

March 11, 2026

Honorable John James
1519 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Angie Craig
2052 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Maria Salazar
2162 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Debbie Dingell
102 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives James, Craig, Salazar, and Dingell,

The Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG), a coalition of national organizations representing people with mental health conditions and substance use disorders, family members, mental health and addiction providers, advocates and other stakeholders. The MHLG is committed to strengthening Americans' access to mental health and substance use disorder care writes in support of the bipartisan Kid Providing Resources for Optimal Outcomes Against Fatalities (Kid PROOF) Act. Kid PROOF will give parents needed support and save young lives from the tragedy of suicide and overdose.

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System published in 2024, indicates continued elevated levels of students who report having persistent feelings of sadness and hopelessness, poor mental health, and serious thoughts of suicide.¹ We must act now to address these alarming statistics and support parents everywhere in need of solutions for their children.

Kid PROOF will provide grants to children's health care providers through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to provide supplies to parents, with their consent, when a child is at risk of suicide or overdose. Overdose trends among youth continue to be consistent and an average of 22 adolescents 14 to 18 died of overdose each week in 2022.² The Kid PROOF Act supports an evidence-based approach to put away dangerous items when a child is considering suicide or overdose, for example, medications such as opioids. The bill will provide parents with immediate support to help their child avoid making a tragic decision.³

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2013–2023. U. S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2024.

² UCLA Health. (2024, January 8). "About 22 high school age adolescents died each week from overdoses in 2022, driven by fentanyl-laced prescription pills." <https://www.uclahealth.org/news/release/about-22-high-school-age-adolescents-died-each-week>

Research has shown that 95 percent of individuals who are ideating on suicide do not go on to die by suicide when means were stored properly and parents are more likely to use free or discounted supplies, resulting in 9 in 10 families using a medication lockbox when provided.^{4,5} The use of supplies to store opioids and items dangerous to children is encouraged by national groups including the American Medical Association, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and the American Academy of Family Physicians.^{6,7} **Kid PROOF is the solution to help keep kids safe from suicide and overdose.**

The Kid PROOF Act will protect the most vulnerable in our society as providers, parents, and communities continue to respond to the youth mental health and substance use disorder crisis. Thank you for your consideration of this effort. We stand ready to respond to any questions on this matter.

Sincerely,

Active Minds

American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work

American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

American Psychiatric Association

American Psychological Association

Anxiety and Depression Association of America

Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare (AABH)

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Children's Hospital Association

Clinical Social Work Association

Crisis Text Line

Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice

Inseparable

International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses

Mental Health America

NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals

National Alliance on Mental Illness

National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors (NACBHDD)

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Association of School Psychologists

National Association of Social Workers

National Federation of Families

National League for Nursing

National Register of Health Service Psychologists

Psychotherapy Action Network (PsiAN)

REDC Consortium

Sandy Hook Promise

SMART Recovery

The Kennedy Forum
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
The Trevor Project
Trust for America's Health
Youth Villages

³ Labouliere CD, Vasan P, Kramer A, Brown G, Green K, Rahman M, Kammer J, Finnerty M, Stanley B. "Zero Suicide" - A model for reducing suicide in United States behavioral healthcare. *Suicidologi*. 2018;23(1):22-30. PMID: 29970972; PMCID: PMC6022755.

⁴ Pirkis, Jane, Lay San Too, Matthew J Spittal, Karolina Kryszynska, Jo Robinson, and Yee Tak Cheung. "Interventions to Reduce Suicides at Suicide Hotspots: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis." *The Lancet Psychiatry* 2, no. 11 (November 2, 2015): 994–1001. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s2215-0366\(15\)00266-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/s2215-0366(15)00266-7).

⁵ Webb, A. C., Nichols, M. H., Shah, N., & Monroe, K. W. (2020). Effect of lock boxes and education on safe storage of medications. *Injury epidemiology*, 7(Suppl 1), 21. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40621-020-00257-y>

⁶ Robeznieks, Andis. "5 Tips for Safely Storing Opioids at Home." American Medical Association, September 6, 2018. <https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/overdose-epidemic/5-tips-safely-storing-opioids-home>.

⁷ Devitt, Michael. "Up and Away Offers Tips to Keep Kids Safe from Medications." AAFP, March 19, 2018. <https://www.aafp.org/news/health-of-the-public/20180319upandaway.html>.