A Public Health Approach to Suicide Prevention

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Campus Suicide Prevention
Grantee Technical Assistance Meeting
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Cohort 1 Quotes

"One of the lessons learned is a need to allow for project development and implementation time at the beginning of the grant period."
Goals

- Increase understanding of public health approach
- Provide time for team work
- Strengthen your strategic plan
  - Increase specificity
  - Connect proposed plan with evaluation
  - Identify challenges

Agenda

- Public health approach: review of the basics
  - Quick task for teams
- Strategic planning in the context of grants
- Public health approach: A grantee perspective
- Team discussion and planning
- Large group Q&A
Why Use a Public Health Approach to Prevent Suicide?

- Declared a public health problem by the surgeon general in 1999.
- Complex problem associated with multiple factors:
  - Individual (biological, psychological)
  - Environmental (physical, interpersonal, community, societal)
- Requires multidimensional approaches:
  - Socio-ecological approach
  - Continuum of prevention

Requirements for successful public health interventions

- Data based – monitor trends
- Strategic planning – start with the end in mind
- Population focused – select population(s)
- Research/theory based – use best practices
- Cultural competence – to meet population needs
- Multidimensional approach – comprehensive, SEM, continuum of prevention
- Community involvement – partnership
- Collaboration among disciplines – leadership
- Evaluation - continuous quality improvement
Depression Related Symptoms at ASU
American College Health Association- National College Health Assessment (2006) (n=206)

Stress

First experience STRESS
Most students who experience DISTRESS
The idea is to reach students here... so fewer end up here.

Addressing Public Health Problems

Strategic Action Planning

Social Ecological Model

TJF/SPRC Comprehensive Approach
Social Ecological Influences

Correlates of Suicide

• Risk Factors
  – Sense of isolation
  – Lack of close personal relationships
  – Poor coping skills
  – Impulsiveness
  – Mental illness (most commonly depression)
  – Substance abuse

• Protective Factors
  – Close personal relationships
  – Strong connections to community and family support
  – Problem solving skills; conflict resolution skills
  – Healthy lifestyle
  – Accessible and effective clinical care for mental, physical and substance use disorders
Strategies for Prevention

Primary
Caring
community
Involvement
Feeling words
Communication
Reduce stigma
Stress mgmt
Coping
Connection
Fitness
Rest/sleep
Healthy eating

Secondary
Barriers to help
Warning signs
Risk factors
Identify students at risk
Ask about suicide risk
Assist someone to get help
Referral resources

Tertiary
Counseling
SACC
Crisis intervention

TJF/SPRC Comprehensive Approach

Identify Students at Risk
Increase Help-seeking Behavior

Promote Social Networks
Comprehensive Approach to Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Promotion
Provide Mental Health Services
Follow Crisis Management Procedures

Develop Life Skills
Restrict Access to Potentially Lethal Means

The Jed Foundation and the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, 2006
Components of a Public Health Strategic Action Planning Model

What is a “Program”?

- Combination of activities, policies, practices, services
- Designed to result in some change in people or in the environment
- Comes about as a result of a planning process
Grantee "Program Areas"

Six fundable activities
- Training programs
- Networking infrastructure
- Educational seminars
- Hotline
- Informational materials
- Educational materials for families

Team Planning Worksheet – Side 1

- List:
  - Your grant activities
    - What you are actually doing/planning
    - Very big picture
  - Target audience for each (if applicable)
Cohort 1 Quotes

“Start slowly and take time to think out/plan out your initiatives. Leave room to change what you do as you’ll likely have to do so.”

Strengthening Strategic Plans

• No program or policy itself is “right” or “wrong”... it all depends on its content and how it is implemented

• Think through planned/existing program components → what is each one trying to change?
  – Anticipated change is also what your evaluators care about
Typical Suicide Program Goals

- Decrease deaths by suicide
- Decrease suicide attempts
- Decrease suicidal ideation
- Decrease injuries from suicide attempts

Thinking Inside the Box

Why do we think this program will have this outcome?

