

Broderick Jones
Opponent SB 333

Hi, My name is Broderick Jones. I am 17 and a junior at Hiawatha High School. I am a victim of suicide. On February 26, 2014 my older brother took his life at the age of 15. Never in a million years would i had thought he would be the one to commit suicide.

My story starts more than four years ago, at 8 years old I was in a very bad place. After missing a lot of school for some health issues and surgery. I had become unable to attend school due to severe anxiety and depression. I was put on two anxiety medications that we later found were fighting each other. When my parent would take me to school, i would cry and fight to leave with them. I was in what i now know as Fight or Flight mode, it became so bad I unintentionally struck a teacher and was on the rails of being placed in State Custody. No one knew but even at this age, suicide was an everyday thought. Never once was I asked if I had those thoughts. My parents and therapist decided it was time to admit me to in patient care. On our over hour drive to Topeka, I tried to jump out of the car. I really didn't want to die but it was the only way out. Thankfully my dad is a pretty big guy and held me the whole way there. Once admitted, this was the first time anyone had asked me the questions regarding suicide. I am certain if the school staff had the training the Jason Flatt Act provides, my story could have ended sooner. I am positive I wouldn't be standing here telling you my story nor my brothers. I am thankful for everyone that helped me, especially my parents and therapist. I am a active member in my school and community. My grades are good, which has lead me to be in National Honors Society. I am very involved in sports. Yet everyday i wake up thinking if i would have told my story sooner maybe my brother would have got the help he needed, and be alive today!

Please keep mandated for all staff to have one hour or more suicide prevention and awareness training, sometimes it won't be the selected staff that has the connection with us student. Sometimes it's a janitor, or para, maybe even the office staff. Thank you for hearing my story.