University of North Texas at Dallas

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Students and Teachers Reaching Out and Never Giving up (STRONG) Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention  
Program at UNT Dallas Abstract The University North Texas at Dallas (UNT Dallas) is proposing the program STRONG (Students and Teachers Reaching Out and Never Giving up) to support a comprehensive and coordinated approach to promote mental health and wellness on campus, focusing on the needs of the students and the communities surrounding the campus. UNT Dallas is a minority serving and Hispanic serving institution with 32% of the students self-identifying as African-American and 46% as Latino. The prototypical UNT Dallas student is raised in South Dallas, an area that suffers significant economic distress and is often described as the mental healthcare desert. Project STRONG will allow us to implement activities to raise awareness, strengthen UNT Dallas' capacity and off-campus outreach and network, with a goal of serving approximately 12,000 people annually and 16,000 throughout the life of the project, including UNT Dallas students, parents/families, faculty/staff, and surrounding communities. We propose to: 1) Educate and empower students and their families. Students and their family members will be outreached via on-line and paper brochures, educational materials, mini-courses, life skill and leadership training, informational presentations, health fair tables, awareness days, use of social media and promotion of online screenings. By Year 1, 50% of students and 50% of parents/families will receive information and 30% of all students will receive Kognito At-Risk for Students training. Participants will report 25% increase in their knowledge/attitudes/skills related to mental health issues. 2) Strengthen the capacity of the faculty, staff, and student leaders to identify, respond to, and assist students at risk for suicide via implementing Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) gatekeeper training; integrating mental health related service learning projects in curricula and engaging and empowering student leaders as peer educators and peer advocates in the project activities. By the end of Year 1, 30% of all faculty and staff members and 50% of all student leaders (club officers) will be trained. Participants will report 50% increase in their knowledge/attitudes/skills to identify, respond to, and assist students at-risk for suicide. 3) Strengthen the network of campus and community agencies that provide mental health services, resources, and support for students, both on campus and in the community. Activities include assessment and creation of new partnerships, improvement of referral system, promotion of community-based, national, or web-based resources, creation of opportunities for mental health related service learning, experiential learning, and
volunteering in the community, and partnering up with local institutions and mental health agencies. By the end of Year 1, 100% of the campus population will be reached with information about local/national services available, at least 40 students will conduct service learning projects, 120 Upward Bound and 60 McNair Scholars will be trained and 6 high schools and 1 faith-based organization will participate with us. Participants will report 25% of increase in mental health related knowledge.