

**Van Buren Community Mental Health Authority  
Ends Monitoring Report  
October 2024**

**Subject: Suicide Rate will Decrease**

- The suicide rate in Van Buren County will decrease.

***CEO Interpretation:***

The Board of Directors desires that VBCMh take actions to prevent the tragedy of suicide in the county.

***Monitoring report***

The VBCMh Board adopted the end of the suicide rate will decrease in 2009. The first portion of the report is updated data from national, state and local trends and recommended responses. The information from national and state experts shapes our prevention plans and responses. The federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agency (SAMHSA) in its National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (National Strategy) does warn that “local suicide rates, due to the significant fluctuations that occur in small populations, are often not useful in evaluating the effectiveness of suicide prevention programs, in the short run.” **Thus, an examination of the means, or processes employed to reduce the rate of suicide may be the closest proxy measure for monitoring of this Board End.**

**Beginning on page 5 of the report is a description of the work of VBCMh to decrease the suicide rate in the county.**

**Trends:**

In Michigan, the rate of suicide deaths have increased over time since 1999. The latest suicide rate data that is available currently is from 2022. In 2022, the suicide death rate in Michigan increased to 14.4 deaths by suicide per 100,000 population (up from 14.2 per 100,000 in 2021). The suicide rate throughout the United States also increased from 14.1 deaths by suicide per 100,000 population in 2021 to 14.4 in 2022. Throughout the state and nation, rates are higher in rural areas and in areas where rates of poverty are higher. VBCMh, along with community partners through the Van Buren Suicide Prevention Coalition, and throughout the state of Michigan, continue to increase the work to improve our suicide prevention efforts.

Trust for America’s Health (TFAH), is a non-profit, non-partisan public health policy, research and advocacy organization, that promotes optimal health for every person and community and makes the prevention of illness and injury a national priority. TFAH has tracked the nation’s deaths of despair crisis since 2017; its latest report, released in July 2024, is entitled: *Pain in the Nation 2024: the Epidemics of Alcohol, Drug, and Suicide Deaths*. Their report states that 49,476 Americans died by suicide in 2022. TFAH’s report also states “younger Americans (youth ages 0–17 and young adults ages 18–34) experienced decreases in suicide rates, while all other age groups (ages 35–54, 55–74, and 75 and older) experienced increases”. The report also stated that age adjusted suicide rates were highest in American Indian/Alaskan Native people (27.1 deaths per

100,000), males (23.0 per 100,000), adults ages 75 and older (21.0 per 100,000), and residents in rural areas (20.5 per 100,000). The 2024 TFAH report includes the following recommendations to begin reversing trends in alcohol, drug, and suicide deaths:

- Invest in prevention and community conditions that promote health, including programs to reduce adverse childhood experiences and those that support families and offer trauma-informed and culturally appropriate services for youth.
- Reduce overdose risk and access to lethal means of suicide through harm reduction programs including syringe services programs, access to overdose prevention medications like naloxone, and promoting safe storage of all firearms.
- Strengthen the mental health and substance use prevention system by continuing to build a continuum of crisis intervention programs, ensuring access to mental health and substance use services, and growing the mental health workforce while increasing its diversity and offering more culturally and linguistically responsive services.

The Michigan Suicide Prevention Commission was formed in 2020 and released its Annual Report in April 2024. The Commission has a broad membership with representatives from the public and private sector and across various regions of Michigan. The report discusses the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic today and that there has been a significant increase in mental health concerns throughout Michigan and the nation. The Commission has subcommittees focusing on the following: including the Death Scene Investigation, Lethal Means, Communication, Licensure, Data, Policy, Special Populations, Succession, Universal Screening and Workforce.

The report provides the following information about suicide deaths in Michigan in 2022:

- There were 1,493 deaths by suicide
- The suicide rate in Michigan was 14.4 per 100,000 population in Michigan
- 1,167 men died by suicide in Michigan (78% of suicide deaths in Michigan)
- 56% of suicide deaths were firearm-related

The Michigan Suicide Prevention Commission 2024 Report also identifies special populations that have an increased risk of suicide. Identifying these populations allows for targeted interventions to provide services to meet their needs. “Nationally, in calendar year 2022, a total of 492 service members died by suicide. 21 Service members who died by suicide in 2022 were largely enlisted (91%), male (93%), white (72%), and under the age of 30 (68%)”. The report also explains that people who are unhoused have increased risk factors for experiencing thoughts of suicide. The Michigan Suicide Prevention Commission sites an analysis from the University of Michigan’s Poverty Solutions which found identified the following key followings:

- High school-aged youth experiencing homelessness report higher rates of attempting suicide.
- Youth experiencing homelessness were five times more likely to have attempted suicide.

