We are extremely appreciative for the participation of all our Island County School Districts in the Healthy Youth Survey. Their participation allows us to report on the current health status of our youth and track trends over time.
If you suspect a child is being bullied or if you witness a child being bullied:
- Don’t ignore it, intervene immediately.
- Display respectful behaviors when you intervene.
- Make sure that everyone is safe.
- Don’t talk to the kids involved together; speak to them separately.
- Don’t make the kids involved apologize on the spot.
- Assure the child being bullied that it is not their fault.
- Make sure that children know that the bullying behavior is not acceptable.\(^1\)

Know the signs that a person may be abused by their boyfriend/girlfriend:
- Appears afraid or anxious to please that person.
- Goes along with everything that person says and does.
- Talks about their partner’s temper, jealousy, and being possessive.
- Checks in frequently with their partner, always telling them where they are and what they are doing.
- Has a lower self-esteem when they used to be very confident.
- Shows major personality changes.\(^2\)

How to help someone who you suspect or know is being abused:
- Don’t ignore it and remain calm; listen to what the person has to say without judgment.
- Reassure the person that they did nothing wrong and it is not their fault they are being abused.
- If you feel your safety or the safety of others is in danger if you intervene, seek professional help immediately.
- Child abuse should be reported to proper authorities immediately; reporting is anonymous.
- If a youth notifies you that they are in an abusive relationship, first make sure they are not in immediate danger. Contact your school-based mental health counselor, guidance counselor or mental health professional or call the National Dating Abuse Helpline 1-866-331-9474.\(^3\)

**Schools**

Schools can have a bullying prevention policy in place and enforce it.
- Train teachers and staff to create a positive, respectful, tolerant and accepting environment.
- Train teachers and staff how to appropriately intervene when a child is being bullied.
- Implement a bullying prevention curriculum.
- Refer students who are bullying, being bullied, or showing signs of depression or suicide to their school-based mental health counselor.\(^4\)

**Community and Government**

Community members and local officials can:
- Advocate for bullying prevention policies in the schools.
- Work with local media outlets such as radio stations, newspapers, and websites to run anti-bullying ads and provide information how to prevent and deal with current bullying issues.
- Reach out directly to groups who work with children to advocate for anti-bullying policies and education.\(^5\)
YOUTH, DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE

WHAT WE CAN DO

PARENTS

PARENTS CAN know signs of depression:
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits.
- Consistent feelings of sadness and anxiety.
- Loss of interest in pleasurable activities.
- Irritability.
- Overeating or a loss of appetite.
- Thoughts of suicide or attempt at suicide.¹

PARENTS CAN know signs of suicide:
- Changes in eating.
- Frequent complaints about physical ailments such as stomachach, headache, or fatigue.
- Unusual neglect of personal appearance.
- Substance abuse, mental health issues, and physical and sexual abuse are often factors that contribute to suicide attempts.²

If you suspect your child is struggling with depression or suicidal thoughts:
- Connect them to a mental health professional through your school, physician, or other community resource.
- Talk to them, and listen carefully.
- Help them find and build relationships with an adult they can go to with problems.
  Understand this may not be a parent, but find someone both of you can trust.

SCHOOLS AND YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

If you suspect a student is struggling with depression or suicidal thoughts, STAFF AND TEACHERS CAN:
- Take your suspicions seriously.
- Contact your Island County school-based mental health counselor or an Island County Mental Health Counselor.
- Advocate for additional school-based mental health counselors to help meet the needs of our students at each school.

SCHOOL AND ORGANIZATION ADMINISTRATION CAN offer suicide-prevention trainings to all staff.

GOVERNMENT

Government officials CAN
- Create and support commissions dedicated to youth, such as the Oak Harbor Youth Coalition.
- Improve access to mental health services for youth through dedicated funding for school-based mental health counselors.