Funding allocated by the Utah state legislature will allow 90 elementary schools to implement suicide prevention programs in the upcoming school year. Many of these schools plan to set up Hope Squads, which are part of the Hope4Utah suicide prevention program. Hope Squads are made up of students who have been trained to identify the warning signs of suicide and educate their peers about kindness and anti-bullying. Originally started in junior high and high schools, Hope Squads have been run in the Provo city school district for the past 10 years and piloted in two dozen other elementary schools across the state. Hope4Utah and Hope Squads founder Greg Hudnall said the program’s expansion can help to reduce suicide risk in a larger proportion of the state’s elementary school students by building on its past success. “I see it as an important step to prevention through education and support,” he said. “We have had Hope Squads in elementary schools in Provo for 13 years and have found them to be very valuable.”

*Spark Extra!* Learn more about [Hope Squads](http://hope4utah.com/hope-squad/).