South Carolina Department of Mental Health

Program Name: Young Lives Matter Project
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The SC Department of Mental Health (SCDMH) will implement the Young Lives Matter Project to reduce deaths by suicide and nonfatal suicide attempts among SC youth and young adults age 10-24. The project will focus on increasing access to screening and mental health services, raising awareness through social media marketing, increasing protective factors through training across community domains, supporting clinicians and educators in implementing evidence-based interventions, utilizing safety plans in emergency departments, and strengthening statewide infrastructure. Within the overall focus population, SCDMH will focus on the subpopulations of those with Serious Mental Illness (SMI), justice system involved, and LGBT. Strategies and interventions include a marketing/outreach campaign as well as suicide prevention programming conducted in 80 school districts and on 5 college campuses; implementing the evidence-based Interactive Screening Program; provision of screening, assessment, and therapeutic services (utilizing the evidence-based Attachment-Based Family Therapy); improving state infrastructure through training, re-creation of the SC Suicide Prevention Coalition, improving discharge protocols in emergency departments, and development of a universal response protocol to respond when it is suspected that a YYA is suicidal.

Goals of Your Life Matters are:

- To strengthen statewide infrastructure that will support improved behavioral health services delivery to potentially suicidal YYAs, including formation of a statewide Suicide Prevention Coalition and regional youth suicide prevention task forces.
- To raise awareness and knowledge of YYAs and those who care about them (e.g., teachers, parents, counselors) regarding how to get help for depression and other mental health issues that may lead to suicidal ideation and suicide attempts.
- To educate parents, teachers, and other caring adults on the risk and resiliency factors that impact YYA mental health, suicidal ideation, and attempted suicide; on how to respond when they believe YYAs to be suicidal; and on how to access services.
- To increase screening of YYAs for suicide risk and their access to services.
- To implement evidence-based practices and successful intervention strategies to reduce suicide attempts and deaths by suicide.
- To develop an interagency response protocol to use in the event that a youth or young adult is determined to be at risk of suicide.

Primary project objectives (not an inclusive list) are:

- 300,000 individuals will be exposed to mental health awareness social media marketing and will be contacted through program outreach efforts
- 10,000 individuals will receive training in prevention or mental health promotion
- 30,000 individuals will be screened for mental health or related interventions
- 20,000 individuals will be referred to mental health or related services
- 25 organizations/communities will demonstrate improved readiness to change their systems
• All 46 SC counties will improve connection via a shared information technology system
• 90 contacts (at key agencies/institutions) will be made through program outreach efforts
• 131 programs/organizations will implement mental health-related practices/activities

It is estimated that at least 300,000 youth and young adults (60,000 annually) will be reached with social media marketing over the lifetime of the project and 30,000 (6,000 annually) youth and young adults will be screened for suicide risk and mental health needs.

Links within this resource