

TUOLUMNE COUNTY'S SUICIDE PREVENTION TASK FORCE: HISTORY & CURRENT EVENTS

Pain Isn't Always Obvious

**KNOW
THE SIGNS**

Suicide Is Preventable.org



May 23, 2013

The Beginnings:



1985

“YES Partnership” launched with Kaiser Grant funding to address a series of suicides in local youth. School curricula addressing suicide reviewed and made available to local schools

2006

In response to another series of suicides, YES Partnership funded research to study factors influencing suicide rates in rural vs. urban California counties

Formation of the Task Force

January
2007:

- In response to community concerns and information found in the data, the *Tuolumne County Suicide Prevention Steering Committee* was formed

- This group evolved to become the

**Tuolumne County
Suicide Prevention Task Force**

Bringing the stakeholders together

- ❑ Resourcing & incorporating already existing groups/efforts
- ❑ Significant involvement and leadership from Public Health Officer
 - ❑ Connection with Medical Community
 - ❑ Access to community, state and federal data
- ❑ NOT led by Mental Health
 - ❑ Reaching target populations outside of SMHS clients
 - ❑ Community issue, not exclusive to MH – reducing stigma



Community Representation on the Suicide Prevention Task Force:

Task Force participants included individuals from:

- Public Health
- Law Enforcement
- Behavioral Health
- Board of Supervisors
- Schools
- Office of Education
- Local Hospital
- Medical Practitioners
- Recreation
- Community members, some with personal experience with suicide in their families.
- Non-Profit Agencies
- Emergency Medical Response
- Service Clubs
- Senior Support Agency
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Probation
- Human Services Agency
- Child Development

Task Force Mission Statement

“To coordinate the planning, implementation and monitoring of projects throughout Tuolumne County that prevent and reduce the risk of suicide, incorporating the core values of integrity, accountability, compassion, collaboration and professionalism.”

Timeline

2007-
2008

- ❑ Local resources were coordinated and efforts combined
 - ❑ Multiple agencies had created different suicide prevention/crisis contact cards and flyers – consolidated into one format for use by all.
 - ❑ Local 24-hour Crisis Lines were expanded and advertised.
 - ❑ California’s Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan was released, providing some guidance & direction.
- ❑ The TCSPTF met and organized into sub-committees to begin the process of writing a Three-year Strategic Plan for Tuolumne County

Timeline (cont.):

2009 -
2010

- Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan completed
- Core Oversight Committee formed, bylaws written
- Coordinating Agency selected -CNVC (Center for a Non Violent Community)
 - MHPA funds awarded to ensure implementation of the Strategic Plan with the understanding that funds could be leveraged to pay for additional trainings, materials, personnel, etc.
- Sonora Area Foundation funded initial launch of TCSPTF implementation
- Multiple trainings, community education, partners launch and expand local programs (Dawn's Light, CNVC bullying prevention, school based programs)