- Youth experiencing homelessness were four times more likely to currently misuse prescription pain medicine.

Michigan holds a five-year grant, Preventing Suicide in Michigan Men (PRiSMM), with goals of reducing suicide in Michigan by 10 percent over the course of the grant. This grant specifically targets adult men, ages 25 and above, due to adult men having an increased risk. PRiSMM conducts and maintains a multi-sectoral partnership that “brings together stakeholders within the field of suicidology and people within male-dominated industries. Bringing together people in different industries enables PRiSMM to not only reach a larger audience, but also to reach men where they are.” The Commission’s report identified the following accomplishments from year three of the grant:

- The PRiSMM Evaluation team at The University of Michigan implemented a statewide community scan with the goal of identifying what suicide prevention strategies are currently in practice within Michigan communities, as well as possible gaps in knowledge and services that exist within the state.
- Man Therapy Michigan is a statewide campaign promoting their online intervention, called Man Therapy, to reduce suicide risk and depression among working-age men. In year 3, the 545 community partners helped reach more than 51,000 visitors to the website and complete 14,099 head inspections.
- The Michigan Department of Corrections has five Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk (ASMR) trainers embedded in their system, and they have trained more than 200 mental health staff.
- PRiSMM continued to promote health communications and safe messaging strategies. Hosted safe messaging webinars that trained media and public health professionals on Tool for Evaluating Media Portrayals of (TEMPOS). More than 150 individuals were trained to use TEMPOS.

The Trevor Project released their 2024 U.S. National Survey on the Mental Health of LGBTQ Young People, which surveys over 18,000 LGBTQ young people ages 13 to 24 across the United States. The Trevor Project is a nonprofit organization that focuses on suicide prevention for LGBTQ+ young people. The organization offers preventative and crisis services to this population. This survey found that 39% of LGBTQ young people surveyed had considered suicide in the last year and 12% had attempted suicide in the past year. Sixty-six percent of LGBTQ+ young people reported experiencing recent symptoms of anxiety and 53% reported experiencing recent symptoms of depression. Of the young people surveyed, 84% had a desire to receive mental health care and of those, 50% reported they wanted care but did not receive care. Young people in the survey cited many reasons for not receiving care, which are outlined in image 1 on the last page of this report.

### **988 Update:**

In 2020, Congress designated the new 988 dialing code to be operated through the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline was renamed to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline on July 15, 2022, and 988 was

officially implemented as the toll-free nationwide telephone number for the hotline on July 16, 2022.

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline offers 24/7 call, text and chat access to trained crisis counselors who can help people experiencing suicidal, substance use, and/or mental health crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress. People can also dial 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support. Services are available in both English and Spanish, plus Language Line Solutions provides translation services for over 250 languages.

In Michigan, the goals of 988 include:

- Improve access to crisis support and suicide prevention resources for all Michiganders, regardless of their location or ability to pay.
- Expand 988 from a stand-alone call line to part of a crisis support continuum.
- Increase the capacity and capability of 988 crisis centers and other crisis services to respond to calls and provide appropriate support.
- Reduce the stigma associated with seeking help for behavioral health, suicide-related concerns, and substance use disorder (SUD).
- Enhance the quality and availability of crisis services for all individuals at risk of suicide, behavioral health crises, and substance use disorder (SUD) resources, especially those in underserved or high-risk communities.
- Promote public awareness and education about suicide prevention and behavioral health resources.
- Coordinate and integrate services across the continuum of care, including crisis services, follow-up care, and ongoing support for individuals and communities affected by suicide or any behavioral health crisis.

In the first year of 988 being active, there were a total of over 69,000 988 calls answered in the state of Michigan. This past year, the second year of 988 being active, more than 88,000 calls were answered throughout Michigan with approximately 19,000 hours spent on the phone with Michigan residents. From July 2023 through July 2024, Michigan's average answer time for a 988 call was 17 seconds. More than 48% of callers had high or overwhelming stress at the beginning of a call, which was reduced to 12% by the end of the call after speaking with a 988 specialist.

