

**Adapting the Air Force Suicide Prevention Model
for Campuses:
Cornell University**

**SAMHSA Campus Suicide Prevention Campus
Grantee Meeting
January 2007**

Introduction

- **Mental health is vital to the University's academic mission**
- **Mental health needs of students present a growing challenge**
- **Trends: effective treatment, decreasing stigma**
- **Increasing recognition of ubiquity of mental health problems as well as our responsibility to reach out and support students who are in distress**



Political Will-Leadership Structure

Executive Committee on Campus Health & Safety

**President's Council
on Alcohol
and Other Drugs**

**Council on Mental
Health and Welfare**

Political Will-Caring Community

"We have a focus here, and we hope to draw you into the focus and bring your strength and spirit and heart along, to develop a caring community everywhere that there is the name Cornell...I urge you, as you move through the wonderful and tremendous life experience that is Cornell, to think about the person next to you, the person across the hall, the person in your class and to help us build an even more caring community."

— From President Skorton's Convocation Address, August 19, 2006

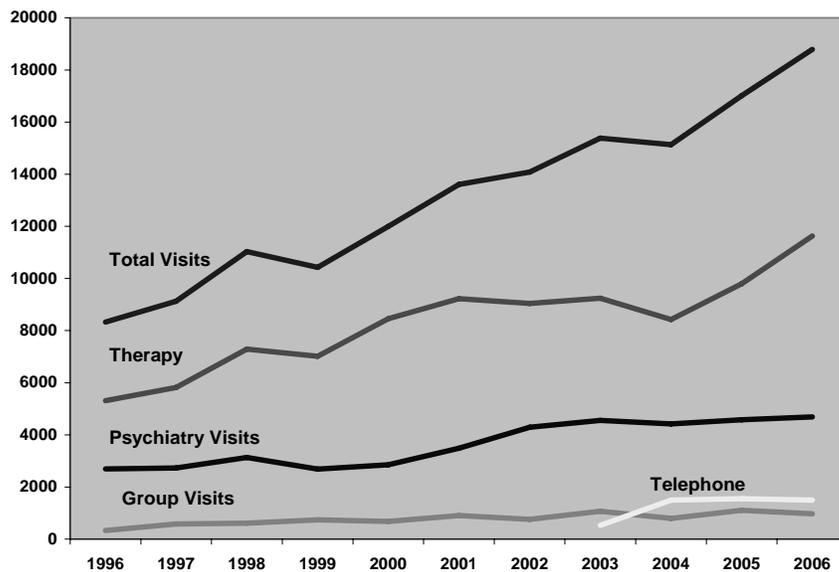
Shared Understanding-Cornell Data – NCHA 2006 Survey

- **Cornell data comparable to peer institutions**
- **Over past year (n=1902):**
 - **44% undergraduates reported feeling "so depressed that it was difficult to function"**
 - **11% reported seriously contemplating suicide**
 - **1.3% had attempted suicide (~175 undergrads)**

Shared Understanding-Clinical Services

- **13% of student body seen last year in Gannett's Counseling and Psychological Services.**
- **6% increase in CAPS visits so far this year.**

CAPS – 10 Year Visit Trend



Shared Understanding-Principles Underlying Strategy

- **Clinical services are necessary but not sufficient (shared responsibility)**
- **Mental health problems require an institution-wide, community-based network of support (collective competence)**

Multilayered Interventions-Framework for Network of Student Support



Environmental Support

- **Climate efforts**
 - **Residential Initiative -Building house programs with more direct contact with faculty**
 - **Caring Community-working to put in place and discern what a caring community looks like at Cornell**
 - **Diversity Initiatives-Recognizing that multicultural factors impact mental health**

Diversity and Mental Health

“Study: Support shields kids from racist slurs”

Gannett News Service 9/26/06

“ . . . discrimination can spur depression and behavior problems in adolescents, but it can also be counterbalanced by support from homes, friends and school. . . ”

Community Based Services

- **Community Consultation and Intervention-Partnering with academic advising, student advocacy, crisis intervention.**
- **Lets Talk- walk-in consultations**
www.gannett.cornell.edu/CAPS/offsiteSupport.html

Educational Strategies

- **New web resources for faculty/staff**

Noticing Signs of Distress Among the Student Body - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address http://www.gannett.cornell.edu/campushealth/Network/Signs_Distress.html

Google Search

Cornell University

Home / Campus Health Initiatives / Campus Network / Signs of distress

gannett Health Services

Home Services Access to Care Top 10 Topics Campus Health Who We Are Who Are You

Campus Health Initiatives

Noticing Signs of Distress

The following can all be important signs of distress. You may notice a student exhibiting one or more of them and decide that something is clearly wrong. Or you may have a "gut-level feeling" that something is amiss. If the latter is the case, don't dismiss your feelings or feel that you need to wait for tangible "proof" that a problem exists. A simple check-in with the student may help you get a better sense of his/her situation.

Academic Indicators

- Deterioration in quality/quantity of work
- A negative change in classroom or research performance (e.g., drop in grades)
- Missed assignments or exams
- Repeated absences from class or from research lab

What the data show

Noticing signs of distress
Roles of key individuals and groups
Intervention pathways
Resources for students
Common mental health conditions

Executive Committee on Campus Health & Safety

http://www.cornell.edu/

Educational Strategies

- **Presentations at faculty & staff meetings**
 - **Focus: awareness of problem, roles & resources**
- **Expanding faculty-staff teams of presenters**
- **Phase two: skill building sessions**
 - **Similar to QPR (Question, Persuade & Refer)**

Continuum of Organizational Support Systems

Pre-crisis

Alert Team

Crisis

Crisis managers

CAPS/Gannett on-call

Post-Crisis

CSM

Alert Team

- **Weekly meeting of key staff from across campus**
- **Pre/early crisis coordination of:**
 - **Communication**
 - **Fact finding**
 - **Case management**
- **Building connections to academic units**
- **Identification of policy issues**

Sustainability-Policy Initiatives

- **Communication with parents when students no longer enrolled**
- **Protocols for early detection (e.g., academic failure) and assessment of functioning**
- **Coordination with Associate Deans**
- **Formulation of Policy Team**

- **“We live in a community that values, celebrates the life of the mind; in order to be successful in this enterprise we must attend to the health of the mind. Good mental and physical health is the foundation upon which excellent college education is built.”**

Kent Hubbell, Dean of Students