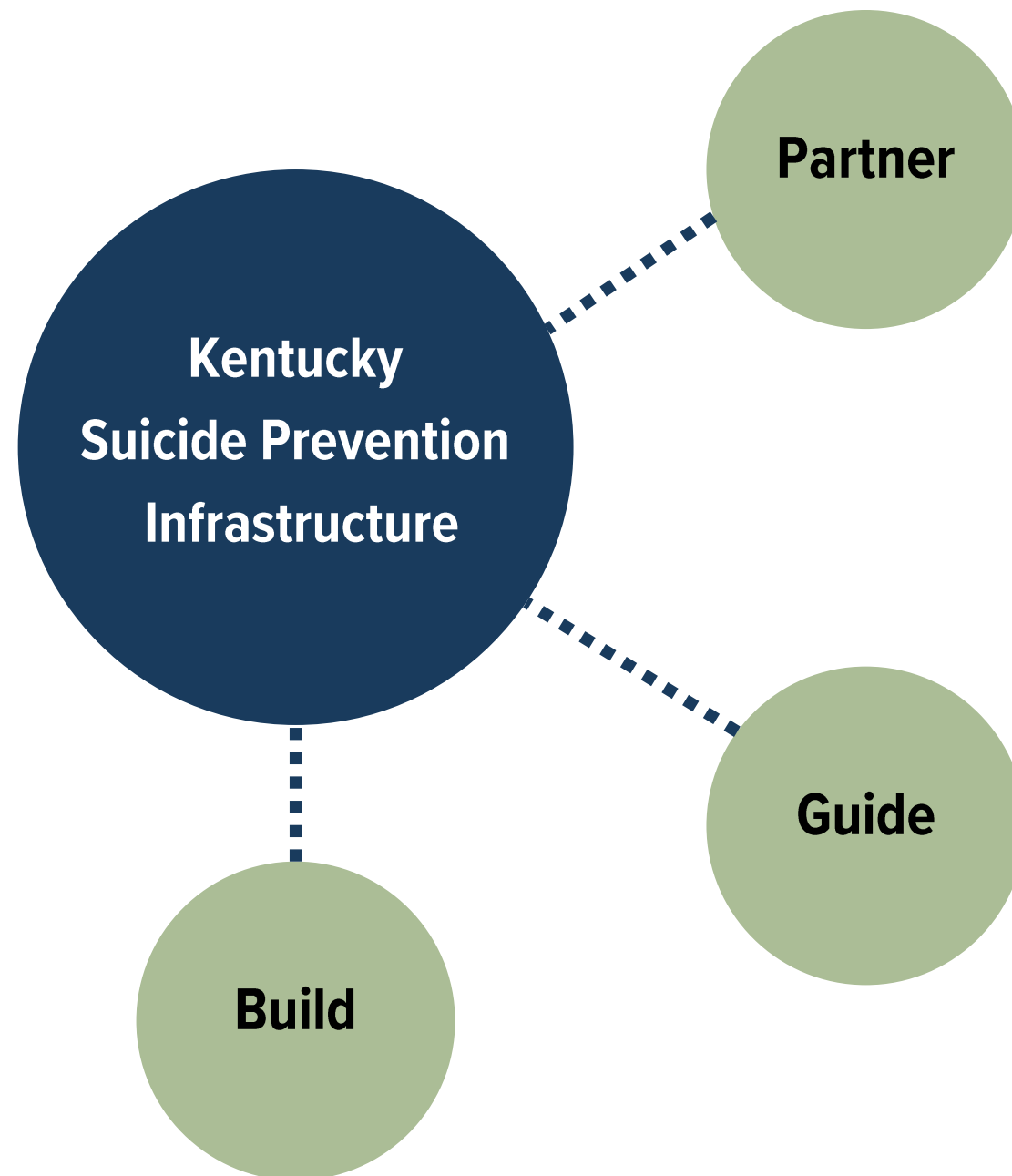
## Lead

Maintains a dedicated position or core team

- **Beck Whipple**, State Suicide Prevention Coordinator
- **Brittany Young**, Suicide Prevention Enhancement Specialist
- **Stephanie Brandt**, Zero Suicide Project Director
- **Becky Banks**, GLS Project Coordinator

Create cross-agency and cross-sector collaboration within state government

# Kentucky's Suicide Prevention Infrastructure



## Partner

Ensure a broad, inclusive public-private partnership or coalition at the state level with a shared vision and commitment to suicide prevention.

