



Appalachian State University

Program Name: A.P.P.S. Cares Network
Grant Type: Garrett Lee Smith Campus
Grant Status: Alumni
Year Awarded: 2013
State: North Carolina

Appalachian State University (“Appalachian”), a constituent institution of the University of North Carolina system, will address suicide prevention by creating a comprehensive network of individuals who are trained to recognize signs, symptoms, and communications of suicide and respond by connecting students to needed resources. The project, which will be integrated into the University’s existing campus safety infrastructure, will be called the A.P.P.S. Cares Network. In order to serve the entire student body, a broad array of community members will be trained in all key areas where student interaction occurs, including residential (both on and off-campus), academic, healthcare, co-curricular and interpersonal/ family. A core team composed of mental health professionals, along with a select group of peer educators (known as the “APPS Cares Peer Network”), will be responsible for in-person trainings. Kognito Interactive (“Kognito”), an online gatekeeper training program, will be used to reach an even wider audience of community members. The broad outreach approach will include partnering with Student Development units (Dean of Students, University Housing, Center for Student Involvement & Leadership, Multicultural Student Development, Health Services, Wellness Center, Off-Campus Community Relations and Parent & Family Services); Academic departments (University College, Academic Advising, Military Science/ ROTC and Orientation); Campus Police, Athletics, Office of Disability Services and Counseling for Faculty & Staff. Goals of the project are as follows: 1) Increase the likelihood that the campus community will recognize and respond to students experiencing mental health distress or crisis; 2) Extend the University’s suicide prevention activities to reach a larger number of students than have been reached by previous efforts, and 3) Utilize a multi-disciplinary leadership network that will have the ability to share relevant information about mental health needs of Appalachian students and adapt and respond to mental health issues as they arise. Trained individuals will be provided with a protocol for responding to students in distress based on the acronym A.P.P.S. Approach and Acknowledge: Approach the student you are concerned about and acknowledge that you have noticed the signs, symptoms, and communication of their suffering. Probe: Show that you care by probing a little bit deeper. Promote hope: Promote hope by communicating that things can get better with the right help. Share: Share referrals with the student. Share information with your Help Network. Share the burden with your Support Network.

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