

Youth Suicide Prevention Report

Revised Statute 17:282.4

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Youth Suicide Prevention

Office of Behavioral Health

March 2018





State of Louisiana
Louisiana Department of Health
Office of Behavioral Health

March 9, 2018

The Honorable John A. Alario, President
Louisiana State Senate
P. O. Box 94183, Capitol Station
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9183

The Honorable Taylor Barras, Speaker
Louisiana State House of Representatives
P. O. Box 94062, Capitol Station
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9062

The Honorable Dan Morrish, Chairman
Senate Education Committee
P. O. Box 94183, Capitol Station
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9183

The Honorable Nancy R. Landry
House Education Committee
P. O. Box 94062, Capitol Station
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9062

RE: Revised Statute 17:282.4 Youth Suicide Prevention Report

Dear President Alario, Speaker Barras and Honorable Chairs:

In response to the reporting requirement set forth in Louisiana Revised Statute 17.282.4, the Louisiana Department of Health and the Louisiana Department of Education offer the following information.

Should you have any further questions or require additional clarification regarding LDH suicide prevention activities, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Behavioral Health at 225-342-2540.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karen Stubbs".

Karen Stubbs, J.D.
Assistant Secretary

cc: The Honorable Members of the Senate Education Committee
The Honorable Members of the House Education Committee
David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library

RS.17:282.4 – Youth Suicide Prevention Report FY 2017

This report was prepared by the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) in response to the requirements of R.S. 17.282.4.

Background

OBH implemented the Louisiana Partnership for Youth Suicide Prevention (LPYSP) from 2006 through 2013 with funds awarded by the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) under the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act. The goal of LPYSP was to reduce youth suicide deaths and suicidal behavior in Louisiana. During this grant, a cadre of individuals was trained to provide evidence-based trainings in suicide prevention and intervention. These programs included the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and the safeTALK (suicide alertness) trainings. This grant led to the legislation requiring this report. OBH worked diligently to build a sustainable trainer network and regional suicide prevention coalitions during the term of the LPYSP grant. The LPYSP grant ended on September 29, 2013. The trainer network has dwindled and the most of the regional coalitions are no longer functioning without the additional fiscal support. Although the Office of Behavioral Health has applied for other suicide prevention and intervention grants since LPYSP terminated, Louisiana has not yet been awarded another grant to address and/or prevent suicide.

Current Status of OBH Suicide Prevention

OBH continues to address suicide prevention across the lifespan, including youth suicide. In SFY 2017, OBH staff provided and supported suicide prevention and early intervention trainings for approximately 1,000 individuals. This included eight sessions of the two-day Applied Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), 17 sessions of the suicide alertness program safeTALK, and 10 sessions of suicide intervention trainings that focused on suicide safety planning and reduction of lethal means. These intervention sessions were presented to professionals at conferences hosted by the Louisiana Association of Substance Abuse Counselors and Trainers, the American Association of School Social Workers, and the National Association of Social Workers, Louisiana Chapter. Participation in these trainings include professional clinicians, care managers, social workers, school personnel, clergy, military personnel, and other individuals who work with vulnerable populations as well as lay audiences from a variety of backgrounds.

After an analysis of the geographical gaps in the trainer network that provides ASIST and safeTALK, OBH offered a training of trainers for both safeTALK and ASIST. In March 2017, 11 individuals attended a two day workshop to learn to deliver safeTALK trainings; these participants were from the areas of Houma, Alexandria, Lake Charles, and Monroe as there were no safeTALK trainers in these parts of the state. The five-day train-the-trainer ASIST sessions were attended by 23 Louisiana citizens. These individuals were from the 10 LDH regions of the state. Each of the new trainers will be completing three trainings over the next 12 months which will greatly expand the state's capacity to provide suicide intervention training statewide. OBH has focused on working with the new trainers to learn the material, and on supporting and mentoring new trainers as they move from provisional trainer status.

In addition to these trainings, OBH responds to calls and emails from the general public regarding suicide prevention activities and resources. In efforts to promote behavioral health connections and establish relationships, individuals making these inquiries are also referred to the appropriate Local Governing Entity (LGE). An LGE is a local public agency that is responsible for providing behavioral health and disability services in designated areas of the state. The LGEs also use nationally-vetted suicide prevention resources. OBH also provides technical assistance around issues related to suicide prevention/intervention as requested. OBH maintains and updates the list of training resources for health and behavioral health professionals on suicide assessment, intervention, treatment and management required of LDH by Act 582 of the 2014 Regular Legislative Session. This information can be found at <http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/page/2082>. OBH also maintains a list of individuals from around the state interested in suicide prevention trainings. As trainings are scheduled in their areas, OBH notifies them of upcoming trainings which helps to increase participation. OBH coordinates efforts among different entities working to prevent suicide and increases communication and collaboration at the local level.