## Build

Create a multi-faceted lifespan approach to suicide prevention across the state and allocate sufficient resources to fully implement and evaluate it.

## Guide

Support all state, county, and local efforts in the planning, execution, and evaluation of their efforts, including allocation of needed resources.





# Community-Led Suicide Prevention

## Five Actions to Lower Suicide Risk





## State

Dept. for Public Health  
Dept. for Aging and Independent Living  
Dept. of Veterans Affairs  
Dept. of Education  
Office of Application Technology Services  
Center for School Safety

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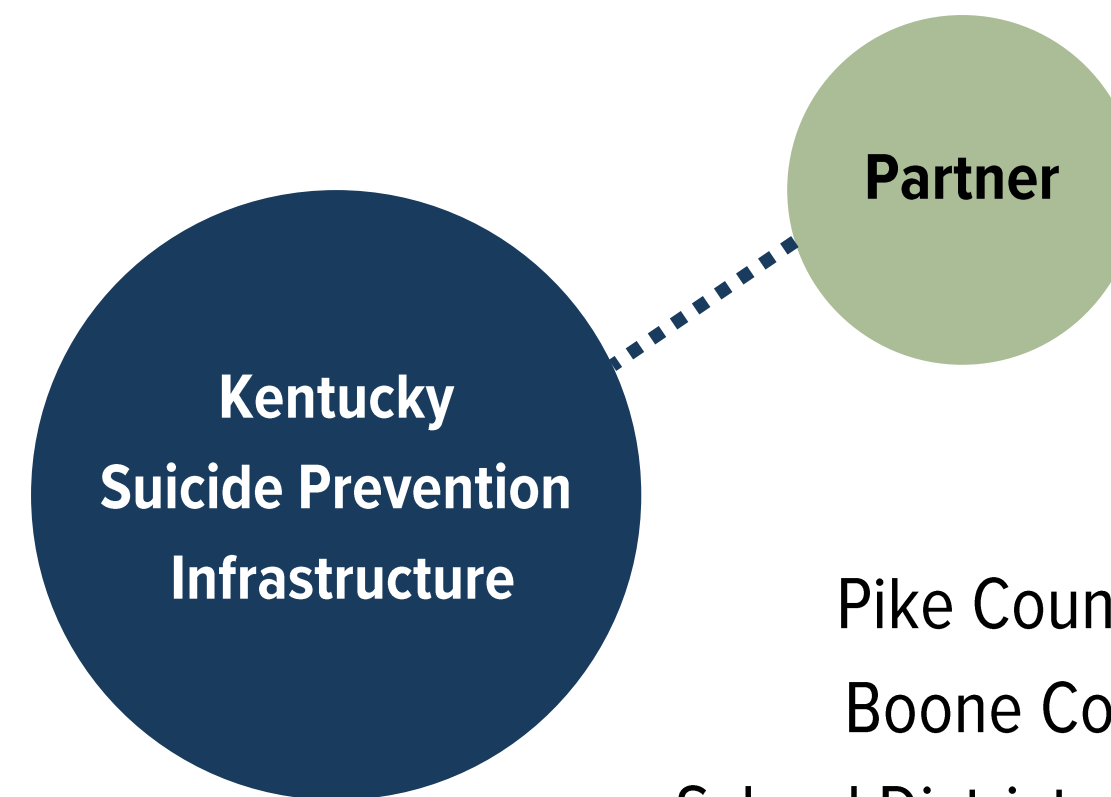
Kentucky Suicide Prevention Group  
Mental Health America-Kentucky  
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