Program Activity

What else do we need to know?

Program Goal

How does this work?

Challenge assumptions

Identify steps in process
Filling in the Black Box

Answer the question:

- What is the chain of events that will occur between the activity and its intended goal(s)?
Specifying the Links

- Each link in the chain should specify a change that is expected to occur, rather than the program activity that is expected to cause the change.

- So, rather than:
  “implement suicide prevention training” (activity), say:
  “increase staff members’ knowledge of warning signs for suicide” (change)

Specify!

- E.g., “Increase awareness” in the community
  Get more specific by asking:
  - Increase awareness of what, exactly? Among whom?
  - By “awareness,” do we mean knowledge, skills, attitudes, or something else?
Specify!

— Increase knowledge about (what)
— Change (what) policy
— Increase or decrease (which) behavior
— Change (what) norm

Example - Hotline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Short-Term Outcome</th>
<th>Intermediate Outcomes</th>
<th>Long-Term Outcome</th>
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<tr>
<td>Establish Hotline</td>
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What is the sequence of changes that take us from

← here to here →

↓ Suicide attempts
Generic Suicide Prevention Model

Group Exercise

- Work with your team (or a small group)
- Pick one activity from the list you made earlier
- Write the activity on a sticky note; that's your far-left box

Write "decrease in completed suicides" on another sticky note; that's the far-right box

Your Activity

Completed Suicides
Group Exercise, cont’d

- Create a logic model to connect left and right boxes
  - Use sticky notes – 1 change per sheet
  - No “right” number of middle steps

Focus on Risk & Protective Factors
Reminder: Specify!

- Increase knowledge about (what)
- Change (what) policy
- Increase or decrease (which) behavior
- Change (what) norm

Team Observations
Benefits of Logic Models

- Clarify the program
  - Focus on desired changes
  - Get specific
  - Achieve internal agreement
    - Resolve competing “implicit theories”
    - Visualize how program elements fit together
  - Communicate program to others
- Use as basis for evaluation plan
- Enhance sustainability

Sharpen Strategic Thinking

Instead of: *What are we doing to DO?*
  “Conduct a workshop”

State: *What are we trying to change?*
“Increase staff skills in recognizing suicide risk and intervening effectively”
Connection with Evaluation

- In short-term programs, suicide rates often not an accurate indicator of success
- Logic model allows you to evaluate the interim outcomes that will eventually lead to reductions in suicidal behavior
From Model to Evaluation Plan

- Based on specified changes, decide:
  - *Indicator*: what info could show this change?
  - *Data Sources*: where could you get that info?
  - *Design*: timing, comparison groups, etc.

Cohort 1 Quotes

"Think seriously about your local evaluation from the beginning."

"Don't underestimate the value of the evaluation. Put the effort into evaluation at both levels and plan ahead."

"Work with an evaluator to create evaluate-able materials."
ASU Lessons Learned

- Assemble a multidisciplinary team.
- Plan with the outcomes in mind.
- Train your team and partners to think strategically.
- Encourage your team to question assumptions.
- Use ongoing evaluation results to improve plan.

Thank you!
How to Use This Meeting

- Note structure – strategic planning process
- Identify areas of knowledge or skill that could benefit your team
- Send each team member to a different breakout session (see Worksheet, Side 2)
- Think strategically!
- Introduce yourself to Dave, Julie, Laurie, Leah

How to Use SPRC’s Campus Programs

- Call or email us with questions
- Read listserv postings
- Post your own questions to the listserv
- Participate in Group Technical Assistance
  - Conference Calls
  - Webinars
- Give us suggestions for topics
Cohort 1 Quotes

“Be realistic in your goals and objectives, but also dare to think big.”

“Identify 2-3 beliefs that you are passionate about and build your program and vision around those beliefs. Your passion will push through all the hard work and obstacles.”

Grantee Assignments

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<th>PS</th>
<th>Dave Stewart</th>
<th>Julie Halverson</th>
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