



State of Louisiana
Louisiana Department of Health
Office of Behavioral Health

July 22, 2016

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, Chairman
House Education Committee
P.O. Box 94062, Capitol Station
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9062

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 Department of Education offer the following information:

R.S. 17:282.4 – Youth Suicide Prevention Report FY2016

This report was a collaborative effort by the Louisiana Department of Health Office of Behavioral Health and the Louisiana Department of Education in response to the requirements of R.S. 17:282.4.

Background

The Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) implemented the Louisiana Partnership for Youth Suicide Prevention (LPYSP) from 2006-2013 through 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 suicides and suicidal behavior in Louisiana. During this grant, a cadre of individuals were trained to provide evidence-based trainings in suicide prevention. These programs included the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and the safeTALK (suicide alertness for everyone) trainings. This grant led to the legislation requiring this report. OBH worked diligently to build a sustainable trainer network during the term of the LPYSP grant. The LPYSP grant ended on September 29, 2013. When the LPYSP grant was ending, OBH used unspent funds to purchase materials to continue the safeTALK and ASIST trainings.

Current Status of OBH Suicide Prevention

OBH continues to address suicide prevention across the lifespan, including youth suicide. In SFY 2016, OBH staff provided suicide prevention and early intervention trainings to approximately

482 individuals. These included: three Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Trainings (ASIST), seven safeTALK suicide alertness trainings, two sessions of Suicide Safety Planning Intervention, two sessions of Means Matter in Suicide Prevention, one session of What We Know About Suicide and Bullying, and three sessions of Suicide Scope, Awareness and What We Can Do. Presentations were done at the NASW State Social Work Conference and the Shreveport Suicide Coalition Conference as well as two different Army National Guard units and in a variety of workplace settings. Participants included professional clinicians, care managers, school personnel, individuals who work with vulnerable populations as well as lay audiences from a variety of backgrounds.

In addition to these trainings, OBH responds to calls and emails from the general public regarding suicide prevention activities and resources. In an effort to establish relationships and promote behavioral health connections, individuals making these inquiries are also referred to the appropriate Local Governing Entity (LGE) providing behavioral health services as well as nationally vetted suicide prevention resources. OBH also provides technical assistance around issues related to suicide prevention/intervention for professionals 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 the Department of Health and Hospitals by Act 582 of the 2014 Regular Legislative Session; this information can be found at <http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/page/2082>. In addition, the OBH disseminated The Joint Commission's Sentinel Alert #56 – *Detecting and Treating Suicide Ideation in All Settings*, the latest recommendations for standard of care, to behavioral health care organizations and professional licensing groups to share with their membership. This information can be found at http://www.jointcommission.org/assets/1/18/SEA_56_Suicide.pdf.

Suicide Prevention at the Local Level

Louisiana's statewide crisis services include crisis prevention, early intervention, crisis intervention and stabilization, and post-crisis support across the lifespan. These activities occur at the local level through the regional Human Service Districts and Authorities responsible for behavioral health and developmental disability services. These Districts and Authorities are also known as the Local Governing Entities (LGEs); location 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. Some parts of the state provide Adult mobile crisis teams as part of their services. The LGEs provide suicide prevention/intervention training for staff and sometimes for the community to continue to enhance and expand capacity. Suicide intervention and stabilization for individuals at risk is included as part of each LGE's overall crisis response. Safety planning, support, care coordination and post-suicidal crisis services are also included as 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.

Crisis services for youth are available in every Local Governing Entity (LGE). 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 hospitalizations and diversion from out-of-home placements. This process should always include client voice and choice. Crisis services for children and youth involved in CART are provided twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. There is a crisis line number available in every LGE which should give direct access to crisis services for children and youth. In some areas these services are provided in conjunction with adult services and in other areas it is not. CART crisis services are available to all children and their families, not just those eligible for state mental health clinics or 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 deemed necessary or requested by the caretakers. The infusion of Social Service Block Grant funds supports respite care, in-home crisis stabilization, and family preservation at various locations across the state. 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. These referrals can begin with any interested party/stakeholder with consent from the guardian. After the maximum seven day period of CART crisis 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 Psycho-Social Rehabilitation services with child providers.

Working with other State Agencies

Louisiana Department of Health Office of Public Health Child Death Review Panel

The Office of Behavioral Health 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 for further dissemination through their member networks.

Louisiana Department of Education Youth Suicide Prevention Plan for Louisiana Schools

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) and the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) collaborated to develop and implement a youth suicide prevention training plan for Louisiana schools during the 2015-2016 school year.

Major components of the plan included policy development and skills-building training for adults and youth. District and school administrators and staff received training and technical assistance with developing comprehensive suicide prevention and intervention policies.

The focus of the policy development training was to ensure that LEAs have clear policies and procedures in place concerning how to respond effectively to a student who may be expressing suicidal behaviors or threats, how to respond in the aftermath of a suicidal attempt or a death by suicide, and the various roles school personnel may play in preventing, intervening, and coping with a student who may be suicidal. The training was designed to complement state law requirements and to help schools ensure that students in crisis are referred to supportive resources and services.

