

**Connecticut Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative (CYSPI)
Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act Grant #SM57391
Funding Period: June 2006-May 2009**

Overview

Background:

The CT Departments of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Children and Families (DCF), Public Health, Education, and the Judicial Branch and the CT State University System (CSU) are collaborating with the University of CT Health Center (UCHC) to implement, evaluate, and sustain statewide youth suicide prevention and early intervention programs in conjunction with the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act.

CT Youth Suicide Advisory Board/CYPSI Advisory Sub-Committee:

- **Description:** The Connecticut Youth Suicide Advisory Board (YSAB), established in 1989 via legislative mandate within the Department of Children and Families, is charged to increase public awareness of the existence of youth suicide, to promote means of prevention and to make recommendations to the Commissioner regarding the prevention of youth suicide. It also acts as the advisory body to the CYSPI. A sub-committee of the larger board was created to provide ongoing strategic and operational advice to accomplish the tasks related to the Initiative. The Sub-committee met monthly the first year of the grant and bi-monthly starting fall 2007; and reports to the YSAB on a bi-monthly basis.
- **Sub-Committee Membership:** Members include the Department of Children and Families, Office of Child Advocate, State Department of Education, National Alliance on Mental Illness-CT, CT Behavioral Health Network, Town of Enfield Youth Services, Wheeler Clinic CT Clearinghouse, University of Connecticut Health Center, United Way of CT, and private citizens/parents.

Program Description

Through CT's existing youth suicide prevention infrastructure, including the Youth Suicide Advisory Board (YSAB), the **Connecticut Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative (CYSPI)** supports the following activities:

High School Component:

- **Goal:** Screening for Mental Health, Inc.'s Signs of Suicide (SOS) High School Program, an evidence-based practice in CT High Schools.
- **Target:** Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS) and Trumbull High School/Regional Agriscience and Biotechnology Program's ninth-grade classrooms.
- **Current Process Outcomes:**
 - Sixteen of seventeen CTHSS schools (one was not eligible) and Trumbull High School have implemented the SOS to ninth-grade students. Total student numbers are currently being collected.
 - Nine of the seventeen schools participated in the evaluation during the 2007-2008 school year. A total of 480 pre-tests were collected fall 2007. No adverse effects reported. Spring 2008 post-tests in progress.
 - School Counselors, Psychologists, and Social Workers are contacts.
 - Support from State Department of Education and Superintendents.
 - DCF-Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services (EMPS) have been encouraged to be available during pre-/post-test and SOS implementation.

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College Component:

- **Goal:** QPR Institute's Question, Persuade, Refer Gatekeeper Program and Screening for Mental Health, Inc.'s CollegeResponse Program (National Depression Screening Day-NDS and College SOS) in the CT State University System.
- **Target:** Central, Eastern, Southern, and Western CT State Universities
 - QPR- faculty, staff, campus police, RA, and other university personnel
 - NDS- students, faculty, staff, and other university personnel.
 - SOS- new students.
- **Current Process Outcomes:**
 - Over 700 people participated in the NDS of which over 300 students were screened and approximately 40% being referred for further evaluation.
 - QPR training and SOS education are in progress.
 - Counseling Center Directors are contacts.
 - Support from CSU System and VPs of Student Affairs.

Training Component:

- **Goal:** Training in recognizing the signs and symptoms of suicidality and depression using the LivingWorks' ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training), and increase the capacity of the State's clinical workforce to assess and manage suicide risk using the Suicide Prevention Resource Center's Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk (AMSR): Core Competencies for Mental Health Professionals Training.
- **Target:**
 - ASIST- Department of Children and Family (DCF) personnel, juvenile justice personnel, foster parents, and schools nurses.
 - AMSR- Clinical staff (masters/PhD prepared clinicians) of the CT Technical High Schools and Trumbull High School, the DCF Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services clinicians, the CT State University (CSU) System Counseling Services staff, and the clinicians funded through the CYSPI at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center and Quirk Middle School in Hartford, CT.
- **Current Process Outcomes:**
 - Four ASIST trainings have been performed with a total of over 200 participants. Four more basic trainings will be performed in 2008-2009 followed by a Training for Trainers spring 2009.
 - Two AMSR trainings have been performed with a total of over 70 participants. Two more basic trainings will be performed in 2008-2009 followed by a Training for Trainers spring 2009.
 - United Way of CT performs ASIST and Wheeler Clinic performs AMSR.
 - DCF-Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services (EMPS) have been very involved.

Clinical Pilot Program:

- **Goal:** A model clinical program in Hartford, CT to increase the availability, accessibility, and linkages to mental health screening and treatment for middle-school youth.
- **Target:** Quirk Middle School School-Based Health Center and the St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center Adolescent Clinic.
- **Current Process Outcomes:**

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- Web-based data collection and services management system developed by UCHC with user manual.
- May-December 2007, 270 students were screened with the RADS 2, 42 (15%) screened positive.
- Consent process for services and evaluation is a challenge due to limited access to parents, especially at the School-Based Health Center.

Statewide Campaign:

- **Goal:** An assertive youth/young adult (ages 10 – 24) suicide prevention education and awareness campaign that will build the capacity of Connecticut communities to promote the mental health and wellness of youth/young adults through the provision of community-based mini-grants.
- **Target:** Community-based youth and young adult (ages 10-24) serving agencies, organizations and schools with pre-existing youth groups or prior experience with youth. Examples of applicants may include but are not limited to: middle and high schools, colleges, universities, Boys and Girls Clubs, Girls Scouts, Boy Scouts, Youth Services Bureaus, YMCAs, YWCAs, civic and service clubs, sports teams, faith-based youth groups, GLBTQ youth groups, educational institutions or agencies that serve active military and returning veterans, etc.
- **Current Process Outcomes:**
 - Seven \$2,000 mini-grants were awarded to organizations throughout the state fall 2007 with a funding period of October 2007-June 2008. The awardees are: 1) Amity High School in Woodbridge; 2) Community Prevention and Addiction Services in Willimantic; 3) CT College in New London; 4) Frank Ward Strong Middle School in Durham; 5) Community Health Resources/Greater Enfield Alliance for Kids and Families in Enfield; 6) Integrated Wellness Group Inc. in New Haven; and 7) Nu Epsilon Omega Sorority of Sacred Heart University in Bridgeport.
 - A second RFP was released mid-March 2008 and will fund mini-grants up to \$4,000 (\$32,000 available). The funding period will be July 2008-May 2009. Letters of Intent are due April 4, applications due May 9, and awards announced May 26, 2008.
 - The Campaign is partially funded by a contribution from DCF and is managed by the CT Clearinghouse, a program of Wheeler Clinic.

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