Strategic Plan

APPENDIX B SUICIDE PREVENTION STRATEGIC PLAN

TRAINING, PREVENTION and INTERVENTION EXPANDED PROPOSALS YEARS TWO AND THREE

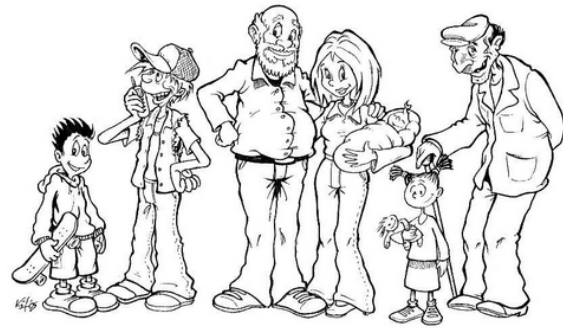
Program	Brief Description	Target Audience/ Target Population/Presentation Group Size	Age Groups	Outcomes	Annual Costs	Agency to provide oversight	Inkind/Cash and Noncash
SOS Signs of Suicide School Based Intervention	SOS Signs of Suicide is a 2-day secondary school-based intervention that includes screening and education. Students are screened for depression and suicide risk and referred for professional help as indicated. Students also view a video that teaches them to recognize signs of depression and suicide in others, and taught that the appropriate response to these signs is to acknowledge them, let the person know you care, and tell a responsible adult (either with the person or on that person's behalf). Students also participate in guided classroom discussions about suicide and depression. The intervention attempts to prevent suicide attempts, increase knowledge about suicide and depression, develop desirable attitudes toward suicide and depression, and increase help-seeking behavior. Note the education part of the SOS program can be implemented in one class period, such as in a health class. The main teaching tools are a video and discussion guide, and a brief 7-question, non-diagnostic screening tool for depression. Students are then given the opportunity to meet with counselors following the program, for themselves or for a friend.	9 th – 12 th grade	Youth	School counselors and teachers trained and implementing curriculum by end of year one. The nationally recognized high school version, evaluated in a randomized-control study, has demonstrated a reduction of suicide attempts by 40% (Aseltine & DeMartino, 2004) and a dramatic increase in help-seeking behavior (Aseltine, 2003), a critical element in preventing suicide.	Total Cost of SOS program kit is \$300, @ 10 kits for 4 grade levels in high schools = \$3,000 (Pending additional funds for school counselors through the Student Mental Health initiative) Costs for staff training not included. A kit of materials is available that includes a staff procedure manual and training video, student screening forms, an educational video and discussion guide, and brochures on suicide and depression for students and parents. The SOS program kit provides extensive, detailed step-by-step information on how to implement the program.	Individual School Districts implementing curriculum	Unknown
Bullying Prevention Schools	The expanded Bullying Prevention Program "I Choose Respect" consists of two components: 1) A 45 minutes of education annually to 4 th grade students in 8 elementary schools in the recognition of bullying behavior, discussion of tolerance, experiential role plays in respect and empathy, intervention strategies for students using role plays, and how to get help in 2009-10 2) An intensive one year bullying Prevention Program in one elementary school for grades K-8th which includes 3 components: 1) The above "I Choose Respect" program; 2) Conducting Restorative Justice Circles in which the victim of bullying behavior and the perpetrator of bullying behavior choose friends, relatives to sit in a circle and identify needs and feelings of everyone in the circle, and together develop strategies to restore balance and accountability for the incident including follow up: 3) Training teachers, staff, and students on how to conduct Restorative Circles so that the program is self sustaining. This intensive program will be conducted in a total of 2 schools over 2 years.	4 th graders in 9 schools Identified bullies and victims of bullying and teachers and school staff of Jamestown Kindergarten through 8 th graders in Jamestown Elementary School	Youth ages 5 to 12 years old	1) 400 4 th graders educated annually in "I Choose Respect" in 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 2) 500 students educated in "I Choose Respect" 5 years to 12 years old in one school 2010-2011 3) 25 core students trained to facilitate Restorative Justice Circles in one school 2010-2011 4) 25 teachers, staff able to facilitate Restorative Justice circles and provide intervention strategies for bullying in one school 2010-2011	Total of \$60,000 which includes 1) \$20,000 for school presenters in 2009-2010 and 2) \$40,000 for school presenters and trainers for intensive training and prevention activities in one school for 2010-2011	Mountain Women's Resource Center (MWRC)	\$55,000 2009-2010 \$55,000 2010-2011 if MWRC still receives money from the state

Task force activities 2009-2012

- Core Oversight Committee met quarterly
- Entire SPTF (Approx 60 members) attended annual retreats for reporting, collaborating and planning
- Projects throughout the community targeting suicide prevention catalogued and included in a resource directory.
- The four strategic directions recommended by the California Strategic Plan on Suicide Prevention were used as a framework for committees and planning
 - 1) Development of a Suicide Prevention (and Intervention) system
 - 2) Training and Workforce Enhancements
 - 3) Community Education
 - 4) Monitoring and Surveillance for Effectiveness

Task force activities (cont.)