In Michigan, there are four agencies that are responsible for answering 988 calls. These agencies include MiCAL/Common Ground, Network 180, Macomb County CMHSP and Gryphon Place. Gryphon Place is the local 988 call center for Van Buren County residents. If Gryphon Place does not have the availability to answer the call, it is routed to another 988-call center in Michigan and as a last resort, an out of state 988 call center.

### **VBCMh Response to facilitate a decrease in suicide rate in Van Buren County**

VBCMh is actively engaged in many activities that align with the priority areas identified

by the State Suicide Prevention Commission and consistent with the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention and CDC Guidelines, including strategies identified as upstream approaches, such as trauma-informed care, programs to reduce adverse childhood experiences and more. Below is a summary of some of those activities:

- **Van Buren County Suicide Prevention Coalition:** The Van Buren County Suicide Prevention Coalition was formed over a decade ago and had been coordinated by VBCMh Supervisor, Becky Fatzinger, until she retired in July of 2023. As of July 2023, Ashley Walker, School and Community Liaison for VBCMh, has taken over the role of the Coordinator of the Suicide Prevention Coalition. The Coalition email list has grown over the past year and continues to include over 300 people including community members, employees from schools, local health systems, Van Buren Intermediate School District, law enforcement, Family Court, human service agencies and more.

The Van Buren Suicide Prevention Coalition focuses on raising awareness about suicide and suicide prevention; reducing stigma associated with mental health and substance abuse treatment; building leadership among adults and youth in community-based suicide prevention efforts; identifying people at risk of mental health problems and referring and linking them to appropriate community resources; and identifying and strengthening protective factors that reduce or mitigate mental health problems. Recent research, best practices, and guidelines are routinely presented and shared with coalition members. The Van Buren Suicide Prevention Coalition has a Facebook page, which has increased in activity over the past year. Posts on the Coalition Facebook page are made regularly to engage with the community, spread information about upcoming suicide prevention trainings and events, and spread positive messaging.

- **Project AWARE:** Project AWARE, a collaboration between VBCMh and VBISD which began over four years ago, is funded through a SAMSHA grant that was awarded to MDHHS. The 5-year grant is focused on improving the system of care for children experiencing mental health distress, through improved identification of children needing services, training of adults in suicide prevention and other mental health topics, training educators in social emotional learning, increasing school mental health supports (provided by the ISD), and identifying barriers and gaps in service delivery across systems. VBCMh's School and Community Liaison, working with the Project AWARE grant, has been trained in Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR), Classroom 180, Community Resiliency Model and Parent Café to help strengthen VBCMh's capacity to provide mental health and suicide prevention training as well as upstream trainings to agency and school staff, as well as to the broader community.

As a result of Project AWARE, VBISD reviewed and updated their suicide prevention policy in FY24. A team of VBISD employees, as well as VBCMh's School and Community Liaison, reviewed the policy and worked with TRAILS to Wellness to update VBISD's policy. This policy is currently being finalized and will then be approved by their board. The new policy is comprehensive and covers suicide prevention, intervention and postvention, so all steps are covered and VBISD staff have an understanding of the process if a student expresses thoughts of suicide. The policy also encourages that VBISD staff attend a Question, Persuade, Refer training.

The Project AWARE grant has allowed for continued partnership building with VBISD and other community partners. These partnerships have increased the ability to spread awareness of VBCMh's services, the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (988) and other suicide prevention efforts. VBCMh's School and Community Liaison has been involved in the planning and presenting of VBISD's Whole Child Summits, which occur twice annually. These summits bring together 150 administrators, school social workers, mental health clinicians, community organizations and more, with the common goal of increasing mental health literacy in Van Buren County. At the Fall 2024 Whole Child Summit, VBCMh's School and Community Liaison, will present with a VBISD staff on Classroom 180, a trauma-informed classroom training.

An initiative that was created from the Whole Child Summit is the formation of the Van Buren Youth Advisory Panel (YAP). During the Whole Child Summits, attendees discussed the importance of youth voice. As a result of this, VBISD and VBCMh worked together to create a youth committee. VBCMh's School and Community Liaison was involved in the creation of YAP in FY24 in partnership with VBISD. YAP is comprised of students from 6 school districts and has youth in 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades. The mission of Van Buren Youth Advisory Panel is to advocate for solutions and spread awareness of the challenges the youth in the Van Buren community experience. The youth have identified mental health and bullying as the top issues they would like to work on. VBCMh's School and Community Liaison has been a leader of this group and will continue to work with them through FY25.