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University of Kentucky  
University of Louisville  
Kentucky State University  
Eastern Kentucky University  
Bellarmine University

## Regional

Community mental health centers  
Local health departments  
Educational Cooperatives  
Western Kentucky Senior Suicide Prevention Network  
UK St. Claire Health  
Owensboro Regional Suicide Prevention Coalition

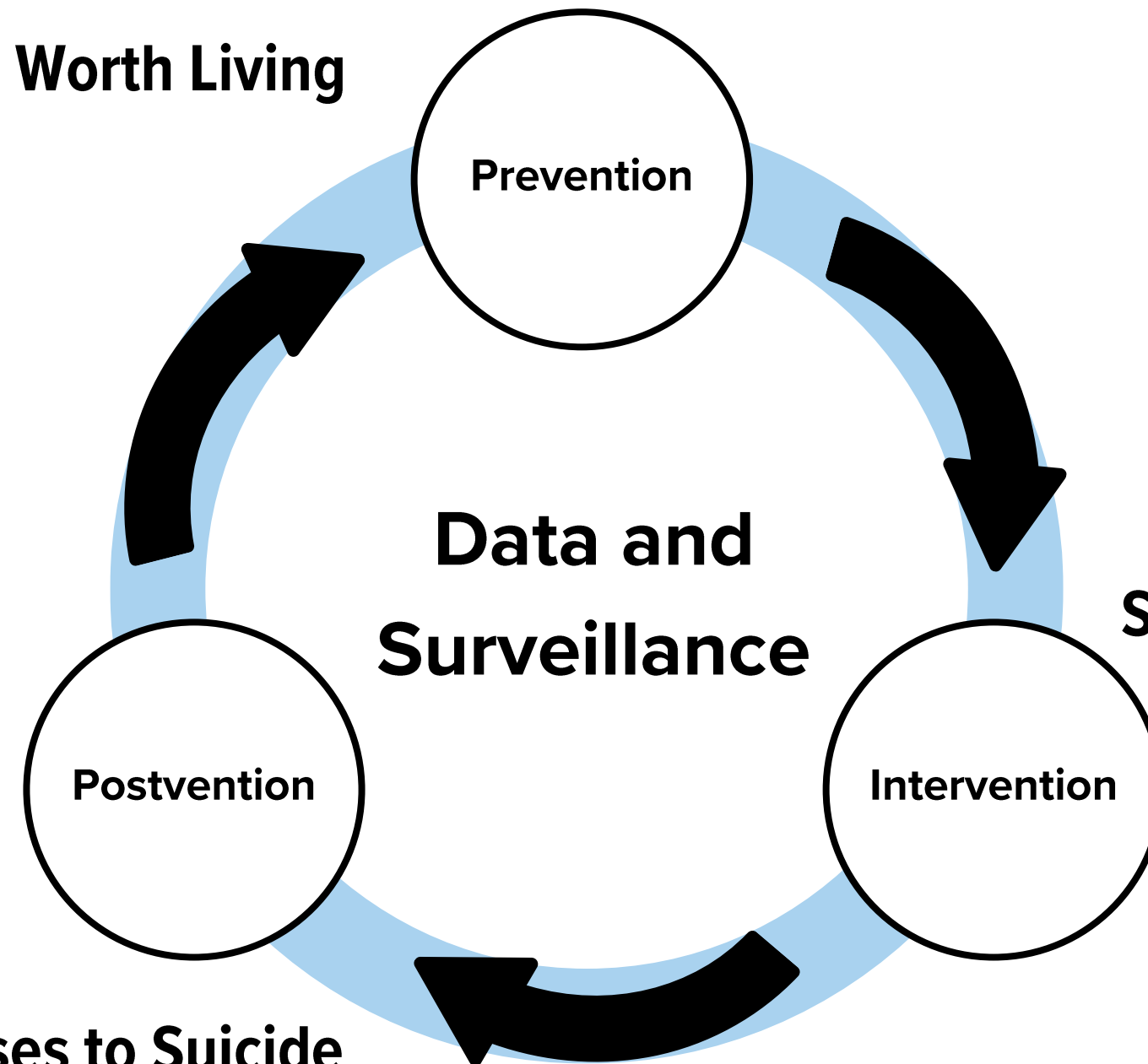


## Local

Pike County Suicide Prevention Coalition  
Boone County Response Planning Team  
School Districts -Caverna, Clinton, Franklin, Lyon Co.