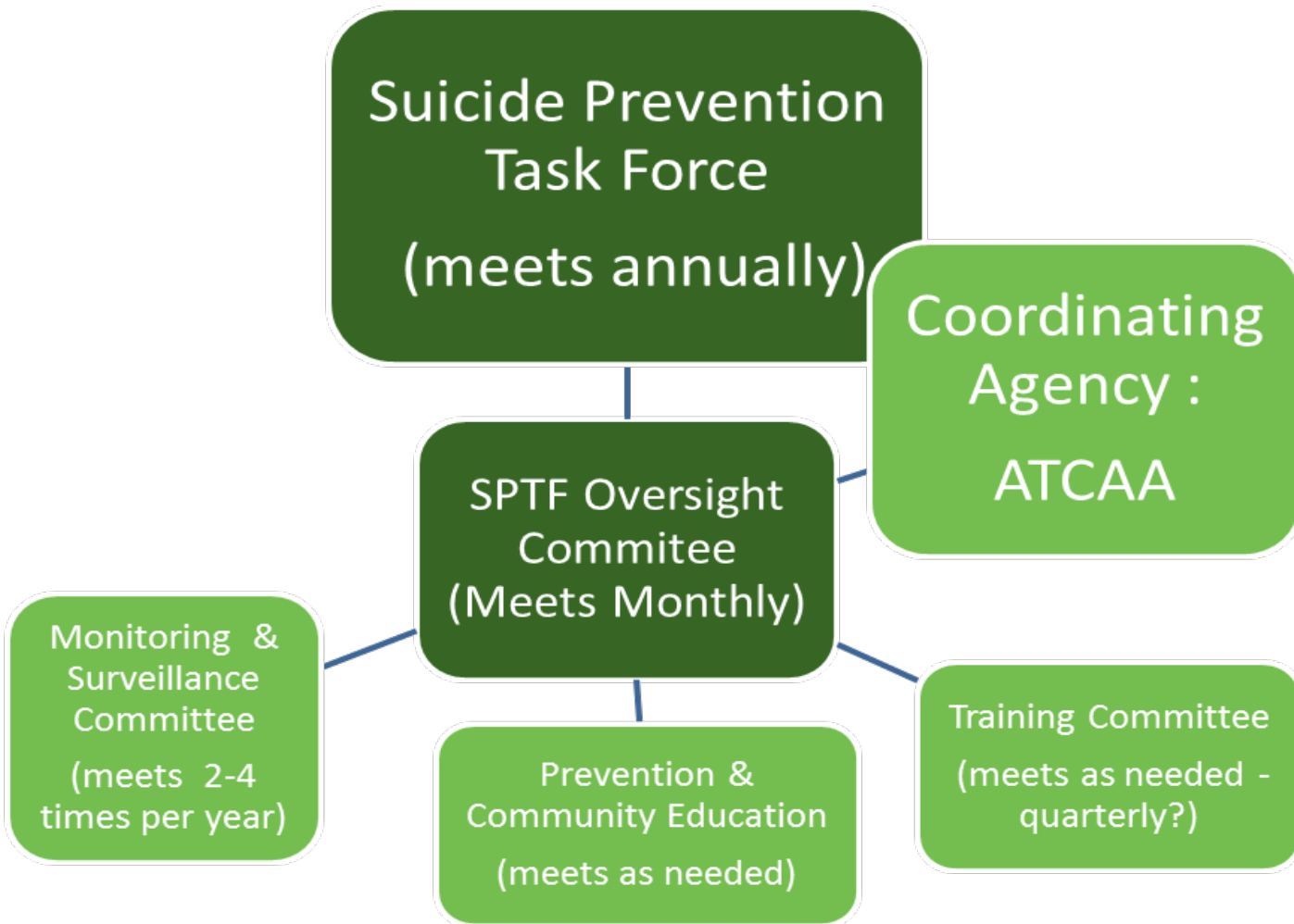
- Four specific age groups were addressed by each subcommittee –
 - Youth (16 years and under)
 - Young Adult (16-24 years)
 - Adult (25-60 years)
 - Older Adult (over 60 years)
- A resource directory of evidence-based prevention programs was established and prioritized over the three year planning period
- A community education plan was established to cover the three year planning period
- At the end of the first three year cycle, work began on developing a new 3 year strategic plan based on lessons learned and identified needs and resources.