The emphasis of the skills-building training was on teaching those who have regular contact with young people to recognize behavioral patterns and other warning signs that may indicate that a young person may be at risk of suicide; to actively intervene in ways that explore the level of risk without increasing it and to ensure that young people at risk receive necessary services.

The Louisiana Department of Education awarded youth suicide prevention funds to five Regional PBIS Consortia through an allocation made available in HB 1 of the 2015 Legislative session. The funds were used to support consortia in developing/modifying training curricula, creating training materials, and conducting training of trainers sessions for school staff and representatives of youth-serving organizations. The funded consortia included Region I, Region II, Region III, Region VI, and Region VII. School and community-based staff in each Regional Consortium area and school district in the state were invited to participate in the training at no cost to the school district or the community-based organization.

Eligibility criteria for receiving the funds included identifying and supporting the participation of at least two skilled and qualified regional trainers in three LDOE-funded training sessions and redelivering the training to schools and community staff in the regional consortium service area.

The following nationally recognized evidence-based programs served as the center pieces of the training that was developed and implemented by the PBIS Regional Consortium staff.

Model School District Policy on Suicide Prevention: Model Language, Commentary, and Resources: The Trevor Project, in collaboration with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, the American School Counselor Association, and the National Association of School Psychologists, created this model policy development document.

Region 2 trainers used the *Trevor Project's Model School District Policy on Suicide Prevention: Model Language, Commentary, and Resources* document to develop a **Louisiana Youth Suicide Prevention Model Policy Training Program** and resource materials. The trainers conducted two training of trainers sessions using the material they had developed and are scheduled to conduct additional training sessions during the 2016-2017 school year. Forty-four participants, representing 14 public and charter school districts completed the Policy Training session. Participants who successfully completed the policy development training received materials and technical assistance and support that enable them to conduct the curriculum training sessions in schools in their local school district.

Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools, The *Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools* was developed by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to help high schools, school districts, and their partners design and implement strategies to prevent suicide and promote behavioral health among their students.

The Region 7 PBIS Facilitator used *Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools* as a model to develop the **Louisiana Youth Suicide Prevention Training Module for Middle and High School Teachers**. The training module and resource materials were used in three training of trainers sessions in North and South Louisiana to train school and community-based staff in suicide prevention. Eighty-six participants, representing 38 parishes and 67 schools participated in the training. Participants who successfully completed the training received materials and technical assistance and support that enable them to conduct the curriculum training sessions in schools in their school district.

The SOS Signs of Suicide® High School Prevention Program: The only school-based suicide prevention program listed on SAMSHA's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices that addresses suicide risk and depression, while reducing suicide attempts. In a randomized controlled study, the SOS program showed a reduction in self-reported suicide attempts by 40% (BMC Public Health, July 2007).

The SOS Signs of Suicide® High School Prevention Program training could only be conducted as a training of trainers session by SOS Signs of Suicide Certified Trainers. Region I PBIS Consortium hosted the SOS training in Jefferson Parish. Thirty-nine participants from across the state who represented 14 school districts, 19 Louisiana public and charter schools, and one university participated in the SOS training. Twenty-eight of the 39 participants successfully completed the certification requirements to receive national SOS certification from the SOS Signs of Suicide Certified Training Institute.

The 28 Louisiana trainers who received national SOS certification are now equipped to encourage and support universal suicide prevention programming for youth and can guide school staff and individuals from other youth serving organizations in the implementation of the nationally recognized SOS Program. They have the skills to:

- Deliver customizable suicide prevention trainings for school staff, implementing the SOS program, parents, and community gatekeepers;
- Advise school staff on best practices for implementing the SOS Program and providing gatekeeper trainings for parents and other trusted adults in their community; and
- Encourage school staff to advocate for youth suicide prevention.

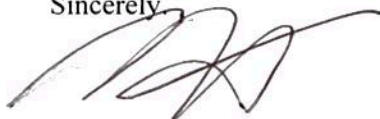
Outcomes

As a result of the implementation of the Louisiana Department of Education Training Plan, two suicide prevention modules were developed, 12 trainers were trained as PBIS Consortium Suicide Prevention Trainers, 253 participants from 66 parish, city, and charter school districts received youth suicide prevention training, and 28 training participants received certification as national Signs of Suicide (SOS) Trainers.

In addition, the trainers who developed the youth suicide training modules and materials for the youth suicide prevention trainings are recognized by the Louisiana Department of Education as “Master Trainers” who have the skills and expertise to conduct training sessions statewide. The trainers are also nationally certified in safeTALK, Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), and Youth and Adult Mental Health First Aid trainers.

I hope you have found this information useful. Should you have any further questions or require additional clarification regarding LDH suicide prevention activities please do not hesitate to contact my office at 225.342.2540. .

Sincerely,



Michelle Alletto
Deputy Secretary

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