

To: Kansas Senate Committee Members and all interested parties

Re: OPPOSITION TO SB333

My daughter, Cady Housh and Ciara Webb, died November 2014. It was within 2 days of each other. It was not a pack. It was two (2) struggling teens that clearly showed signs of deep depression and high-risk suicides.

A month after burying my daughter, I read in "People Magazine" where she had been telling other students that she wanted to die. I also became highly aware of not only what were the suicide signs/risks but that we had an alarming increase in suicides. Suicides had risen- becoming the number 2 cause of death in our teens. My head burst with - **"WHY hasn't more been done to help our teens!"** It was then I knew I had to "Speak Out" against this silent epidemic killing our kids.

You know the numbers and the stats. I want to share with you a different tale. In my research I discovered on the Jason Foundation website, an Attorney General Ambassador Page. There our own AG was listed even though we weren't one of the states that had the law.

Upon contacting his office, I met with one of his directors. There on the conference table was a folder labeled - "Jason Flatt Act". On the folder was a **YELLOW STICKY** hand written with "May 2013". Two of his directors read through the JFA and stated they felt as this "Free" Suicide Training in All Jr & Sr. High Schools in Kansas was an excellent thing to do. Bring it in from the AG's office as a resolution. But as we sometimes do-it fell to a backburner and was paused.

I knew in my heart that if JFA had been in place in November, 2014, Cady and Ciara would be alive today. The heavy abscentism-65 classes missed in 70 days, 4-Fs, reckless behavior on school property, legal issues, parents going through a divorce, etc. -should have rung bells with the staff. Especially since I was at school begging for help and intervention. I used the word "Crisis"-reported her living situation with her father w/ DCF, discussed her legal issues. No one said she is at high risk for suicide, here's what you need to do....

To add one other comment regarding the school's responsibility- When presenting JFA to the Kansas Mental Health Coalition of KS, the president during my presentation, grabbed my arm, looked me in the eye and said, "I am so sorry I didn't get to help Cady". I know for a fact; suicide awareness & prevention training materials were distributed to the school, but nothing had been done with them.

We need "MANDATORY" training in all schools. Not just a select few and not optional.

At this time, Representative Yoder from Kansas and Cleaver from Missouri introduced a bi-partisan bill in Congress. It is HR 3552 aka the "Cady Housh and Jason Flatt Teen Suicide Act of 2017/2018." This bill would mandate suicide prevention in All states across the country.

Please don't go backwards-lets go forward and do more! The bill/laws won't catch every teen, but I know some that it has. We still need to keep rallying and do MORE -not less. Let's keep saving lives.

Warm Wishes,

Cathy Housh-Cady's Mom When you **see yellow stickers**.... think about our teens lives. I do!