Current Task Force Status:

- New Coordinating Agency: ATCAA
(Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency)
- Next 3 year Strategic Plan completed
- Oversight Committee meeting monthly
 - Recent agenda items include: updates from partners, community response to suicides, state, regional and local efforts and trainings, current events (i.e. Know The Signs campaign, ReachOut)
- Fourth SPTF Retreat – Spring 2013!

Current Task Force Structure



Current activities: ASIST Training

- **Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training**
- The ASIST workshop teaches suicide first aid which helps a person at risk stay safe and seek further help. Participants learn how to:
 - Recognize invitations for help
 - Reach out and offer support
 - Review the risk of suicide
 - Apply a suicide intervention model
 - Link people with community resources
- There will be an ASIST training on **June 24-25**, at the Tuolumne County Superintendent of Schools Office.

safeTALK Training

- Suicide Alertness for Everyone-**Tell, Ask, Listen, Keep Safe**
- safeTALK prepares helpers to identify persons with thought of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources. Participants will be better able to:
 - Move beyond common tendencies to miss, dismiss or avoid suicide
 - Identify people who have thoughts of suicide
 - Apply the *TALK* steps (*Tell, Ask, Listen, and Keep Safe*) to connect a person with thoughts of suicide to a suicide first aid intervention caregiver.
- We have three safeTALK trainers in Tuolumne County.
- First safeTALK training will be held on **August 22**.

QPR Training

- **Question Persuade and Refer**
- The QPR for Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training teaches people how to recognize suicide warning signs and how to Question, Persuade and Refer a suicidal person to a professional who can help.
- Like CPR, QPR is an emergency response to someone in a suicide crisis.
- We are in the process of identifying and recruiting people who would like to be trained as QPR Certified Gatekeeper Instructors.
- There are two people trained in QPR Suicide Triage for First Responders in Tuolumne County.

Programs: Boys Council/Girl's Circle

- **Boys Council** is a strengths-based approach to promote boys' and young men's safe and healthy passage through pre-teen and adolescent years
- **Girl's Council** is a structured support group for girls from 9-18 years which integrates relational theory, resiliency practices, and skills training.
- Since 2012 over 140 students have been part of Boys Council/Girl's Circle programs at Jamestown, Soulsbyville and Twain Harte Elementary Schools, and the Tuolumne County Probation Department.

STOP IT Anti-Bullying Summit

- Tuolumne County Superintendent of School Office sponsored the first ever Anti-Bullying Summit.
- Attendees included students from Tuolumne and Calaveras schools, teachers and school administrators, board representatives, and parents.
- Sessions offered to different groups included information on Cyberbullying, Standing up against Bullying, and a panel of community representatives.
- Attendees completed pledge cards – another summit may be held in the fall

Media Resources & Campaigns

- **Know the Signs (support) & Reach Out (for teens)**
 - Online resources for Suicide Prevention for support persons and teens. Posters and brochures being distributed throughout Tuolumne County
- **Man Therapy (mantherapy.org)**
 - A mental health and suicide prevention campaign targeting working age men (25-54) that employs humor to cut through stigma and tackle issues like depression, divorce, and suicidal thoughts. Man Therapy is built around the fictional Man Therapist, Dr. Rich Mahogany. The centerpiece of the campaign is the mantherapy.org website, where men and their loved ones will find they have a virtual appointment with Dr. Mahogany.
 - This campaign will be launched in Tuolumne County with posters, flyers and public service announcements.

Challenges, learning points

- Retaining trained trainers for QPR, SafeTalk, etc. can be difficult
- Compensation for trainers who are expected to provide ongoing trainings (beyond what is required) needs to be addressed and planned for
- Community and stakeholder focus tends to be on youth and older adults, but the largest number of suicides occur in the middle age group, where services and supports are most slim.

Challenges, learning points

- Sustaining energy and interest of the oversight committee through more mundane tasks can be difficult – it was a topic at a recent meeting and feedback included inviting trainers to provide updates and stories and to discuss community responses to current suicide event.
- Schools (including colleges) also have grant funding and services available - Collaborating can help avoid duplication of services and maximize resources.

Contacts & information



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