A local community and Van Buren Suicide Prevention Coalition member gave permission for VBCMh and VBISD to use a sign in front of their home for suicide prevention messaging on Red Arrow Hwy in Paw Paw. Their home was previously a business and the sign at the front was not being used. Rather than tearing it down, they offered for it to be used to spread information regarding 988 or other resources. Project AWARE funds were used from VBISD to fund signs to be printed from KRESA. These signs were installed in late September 2023, one side being in English and the other in Spanish.

- **Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM):** A debriefing model used by trained staff after a critical incident that impacts a group of people. Debriefings can occur after different incidents but are often used after an unexpected death, including suicides. Critical stress debriefings are an important Suicide Postvention intervention. Postvention is a critical component of suicide prevention, as research indicates those exposed to suicide (directly and sometimes indirectly) can experience an increase in distress and mental health symptoms, including an increased risk for suicide. Non-suicidal traumatic events can also exacerbate mental health problems, including increasing suicide risk. Postvention activities help to reduce this risk by facilitating healing and mitigating other negative effects after exposure to suicide and identifying those who may need additional support or intervention. VBCMh currently has 16 staff trained in the CISM model. The VBCMh team is part of a broader community team led by VBISD that respond to schools, work sites and other organizations as requested after a crisis.
  
- **Community Education:** In FY24, VBCMh distributed the QPR flyer, YMHFA flyer, Suicide Prevention Coalition brochure, Suicide Safe Homes brochure, Crisis Support flyers, as well as information on 988 at the following events:
  - DHHS Foster and Adoptive Trunk or Treat
  - Crime Victims Rights Resource Fair
  - DHHS Provider Resource Fair
  - Project Connect
  - South Haven Pride
  - Healthy Start Family Festival – Covert
  - American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Walk
  - Gryphon Place Suicide Prevention Walk
  - Bloomingdale Middle/High School Open House
  - Covert Public Schools Open House
  - Hartford Back to School Bash
  - Gobles Tiger Bash
  
- **Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Suicide Gatekeeper Trainings:** This national evidence-based model focuses on teaching lay people to recognize the warning signs of suicide, know how to offer hope, and how to refer someone to help. The training is conducted by a CMH master’s level therapist. Typically, trainings are done in-person, face-to-face with participants. The National QPR Institute approved virtual gatekeeper trainings in the late spring of 2020. VBCMh began offering virtual QPR trainings in June 2020. We now schedule virtual and in-person community trainings three to four times per year as well as offer a QPR trainer to train in-person or virtually for specific groups.

In FY24, 210 adults were trained in QPR through VBCMh's QPR instructors in both virtual and in-person settings. This number has increased since FY23, where the number of adults trained through the year was 110. Attendees for QPR trainings in FY24 included attendees of the Whole Child Summit, South Haven Public Schools staff, members of the Area Agency on Aging Kinship Care group, Van Buren County Court staff, DHHS (foster care and CPS) staff, VBCMh staff (both clinical and non-clinical), VBISD staff, library staff and more.

- **Reducing Access to Lethal Means:** During FY23, 32 VBCMh staff participated in a Counseling on Access to Lethal Means training through Zero Suicide. This training is a free, self-paced, online training available for anyone to complete. The training gives people the tools and knowledge needed to reduce access to lethal means (firearms, weapons, medications, etc.) when someone is at risk for suicide. This training initiative was in partnership with the University of Michigan and the State of Michigan through a grant. As a result of our participation in this training, VBCMh was sent 47 cable trigger locks in FY24 that we have on hand to give clients or the community if there is a risk of suicide.

VBCMh Substance Use Prevention Unit interventions include reducing access to lethal means of substances and prevention of lethal misuse of substance. SUD Prevention attends community events and distributes information on locations of Red Med Boxes and safe storage. In this fiscal year, this program partnered with the county and boxes with Narcan kits were installed in each school building and county building in Van Buren County.

VBCMh continued trainings and distribution of Naloxone (Narcan) in FY24 with 24 residents trained and receiving a Narcan kit to keep with them. Naloxone is used to treat a narcotic overdose in an emergency by blocking or reversing the effects of opioid medication, including extreme drowsiness, slowed breathing, or loss of consciousness. Recent research indicates there is a strong correlation between opioid misuse and suicidality. Often, it is unknown if the overdose was accidental, purposeful and/or related to an overwhelming sense of hopelessness about the future. In August of 2024, VBCMh Substance Use Prevention Unit delivered 122 lock boxes/bags to local dispensaries, VBCMh and Bronson Hospital.

