Ohio State University

Program Name: Ohio State University
Grant Type: Garrett Lee Smith Campus
Grant Status: Alumni
Year Awarded: 2009
State: Ohio

The Ohio State University Campus Suicide Prevention Program (OSU-CSPP) seeks to develop a comprehensive, effective, culturally responsive, technologically advanced, and sustainable system of suicide prevention at the Columbus campus and five regional campuses. A broad and diverse network of 73 campus and community partners is already committed to the project and will create a systematic and coordinated effort, where suicide prevention is seen as a shared campus responsibility.

As the nation’s largest university, the Ohio State University (OSU) recognizes its responsibility to assume a leadership role in the development and dissemination of a sustainable suicide prevention program that is effective for large campuses.

The proposed project will build on the strong foundation already in place to enhance and strengthen existing services for students while simultaneously creating new approaches to suicide prevention. There is high-level and broad-based commitment to this project, with the President of the university already committing his support and leadership, and campus partners from 64 different units and programs from the academic and service sides of the university, as well as student partners. Additionally, nine community partners have pledged their support for the project, for a total of 73 partners in this project. The OSU-CSPP is run through a separate, stand-alone office within the university, so all partners share equally in the development of a campus culture of caring. The campus and community partners have identified individuals to spearhead their units contributions to suicide prevention. In the project, 22 faculty and staff from 11 different campus offices have pledged at least 5 percent of their time as an in-kind match.

Major components of the program include (1) continuing to engage a broad and diverse group of campus and community partners; (2) collecting and integrating new and existing data regarding suicide risk on campus; (3) developing coordinated policies and procedures for crisis management across university partners; (4) developing an extensive, culturally sensitive, and technologically advanced training system in suicide prevention, with particular attention to targeted groups; (5) using technology and e-messaging, in addition to traditional formats, to expand suicide prevention education and anti-stigma campaigns to all students; (6) developing a comprehensive suicide plan for OSU; (7) evaluating all components of the project, through process, performance, and outcome measurements; and (8) disseminating information widely to other campuses, through professional organizations, and through Suicide Prevention Resource Center Best Practices Registry and SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices.

With a strong foundation in place, the next phases are to (a) formalize and operationalize the partner networks, (b) expand the project to include target populations and products, (c) refine the efforts to components with demonstrated effectiveness, and (d) institutionalize the efforts so they become part of the ongoing operation of the university and can be sustained.