Philadelphia health officials are working with the city’s school district to prevent student suicide. The Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS) often provides supplemental clinical support to the school district following a student suicide death. According to Kamilah Jackson, psychiatrist and deputy chief medical officer for DBHIDS Child and Adolescent Services, outside clinicians work closely with school psychologists and counselors, as "those who are familiar to children are the best resources for support." The city also mobilizes its Network of Neighbors community support teams to respond to student suicides, and ensures that effective postvention is in place. "The after-effects of a student suicide can linger long after the crisis team is gone," said Jackson. "That's why it is important to equip the adults who remain in the building to be able to recognize the signs of when to seek more support for a young person." Philadelphia DBHIDS has also strengthened its Suicide Prevention Task Force, which has a partnership with the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, and offers Mental Health First Aid to educators and community members.

Spark Extra! Check out After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools [2].

Links within this resource