

Vermont Youth Suicide Prevention Coalition Meeting

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Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

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Minutes

Those present: Stephen Earley, VT School Crisis Team; Linda Livendale, VT AFSP; Debby Haskins, ASAP of VT; Donna McAllister, VT DOE; Patty Baroudi, VDH; Heather Danis, VDH Burlington; Charlie Biss, Div. MH; Tom Delaney, VCHIP; Bill McMains, DMH; Sally Kerschner, VDH; Larry Lewack, NAMI-VT; Robin Pesci, Howard Center-FC; Ali Siemianowski, ADAP Young Adult Advisor Team; John Halligan, Ryan's Story Presentation; JoEllen Tarallo-Falk, VT Youth Suicide Prevention; Brian Remer, VT Youth Suicide Prevention

Introductions- Everyone was provided a description of one of the VT YSP project components to review and then brief other people in the room. Brian fielded questions about aspects of the project that emerged from this activity.

Following this activity people introduced themselves by name and role.

Transition Grant- Charlie Biss provided an overview of the new 9 million dollar six year grant project through the Department of Mental Health focused on transitional age youth (with mental health issues and/or disorders), age 16-21. One of the outcomes will be a youth run organization, helpful to suicide, substance abuse and other mental health initiatives. At the next meeting there will be two newly hired Youth Coordinators representing this project. Charlie explained that when he thinks about behavioral health problems it includes many co-occurring issues, inclusive of substance abuse. The Suicide Prevention Platform was the outgrowth of inter-agency initiatives.

National Evaluation- Haley Reid of Macro International, sub-contractor to SAMHSA, federal funding agency, to carry out a national cross-site evaluation, provided an overview of the national cross-site evaluation.

Haley explained that there are four foci of the national evaluation and each has at least one evaluation tool associated with it:

1. Recording the Context of the project: *Evaluation Needs Assessment, Existing Database Survey*
2. Documenting the Products of the project: *Products and Services Inventory*

3. Tracking the Processes of the project: *Training Exit Survey, Referral Network Survey*
4. Measuring the Impact of the project: *Early Identification, Referral, & Follow-up*

She went into more specifics on two aspects of the evaluation for which coalition member are needed to provide information.

Early Identification, Referral and Follow-up (EIRF)

This represents the major data collection that demonstrates impact of the project to connect youth identified at risk with services. The purpose of this evaluation is to document the result of screening activities or gatekeeper trainings; ensure that service providers track service referral and receipt and that youth's needs are met; increase the percentage of at-risk youth receiving services by identifying gaps and breakdowns in the referral network; identify potential areas for providing new services or establishing new policies.

This data will enable us to assess strengths and gaps of systems of support for youth and will contribute to the development of a long range plan for building infrastructure in VT. Tom and JoEllen explained how we are trying to build a data-collection system for the EIRF and we are looking for suggestions. Heather Danis (Burlington VDH Regional Director) suggested that the collection of EPSDT School Nurse nurse data may provide some lessons to inform the data collection.

Referral Network Survey (RNS)

This data collection focuses on studying the collaboration that exists between agencies: the extent to which a referral network exists to support the suicide prevention program including agency/organization involvement, and related interactions, policies and procedures. A sign-up form was distributed with the suggestion that two people from each organization be listed. The following people agreed to be interviewed during the survey.

Heather Danis, VDH, Burlington District; Barbara Cimaglio, VDH Deputy Commissioner
Charlie Biss, DMH; Bill McMains, DMH
John Halligan and Kelly Halligan, Ryan's Story Presentation, LLC
Linda Livendale, VT Chapter AFSP
Debby Haskins, ASAP of VT
Donna McAllister, VT DOE; Deb Quackenbush, VT DOE
Steve Earley, VT School Crisis Team; Chief Leo Nadeau, Essex Police Dept.
Patty Baroudi, VDH/ADAP; Michael McAdoo, VDH/ADAP
Larry Lewack, NAMI - VT

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)

Linda described the work of the AFSP and the new audio-visual resources they have produced which are targeted to high school students, college students, and physicians. Each one has a Facilitator's Guide. The group viewed one of the resources showing four

different levels of youth depression. This film can be coupled with other resources provided at the school-based trainings planned for the next three years.

Discussion about Coalition Development

People worked in small groups to respond to a series of questions.

What kinds of roles/organizations would we like to see in this coalition?

- Juvenile Justice
- Court Diversion
- Corrections – Youth in Transition Grant
- University of Vermont – Counseling Department
- Department of Public Information/Communications
- State Association of School Counselors
- Outright VT and RU12
- Emergency Management
- School Nurses' Association
- State Guidance Counselors' Association
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse Providers
- Clergy
- Anti-Violence Partnership
- Teen Centers
- Sexual Violence Prevention Task force
- UVM Community Relations Group
- Women's Center at UVM
- Athletic Directors in schools
- High Schools
- DCF
- Vermont Home Schools
- Marketing Person
- Supported Employment Job Program
- Military, National Guard
- Vermont Refugee Resettlement

What are the opportunities and challenges of targeting and including youth?

Patty shared the struggles that the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention intern Connie Beal has encountered in trying to develop a youth leadership component to the Strategic Prevention Framework initiative aimed at substance abuse prevention. Scheduling and traveling to meetings, etc. have been barriers. The strength has been in the gathering of youth perspectives. Tom mentioned the Jobs program out of Vocational Rehabilitation and another out of the Department of Labor WIA, as possible resources for attracting youth. Ali mentioned that someone who has been personally affected by the issues may be less likely to want to come forward and participate in initiatives. It is probably easier to find interested young adults from the college population than in the workforce. Opportunities including young adults must be interactive.

What are the opportunities and challenges of including survivors in the Coalition?

Linda described a Survivor Outreach training she will be attending which prepares survivors to provide support to other survivors.

We could offer this training in Vermont. Survivors have a unique perspective and have used their experience to elevate the public health awareness, policy and funding for these initiatives. Survivors need opportunities to strengthen their voice and there is a lack of awareness of resources available for them. They play an important role in reducing stigma around suicide.

Environmental Strategies

A chart providing an overview of the major environmental strategies being used in the project was provided (see attached). Peter Kriff of PDI Communications will be working with CHL on developing a media campaign with applications to web, print and radio messaging. Peter interacted with the group around the process and approach.

We hope to have some designs for the coalition to provide input on in the next month or so.

Maine Lifelines Curriculum Review

The group previewed elements of the four lessons from the Maine Lifelines curriculum for which teacher training will be offered. Before a school participates in the curriculum training they will be required to participate in the Protocols, Gatekeeper and Trainer of Trainer trainings. Schools will need to develop protocols with local mental health agencies, deliver parent education awareness and conduct Gatekeeper training with all staff in the school community before they implement the lessons with students.

The group inquired about how interdisciplinary connections might be made and what kind of information about referral would be provided. The group watched one of the videos that accompanies the curriculum called, "A Life Saved," a story of a successful intervention.

Future Meeting Dates and Times

Location: Waterbury was suggested as a good location (Stanley Hall)

We will meet again in late May after the pilot of the School-based training in Chittenden County in May.

Look for an announcement via MeetingWizard.