# Comprehensive Approach to Addressing Suicide

Championing a Life Worth Living

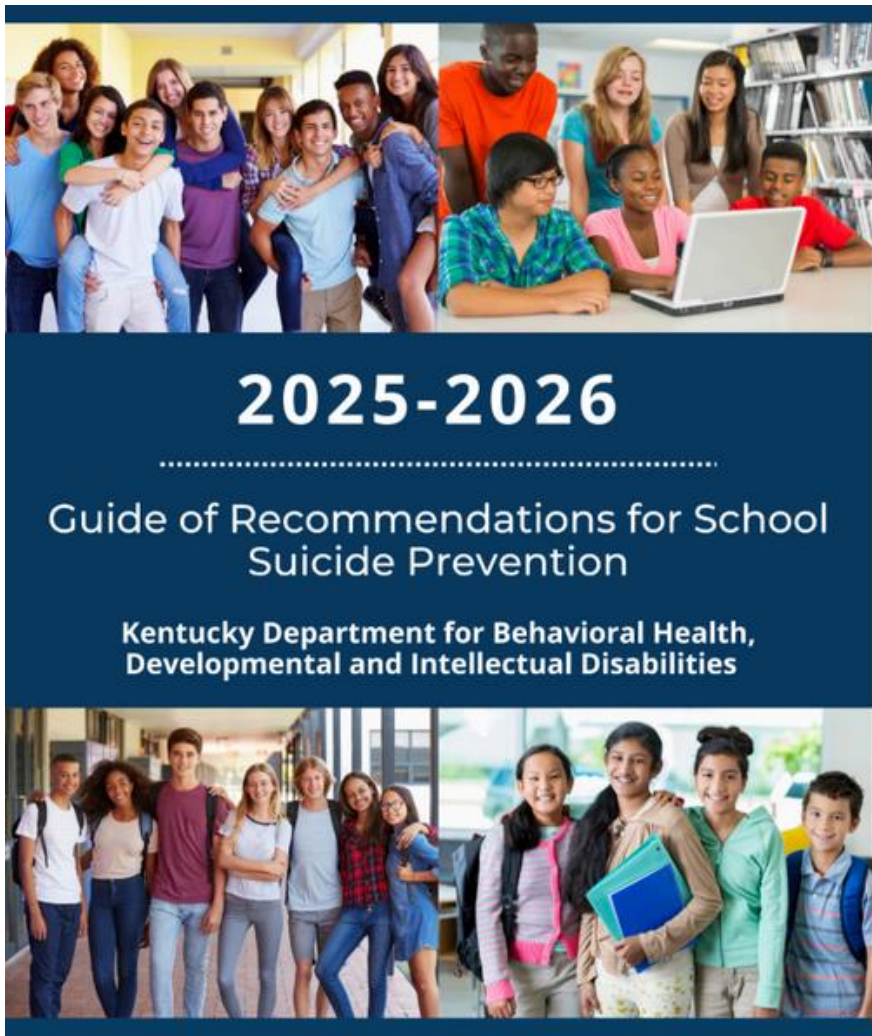


Supporting Individuals in Suicidal Crisis

Building Survivor-Centered Responses to Suicide



# Prevention: Championing a Life Worth Living



Authorize



988 License Plates  
Kentucky Suicide Prevention Group

## Regional Prevention Centers



Partner



# Code Red: Universal Safety Planning



[codered@ky.gov](mailto:codered@ky.gov)

Lock 2 Live



<https://tinyurl.com/lock2live>

## CONTACT

Who can I reach out to,  
to help me?

