New York’s Suicide Prevention Academy

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In 2014, the New York Office of Mental Health created the New York Suicide Prevention Office (SPO) [1] to coordinate its suicide prevention activities. The SPO receives an allocation in the state’s annual budget. In turn, the SPO uses a portion of its budget to fund the Suicide Prevention Center of New York (SPC-NY) and to help support the Columbia University Medical Center’s Suicide Prevention – Training, Implementation, and Evaluation (SP-TIE) program and the Mental Health Association of New York State (MHANYS).

These three organizations support New York state’s suicide prevention initiatives, including comprehensive suicide prevention training and education. MHANYS provides administrative support for the state’s gatekeeper training initiative in schools and communities, logistical support for New York's annual state suicide prevention conference, and support for other prevention tasks as needed. SP-TIE has developed online learning modules for health care clinicians on safety planning, risk assessment, and more. SPC-NY [2] houses a resource library and list of available trainings in New York focused on communities, schools, and health care.

New York also has county-level suicide prevention coalitions. Providing support to these coalitions is a focus of New York State’s suicide prevention plan [3], since the coalitions help implement suicide prevention strategies.

In 2016, the SPO developed a suicide prevention coalition academy through which coalitions were invited to participate in two-hour, in-person trainings followed by a series of online modules focused on strategic planning. Participant coalitions were given $3,000 to help them develop and launch their strategic plan. Additionally, six counties that did not have coalitions were given full-day trainings on coalition development. All of these efforts to support coalitions help them develop a shared language and strategic planning focus.

The SPO has continued to develop and offer new online modules and webinars on a variety of prevention topics from mission statements to data analysis to postvention. The SPO also continues to provide targeted infrastructure funding opportunities to help coalitions implement projects in alignment with the state plan. With the combination of New York’s state funding, inter-agency collaboration, and support of local coalitions, key players receive the education and support they need to develop and implement effective suicide prevention efforts across
Learn how your state can develop similar infrastructure and read additional examples by visiting the Guide [4] essential element of SPRC’s State Infrastructure Recommendations.