OBH has worked closely with Eastern Louisiana Mental Health System (ELMHS), one of Louisiana's publicly-funded state psychiatric hospitals, to train their workforce on suicide prevention. OBH helped to train over 400 of the psychiatric aides and guards in safeTALK as the hospital recognized that the staff who spent the most time with the patients did not know how to recognize signs of suicide. The safeTALK program teaches individuals to recognize signs of suicide and how to connect individuals to someone who can provide suicide first aid. Some clinical staff were also trained in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). Two of the new safeTALK Trainers and three of the new ASIST trainers are ELMHS staff. This will allow them to continue to train their own staff. OBH and ELMHS are also participating in a Community of Practice Learning Collaborative with SAMHSA on implementing Zero Suicide, an aspirational goal and a set of strategies to move health and behavioral health care organizations toward zero suicides.

Suicide Prevention at the Local Level

Louisiana's statewide crisis services include crisis prevention, early intervention crisis intervention and stabilization, and post-crisis support services across the life span. These activities occur at the local level through the regional LGEs. An LGE map and contact information can be found at: <http://dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/directory/category/100>. The services provided at the local level are part of the state's overall response to suicide prevention and intervention. There is a crisis line number available in every LGE, which gives direct access to crisis services. The LGEs provide suicide prevention/intervention training for their own staff and sometimes for the community to continue to enhance and expand capacity. Suicide intervention and stabilization for individuals at risk of suicide is included in each LGE's overall crisis response. Safety planning, support, care coordination and post suicidal care coordination are also part of the local response for individuals at risk of suicide. Post crisis intervention and support services provided in the LGEs generally include peer support, linkages to care coordination, and follow-up clinical care. Most LGEs provide ongoing support that includes transition assistance for each individual who has received crisis intervention to ensure the immediate crisis was resolved and the linkages are being

effectively utilized within the community for follow up. The ongoing support can include individualized safety planning, inclusion of family and natural support systems, individual and group therapy, psychiatric medication management services, and contracted care management services.

In addition to services for adults, crisis services for youth are available through the LGEs as well. With the advent of regionally led services in every area of the state, the LGEs have the autonomy to determine how they want to provide children's crisis services. The community-based Child and Adolescent Response Team (CART) program and other community-based supports and services continue to provide a route to assist in the reduction of inpatient hospitalization and diversion from out-of-home-placements. The process should always include client voice and choice.

Crisis services for children and youth involved in CART are provided 24 hours a day seven days a week. There is a 24-hour crisis line number to access children's crisis services in each area; in some areas, this is provided in conjunction with the adult crisis services. CART services are available to all children and their families, not just those who are eligible for state behavioral health services. Services include telephone access with additional crisis services and referrals, face-to-face screening and assessment, crisis respite in some areas, clinical case management, consumer care resources, and access to inpatient care when necessary. The CART program provides daily access to parents/teachers, doctor's offices, emergency room staff or other community persons who identify a child experiencing a crisis. After the maximum seven-day period of CART stabilization, youth and their families may still require further in-home intensive services. Intensive in-home services may be provided through any of the available community-based services such as Functional Family Therapy, Multi-Systemic Therapy, Homebuilders, and Community Psychiatric Support and Treatment, or Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services with child providers.

Working with other state and non-profit agencies

Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE)

Two Positive Behavioral Intervention Support (PBIS) regions used funds from their PBIS budget to conduct three trainings in eleven school districts and two charter or non-public schools for a total of 139 participants. LDOE reported that they did not receive any additional funds to conduct suicide trainings in SFY 2016-2017. LDOE does not track individual school or district compliance with the Jason Flatt Act, which requires schools to provide suicide prevention training.

Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Public Health (OPH) Child Death Review Panel & Youth Violence Learning Collaborative

OBH is represented on the state level Child Death Review Panel and provides information and technical assistance on youth suicide prevention. Youth suicide prevention resources are shared with panel members to further disseminate through their respective member networks. OBH is also represented on OPH's Youth Violence Learning Collaborative as a subject matter expert on youth suicide.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), Louisiana Chapter

AFSP-LA is a non-profit organization that works to eliminate loss of life from suicide by delivering innovative prevention programs, educating the public about risk factors and warning signs, raising funds for suicide research and programs and reaching out to those who have lost someone to suicide. OBH has been working with AFSP-LA to coordinate and collaborate on providing the safeTALK and ASIST trainings. OBH helps to publicize their training events and provides some of the training materials for the trainings they facilitate. AFSP-LA has organized all the logistics of their trainings and has paid for master-level trainers of ASIST to conduct trainings; those trainers were able to incorporate then new ASIST trainers and mentor them through the training process. OBH has authorized continuing education credits.

Jacob Crouch Foundation (JCF) and St. Tammany Outreach for the Prevention of Suicide (STOPS)

Both of these non-profit organizations are focused on suicide prevention in their areas. Jacob Crouch Foundation serves the Acadiana area and STOPS serves St. Tammany Parish. OBH has provided materials for some of their trainings and helps to publicize their training events to larger audiences to increase participation.

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