TEXAS: Suicide Prevention Efforts Focus on Small Texas Towns

July 15, 2016
News Type: Weekly Spark, Weekly Spark News
State: Texas

The Texas Tribune [1]

A new service in Denton County, Texas provides resources and support to survivors of suicide loss in the community by mobilizing teams of mental health professionals and trained volunteers who have themselves lost loved ones to suicide. A collaboration between the mental health authority and medical examiner’s office, Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors (LOSS) sends clinicians and volunteers who have been “touched by suicide” to the homes of families who have just experienced a suicide loss. The program hopes to address the disproportionate rates of suicide in rural areas of the state, where poverty, reduced access to mental health services, high rates of gun ownership, and a reluctance to seek help place inhabitants at higher risk compared to those in urban areas. Modeled on a similar program in Tarrant County that found increased mental health service use among survivors, Denton County LOSS aims to reduce the stigma around discussing suicide and seeking help, in part through volunteers who are models of survival. Christine Smith, the Tarrant County team’s coordinator, said of the volunteers, “These people are in the most tragic places of their lives. It’s unbelievable how you can be in such a devastating state and want to help others.”

Spark Extra! Learn more about postvention [2] and suicide prevention in rural areas [3].

Links within this resource

Printed on 05/06/2020 from https://www.sprc.org/news/texas-suicide-prevention-efforts-focus-small-texas-towns