

SAVE Removes Financial Barriers to Youth Suicide Prevention, Makes Green Bandana Project Free for Schools Nationwide

SAVE makes The Green Bandana Project free nationwide, expanding access to student-led suicide prevention in schools.

BLOOMINGTON, MN, UNITED STATES, February 27, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Suicide Awareness Voices of Education ([SAVE](#)), a Minnesota-based national suicide prevention nonprofit, today announced that it is eliminating participation fees for [The Green Bandana Project](#) (TGBP), making the program free for schools across the country.



This decision reflects SAVE's commitment to expanding access to suicide prevention resources and ensuring that more students and school communities can benefit from early intervention and peer-based support.

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Soua Thao, Program Coordinator for The Green Bandana Project at SAVE

The Green Bandana Project is a nationally recognized, student-driven initiative designed to increase awareness of mental health and suicide prevention resources while empowering students to support one another. Through the program, trained students wear green bandanas to signal that they are safe, trusted peers who can connect others to help when it is needed most.

“Too many schools want to bring meaningful suicide prevention programs to their students but face financial barriers,” said Erich Mische, CEO of SAVE. “By removing participation fees, we are taking an important step toward ensuring that every school has the opportunity to implement a program that can help save lives.”

"This shift allows us to reach more students, more schools, and more communities with a program that is grounded in connection and support," said Soua Thao, Program Coordinator for [The Green Bandana Project at SAVE](#). "We have seen firsthand the impact this program can have when students feel empowered to look out for one another and help connect their peers to trusted adults and resources."

SAVE emphasized that the decision to eliminate fees was made possible, in part, by the early support of schools that previously invested in the program. Those contributions helped fund curriculum development, training materials, staffing, and ongoing program improvements that have strengthened and expanded TGBP's reach. It is also made possible by the support of the Tosa Foundation which made a financial significant gift to SAVE in 2025.

"We are deeply grateful to the schools and educators who supported The Green Bandana Project from the beginning," Mische added. "Their commitment made it possible for us to grow this program into what it is today and to now remove cost as a barrier for others."

Schools interested in implementing The Green Bandana Project must still complete the program onboarding process and designate a faculty or staff member to oversee implementation and student engagement.

This expansion comes at a time when youth mental health continues to be a growing concern nationwide. SAVE's decision is intended to accelerate the adoption of peer-supported approaches that encourage help-seeking behavior and early intervention.

Schools and educators interested in participating



The Green Bandana Project Program Coordinator, Soua Thao



Erich Mische is CEO of SAVE - Suicide Awareness Voices of Education.

can learn more and sign up at:

<https://www.save.org>

ABOUT SAVE

Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE) is a national nonprofit organization based in Minnesota dedicated to preventing suicide through education, training, advocacy, lethal means safety, and support for suicide loss survivors. For more than 36 years, SAVE has worked to transform awareness into action and action into hope.

Erich Mische

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The official 35th Anniversary logo for SAVE -Suicide Awareness Voices of Education

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