Community Effort to Address Postvention Needs

Amy Hart
Suicide Prevention Coordinator
Crisis Line of Central Virginia

Christina Benton, MPH
Suicide Prevention Manager
Virginia Department of Health
Postvention

A strategy or approach that is implemented after a crisis or traumatic event has occurred that includes the support for the bereaved (family, friends, professionals and peers).
Assessing Community Needs...

Postvention Questions:

• Does the agency provide postvention services?

• If so, what kind? (support group, counseling, educational materials, other)

• Strengths of postvention services provided?

• Challenges faced when delivering postvention services?
Crisis Line of Central Virginia
Central Virginia Population – 2009
Youth (Ages 10-24)

Youth Population Total: 116,275

- Male 50%
- Female 50%
- Black, NH 24%
- Hispanic, Any race 2%
- Other, NH 2%
- White, NH 72%
Central Virginia Youth Suicide Rate

51 youth suicides over five year period (05’-09’), for a crude rate of 8.9 per 100,000
Central Virginia Youth Self Inflicted Injury Rate
### Needs Assessment Results

**Survey Respondents** *(n=83)*

- Community Services Boards: 6%
- Social Services: 8%
- Physicians: 53%
- Social Worker: 14%
- Psychiatrist: 1%
- Private Counselor: 7%
- Other: 13%

*Respondents were able to choose more than one category.*
Needs Assessment Results

- 74% of responding organizations work with youth
- 39% of responding organizations provide postvention services
Needs Assessment Results

What postvention resources does your agency/organization offer to suicide survivors?

- Support Groups: 7%
- Counseling: 25%
- Educational Materials: 12%
- No Postvention Services: 11%
- Other: 19%
Needs Assessment Results

“Not enough staff/funding - would be good to have ongoing support group."

“Limited training, funding."

“Time restraints. Lack of referral capability.”
Needs Assessment Results

“Clients often wait for a psychiatric consult or are unable to get a psychiatric appointment due to lack of the ‘right’ insurance.”

“Availability of private therapists for people without insurance.”
Needs Assessment Results

“Lack of available number of staff. Waiting list.”

“Challenge to get appointments with counselors and psychiatrists quickly.”
Community Stakeholders Meeting

- Invitees
- Attendees
- Decisions
Agency Collaboration

- Mental Health America: Survivors of Suicide Support groups
- Kids’ Haven: A Center for Grieving Children
- Local Coalition
Compilation
Information for Loss Survivors

• Acknowledging the loss
• How to cope
• Explaining suicide to children
• Myths and facts about grief
• Stages of grief
• Survivors Bill of Rights
Compilation

Information for Loved Ones of Attempt Survivor

• What Happens in the Emergency Department
• Next Steps After the Emergency Department
• Safety Planning
• Moving Forward
Compilation

Information for Attempt Survivor

• Brief acknowledgement of feelings
• After the Emergency Department
• Step by step help
Compilation

Resources

• Crisis Hotlines
• Support Groups
• Local Counselors
• Local and State Resources
• National Resources
Distribution

- List compilation
- Guide mailing
- Agency website
Moving Forward

• More requested

• Expansion planned