



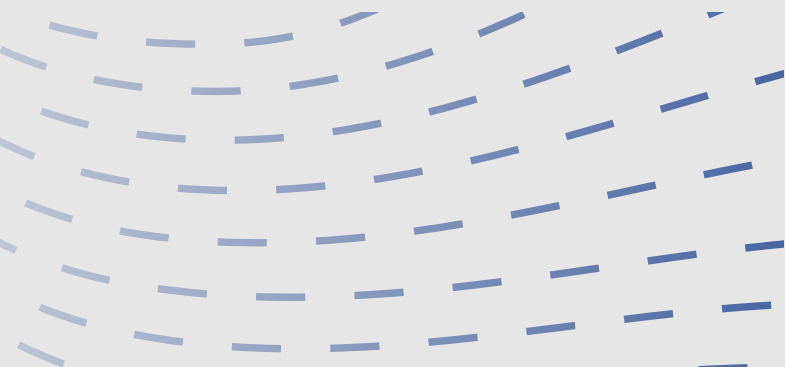
targeted suicide prevention for high-risk youth

The Brookline Center for Community Mental Health
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Research points to a critical and largely unaddressed gap: many youth at greatest risk for suicide return to school without the structured, ongoing support they need during the most critical part of their recovery.

Bryt works with schools to support these students.





Approximately **60% of students** enter bryt following an extended mental health-related absence.

Forty percent are chronically absent at entry, compared to 19% of MA public school students overall.

Bryt students enter the program with **depression, anxiety, trauma, recent hospitalization, social isolation, and family instability**, all factors linked to suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Even without a prior suicide attempt, bryt students are at **higher risk** than the general student body.

bryt stats

Despite the well-documented risk, schools are unprepared: **Only 16% have formal re-entry protocols, and 38% have no guidelines.**

Bryt fills this gap by **strengthening factors that reduce suicide risk**: connection to trusted adults, supported reintegration, academic engagement, and coordinated care during high-risk transitions.

National data show that more than 50% of students with serious mental health challenges drop out or leave school without a regular diploma. In contrast, **83% of bryt students achieve positive educational transitions** (graduation or advancement to the next grade), **only 4.7% leave school**, and **participants experience a 78% reduction in repeat hospitalization.**

Beyond supporting individual students, bryt weaves suicide prevention into the fabric of school culture: training teachers to recognize warning signs, reducing stigma, and **shifting school response from punitive to supportive.**

bryt impact

3,500

students participating in bryt each year

200

bryt network schools in Massachusetts

2/3

MA public high schools students with access to bryt in their school

Research consistently shows that the period immediately following hospitalization carries the highest risk for suicide attempts and rehospitalization.

Yet school programs designed for reintegration after a mental health crisis are rare.

facts

- Poor school connections after hospitalization correlate with more severe suicidal thoughts six months later.
- Indicated interventions (programs that focus on youth already at high risk) have the greatest impact, outperforming broad, school-wide prevention efforts.
- Foster-involved youth report suicidal thoughts at rates three to nine times higher than other adolescents; they are two to four times more likely to attempt suicide.
- Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among older adolescents in the U.S.

Who we are

The Brookline Center is committed to advancing mental health care for all.

As a community mental health provider, clinical training hub, and leader in mental health innovation, the Center has a distinguished track record of developing pioneering, cross-sector programs and services.

What we do

Bryt partners with schools and districts to support students at high risk for suicide, particularly those returning to school after a psychiatric hospitalization or serious mental health crisis.

Unlike broad awareness programs that aim to reach many students, bryt is an indicated prevention program, working with students facing significantly greater mental health challenges and suicide risk than their peers.

Bryt intervenes at a critical transition point, helping students catch up academically and successfully return to school life, usually over a 12-week period. A clinician and academic coach support each student intensively, providing therapeutic, academic, and family support along with care coordination tailored to each student's needs. Bryt helps reduce suicidal thoughts by addressing underlying conditions such as depression, anxiety, and trauma, preventing further crises.



Foster-involved youth face dramatically higher rates of suicide risk than their peers, and nationally, Massachusetts ranks among the lowest states in educational outcomes and overall well-being for these students.

To better support these youth, the bryt team developed COMPASS, a specialized program designed for students involved with the Department of Children and Families, including students in foster care. In 2024, The Brookline Center launched a COMPASS pilot at Framingham High School, a community with one of the highest concentrations of foster-involved youth in the state. The pilot's early success was heralded in an [April 2025 feature](#) in *The Boston Globe*.

bryt voices

Wanting to die was always on my mind. After a track meet one night, I swallowed 17,000 milligrams of Tylenol and went to sleep. A few hours later, my sister accidentally woke me, saving my life.

The thought of returning to school felt paralyzing. I knew I'd need to catch up on weeks of classes, and I worried what people would say. The bryt staff made sure I felt safe and set up for success, and being in a judgment-free space with kids going through the same experiences took so much pressure off. bryt gave me the courage to walk into school every morning.

Maddie, bryt participant

One of our bryt students wasn't on anyone's radar as being at risk for self-harm.

Then she survived a suicide attempt and spent nine months hospitalized. Returning to school through bryt, she completed her final two years and graduated on time with her classmates.

There is no other intervention that combines care the way bryt does. It gives students a space to speak openly, connect with peers, and experience belonging. When students leave bryt, they don't just return to class, they leave with hope and a path forward.

Katie, LCSW, bryt District and School Support Specialist

There are moments in life you never forget. Olivia waking us in the middle of the night to say she had attempted suicide is one that will stay with me forever. We rushed her to Children's Hospital, where she was admitted to inpatient psychiatry, and then spent a month at McLean.

The thought of her coming home was terrifying. What if school became overwhelming again? What if she tried to end her life a second time? Before Olivia was discharged, we met the bryt team. They reassured us she would be safe and in good hands, and I felt a glimmer of hope.

Bryt became Olivia's sanctuary. I truly believe that if she had returned to school anywhere else, she would not be alive today.

Nancy, bryt parent



Why your
support
matters now

Massachusetts' recent, historic \$13 million investment in bryt proved what we have always known: When given the resources, we can scale life-saving mental health support rapidly and effectively.

With that combined state funding, bryt shattered initial projections, partnering with 49 new schools to provide critical planning and implementation support at zero cost to them. By the end of this year, those initial launch funds will have successfully integrated these programs into the fabric of their school communities.

Now, our eyes are on the horizon. Over the next two school years, bryt is on track to serve 7,000 students across the Commonwealth. But to sustain this incredible momentum, and to reach the remaining one-third of public high school students who still lack access, we cannot rely on volatile public funding alone.

While state funding provides a foundational baseline, philanthropic partnership is the strategic catalyst that allows us to move swiftly, protect recent gains, and expand our reach. Donor support will allow The Brookline Center to:

- Subsidize or completely waive technical and network fees for schools most severely impacted by local budget shifts.
- Guarantee that bryt's world-class training, technical assistance, and network support remain seamlessly available.
- Strategically deploy resources to introduce bryt to new districts where the youth mental health need remains highest.

Public funding built the launchpad, but visionary philanthropic investment is what keeps this proven model moving forward. Your support ensures that as financial conditions shift, our commitment to Massachusetts students remains unshakeable.