- **Youth Intervention Screening Program:** The Youth Intervention Screening (YIS) program began in 2017. This comprehensive screening program targets early identification of youth who may be at risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system. Project staff work closely with court, local schools, and other organizations to identify youth who may benefit. The screening includes a brief



mental health screen, trauma screening, and a CAFAS (Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale). Youth are referred to appropriate services and resources as indicated by the results of the screening. The project has adapted to offer virtual screenings, as well as socially distanced screenings at agency sites or outside at consumers' homes as needed. We continue to promote and encourage referral sources to make referrals. During FY24, the YIS program received 89 referrals for screening, and 71 had been screened. 66 youth screened received referrals to mental health service.

- **Telehealth Options:** Telehealth options continue to be offered and are a vital part of service delivery. As an alternative to in person services, telehealth allows for greater access to those seeking services.
- **Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk (AMSR) Training:** This well researched, evidence-based training provides training for professionals working with customers who have suicide risk; and another level of training for non-professionals working with customers. The model provides guidance on best clinical and supportive interventions when working with those at risk. In 2010, VBCMh sponsored an AMSR training in which approximately 45 VBCMh clinical staff were trained. In October 2021, VBCMh arranged for virtual training of another 44 VBCMh clinical staff. With some training slots available, partners at VBISD had 9 master's level mental health staff that were trained. This training was provided through an MDHHS grant. In 2022, VBCMh was able to have a staff person trained as a trainer of the model, so we are now positioned to provide additional AMSR training to both clinical and non-clinical staff. VBCMh hosted our first AMSR training in May 2023 in-person at VBISD. There were 7 people who attended the first AMSR training, including both VBCMh and VBISD clinicians. In FY24, VBCMh hosted one AMSR training, with 13 VBCMh and VBISD staff attending. VBCMh has an AMSR training scheduled in November, with 17 individuals registered at the time of this report.
- **Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy:** This evidenced based model for children includes three primary components – screening for trauma, trauma treatment, and trauma informed parent/caregiver education (provided through group education). A well-known major study on adverse childhood events (ACES) revealed the increased risks across many health domains that trauma has on those experiencing childhood trauma, including an increased risk for suicide later in life. Appropriate treatment can help ameliorate those negative impacts of trauma, including reducing suicide risk.

VBCMh first began training staff in this model in 2013 through a state sponsored training initiative. Thus far, VBCMh has participated in 6 state-sponsored learning collaboratives, with the most recent concluding in August 2021. VBCMh has one clinician in the current cohort of TFCBT training and two additional

clinicians will be starting in the next cohort in FY25. Currently, all children assessed at VBCMh have a completed trauma screen, which helps inform treatment. Eleven current staff are trained in the therapy portion of the model; and 12 staff are trained as parent/caregiver educators. Caregiver education classes are offered about three times per year. In FY24, 10 parents and caregivers completed the six-week training.

A community caregiver education program was also offered during this fiscal year, made possible by a grant from Van Buren Great Start Collaborative. This group was open to all parents in Van Buren County and did not have to be a client of VBCMh. Three parents completed all six sessions, and an additional 8 parents completed a portion of the sessions. Feedback was given from all classes that the information parents received will help improve their ability to communicate with their child and understand their own traumas.

- **Classroom 180:** VBCMh's School and Community Liaison, along with 3 VBISD staff, were able to attend a 3-day Classroom 180 training during FY24. Classroom 180 gives a roadmap of what it means to fully create, implement and sustain a trauma-informed classroom. From this training, the four individuals that attended created a 2-day training for new teachers. This training was offered to any teacher that completed the New Teacher Academy through VBISD in August. Late August, the training was held, and 24 new teachers attended. Since then, two school districts have reached out requesting presentations for Professional Development for their staff. In September 2024, VBCMh's School and Community Liaison was able to present to 35 Paw Paw Early Elementary staff. A training for Hartford Schools is being planned for FY25.
- **Community Resilience Model (CRM) Training:** The Community Resiliency Model (CRM) is evidence-based and trains community members to not only help themselves but to help others within their wider social network. The primary focus of this skills-based, stabilization program is to re-set the natural balance of the nervous system. CRM's goal is to help to create "trauma-informed" and "resiliency-focused" communities that share a common understanding of the impact of trauma and chronic stress on the nervous system and how resiliency can be restored or increased using this skills-based approach. One VBCMh staff member was able to be trained to instruct CRM training. In addition, two VBISD staff members and one Bronson staff member attended CRM train the trainer in FY24 (all of which was funded by VBISD). Since being trained, VBCMh's School and Community Liaison was able to present to three groups, training a total of 65 individuals in CRM. Trainings will continue to be offered on an as requested basis.
- **Story Stroll:** In FY24, VBCMh partnered with Van Buren District Library, Van Buren Great Start Collaborative, Bronson and South Haven Memorial Hospital to