## DELAY

What are my reasons  
for living?

Always Call 911 if you are in immediate  
danger of harming yourself.  
Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: Call or Text 988  
Crisis Text Line: Text "KY" to 741-741

## RELAX

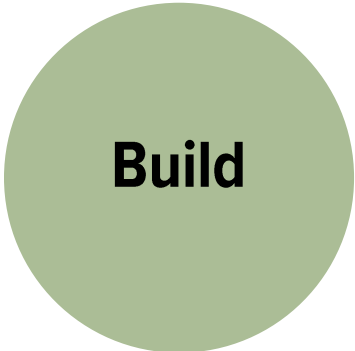
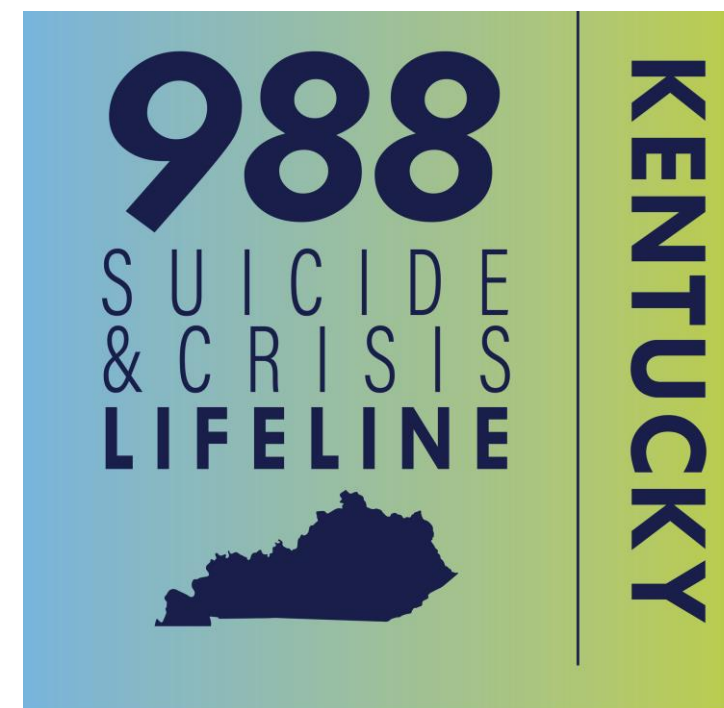
What helps me calm  
down?

## DISTRACT

What can keep my mind off  
things that are upsetting me?



# Intervention: Supporting Individuals in Suicidal Crisis



# Postvention Best Practices



Promotion and Use of  
Media Recommendations



All Communication Guided  
by Safe Messaging



Needs and Sensitivity  
to Loss Survivors



Obtaining Facts from  
Reliable Source



Preparation of Script  
for Notification



Breaking News to Staff/  
Clients/Students



Use of Grief Counselors/  
Emergency Response Teams



Collaboration of  
Key Stakeholders



Use of the Word Suicide  
if Openly Known



Awareness of Contagion



Memorial Guidelines



Monitoring Electronic Communication

Lead

Build

Guide

Partner

## Postvention: Building Survivor-Centered Response to Suicide

- Kentucky Community Crisis Response Team
- LOSS Team Community of Learning
- Long Term Survivors of Suicide Retreat
- School district technical assistance
- Disaster behavioral health response
- Cluster response

# Summary and Conclusion

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Q & A

Contact Info: [beck.whipple@ky.gov](mailto:beck.whipple@ky.gov)

Thank you!!