Maine Youth Suicide Prevention Program

Program Name: Caring About Lives
Grant Type: Garrett Lee Smith State
Grant Status: Alumni
Year Awarded: 2008
State: Maine

The Caring About Lives in Maine project will support a strategic expansion of key priorities included in the Maine Youth Suicide Prevention Program Plan. Funds will: 1) implement suicide prevention and early intervention strategies; 2) provide training and assistance to increase the capacity of schools and youth-serving organizations to identify youth at risk and link them to culturally competent helping resources; 3) assist colleges in learning about suicide prevention protocol development; and 4) continue collaboration to pilot the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) model of web-based outreach to high risk college students.

Community “Referral Networks” that identify and assist youth at risk for suicide will be strengthened or created between 11 high schools and community organizations including crisis services, substance abuse treatment and child and family behavioral health services. The selected high schools will implement the Maine Lifelines Program, a school-based suicide prevention program. Student Assistance Teams (SATs) in each school will implement use of an early identification Data Tickler System to record student risk factors and the effectiveness of interventions through the SAT process. Evaluation focuses on efficacy and sustainability of two key promising practices: full-day Gatekeeper Training and the Maine Lifelines Program.

Training and resources will be provided to key groups in direct contact with youth in a variety of settings including those working with youth in behavioral health, child welfare and foster care. The project will collaborate to adapt training programs with Native Americans and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). We will also partner with the Veterans Administration Suicide Prevention Program and other programs serving high risk youth in a variety of settings. Efforts will include innovative initiatives such as work in health literacy, working with youth in transition and development of materials for families of youth in the criminal justice system.

Additional objectives include enhancement of the MYSPP Steering Committee to broaden leadership in suicide prevention and integration of a sustainable suicide prevention component within state organizations. Data gathered will increase understanding of youth suicide in Maine.

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