create two Story Strolls. A Story Stroll is created by enlarging pages of a book and placing them on signs. This allows children and their families to be able to spend time outside and move while reading a story together. Both Story Strolls are bilingual and are available to be used by community agencies and schools. The second Story Stroll that was created was a social-emotional book called *I Can Do Hard Things* by Gabi Garcia. This book provides mindful affirmations for children and their families. The Story Strolls have been used at schools, community events and organizations.

- **Parent Café:** Parent Cafés are physically and emotionally safe spaces where people talk and listen to each other on topics that matter to them, such as the challenges and victories of raising a family, navigating landscapes of inequality, enhancing well-being, or being involved in the recovery process of someone they love. Through individual deep self-reflection and peer-to-peer learning, participants explore their strengths, learn about the Protective Factors, and create strategies from their own wisdom and experiences to strengthen their families. Participants leave Cafés feeling inspired, energized, and excited to put into practice what they've learned. VBCMh School and Community Liaison partnered with Van Buren Great Start Collaborative, VBISD and Flowers Early Learning (Head Start) to plan a Parent Café training. 28 people from Bronson, VBCMh, Flowers Early Learning, VBISD and more attended to become trained Parent Café facilitators in FY24. Parent Cafes will be held beginning in FY25.
- **Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC):** During FY24, VBCMh was awarded the 4-year CCBHC grant from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Agency. As a result of this grant, in July 2024, a Veterans Navigator was hired to focus on veterans' outreach. VBCMh's Veterans Navigator will be attending AMSR and other suicide prevention trainings in FY25.

VBCMh was also chosen to join the State of Michigan demonstrate site project as a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic, which will allow for an expansion of services available to Van Buren County. In FY25, as a result of the CCBHC grant, VBCMh will be taking initial steps to move towards a Zero Suicide Framework. The seven elements of Zero Suicide represent what experts in the field of suicide prevention have identified as the core components of safe care for individuals with suicidal thoughts and urges. They represent a holistic approach to suicide prevention within health and behavioral health care systems. The seven elements include:

- Lead system-wide culture change committed to reducing suicides.
- Train a competent, confident, and caring workforce.
- Identify individuals with suicide risk via comprehensive screening and assessment.

- Engage all individuals at-risk of suicide using a suicide care management plan.
- Treat suicidal thoughts and behaviors directly using evidence-based treatments.
- Transition individuals through care with warm hand-offs and supportive contacts.
- Improve policies and procedures through continuous quality improvement.

Additional information regarding the Zero Suicide Framework can be found here: <https://zerosuicide.edc.org/about/framework>

## **Conclusion**

The CDC’s Suicide Prevention: Resource for Action report states “Suicide deaths reflect only a portion of the problem. Every year, millions of Americans seriously think about suicide, plan, or attempt suicide. Suicide and suicide attempts can contribute to lasting impacts on individuals, families, and communities. The good news is that suicide is preventable”. This report recommends the following seven strategies and approaches to preventing suicide:

1. Strengthen economic supports
  - a. Improve household financial security
  - b. Stabilize housing
2. Create protective environments
  - a. Reduce access to lethal means
  - b. Create healthy organizational policies
  - c. Culture and reduce substance use
3. Improve access and delivery of suicide care
  - a. Cover mental health conditions in health insurance policies
  - b. Increase provider availability in underserved areas
  - c. Provide rapid and remote access to help
  - d. Create safer suicide care through systems change
4. Promote healthy connections
  - a. Promote healthy peer norms
  - b. Engage community members in shared activities
5. Teach coping and problem-solving skills
  - a. Support social-emotional learning programs
  - b. Teach parenting skills to improve family relationships
  - c. Support resilience through education programs
6. Identify and support people at risk
  - a. Train gatekeepers
  - b. Respond to crises

- c. Plan for safety and follow-up after an attempt
  - d. Provide therapeutic approaches
7. Lessen harms and prevent future risk
- a. Intervene after a suicide
  - b. Report and message about suicide safely

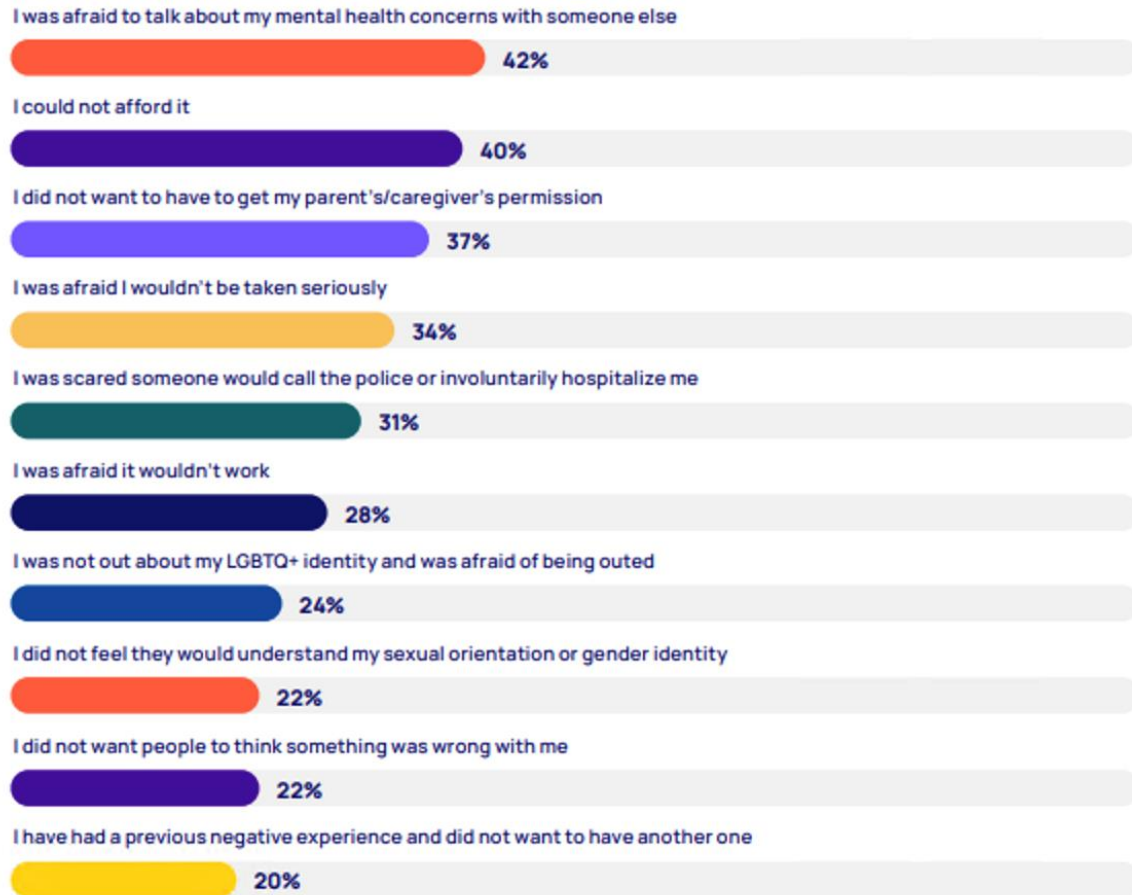
While suicide rates in Michigan and the United States as a whole have increased, we remain optimistic and push toward all opportunities to provide community education, modify upstream societal factors, assist those who are struggling with their mental health or having thoughts of suicide as well as involving the community in suicide prevention efforts throughout the county.

Although many effective strategies have been launched, much remains to be done. The budget for VBCMh for 2024 fiscal year retains the ongoing work of the Suicide Prevention Coordinator and the efforts of VBCMh discussed in this report.

The Board is asked to deliberate the questions asked when an Ends report is given:

- 1. Is the interpretation by the CEO reasonable?
- 2. Is the evidence relevant and compelling?
- 3. Does this information lead the Board to believe they need to refine their Ends?

## LGBTQ+ young people who wanted mental health care but were unable to get it cited the following top ten reasons:



[The 2024 Michigan Suicide Prevention Commission Annual Report](#)

[Trust for America's Health Report 2024](#)