

The San Diego County Suicide Prevention Council (SPC) “Elevator Pitch”

Why is Suicide Prevention Important?

- In the US:
 - Every 15 minutes, someone dies by suicide
 - Approximately 1,000,000 people make a suicide attempt every year
- In San Diego County:
 - Suicide is a leading cause of non-natural death, second only to motor vehicle crashes
 - There is roughly one suicide per day (372 total in 2010)
- Men are 4 times more likely to die by suicide than women, but women attempt suicide 3 times as often as men.
- 90% of people who die by suicide have a diagnosable and treatable psychiatric disorder – usually depression - at the time of their death
- On average, one suicide affects the lives of at least six other people, causing considerable grief, social stigma, and putting survivors at highest risk for suicide.
- *Suicide is preventable.*

Suicide Prevention Action Plan Development

- In 2010, the County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) launched a suicide prevention action planning process.
 - Informed by the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention and the California Strategic Plan on Suicide Prevention;
 - Both advocate for a strong public health approach to suicide prevention, as well as the creation of local strategies based on the input of a diverse, representative group of stakeholders.
- The purpose of the **Suicide Prevention Action Plan (SPAP)** for San Diego County is to propose strategies that will enhance efforts to:
 - increase understanding and awareness of suicide,
 - decrease stigma associated with suicide, and
 - ultimately reduce the number of suicides in San Diego County.
- A comprehensive needs assessment and planning process that involved stakeholders from multiple sectors throughout San Diego County was conducted to gather input from and develop *local* prevention strategies.
- The strategies were organized around three prevention elements: universal, selective, and indicated strategies.
 - Designed to influence everyone, **universal strategies** are targeted to the general public and reduce suicide risk by strengthening protective factors.
 - **Selective strategies** focus on at-risk groups that have a greater probability of becoming suicidal, and aim to prevent the onset of suicidal behaviors.
 - **Indicated strategies** target high risk individuals that exhibit early signs of suicide potential.

San Diego County Suicide Prevention Council (SPC)

- As a result of this community-wide effort, stakeholders are continuing to work together to implement the recommendations in the SPAP through the SPC by providing oversight, guidance, and collective support in the implementation of the recommendations made in the SPAP.
- The **vision** of the SPC is zero suicides in San Diego County.
- The **mission** of the SPC is to prevent suicide and its devastating consequences in San Diego County.
- The SPC meets from 10:00am – 11:30am on the fourth Tuesday of every month at the HHSA Rosecrans Offices (3851 Rosecrans Street San Diego, CA – Coronado Room).
- SPC Resources:
- www.sdchip.org/spap.aspx (SPAP, SPC Strategic Work Plan, Mission/Vision/Core Values, Charter, and other supporting tools and reports)
- www.up2sd.org (Mental health and suicide prevention resources)
- SPC Subcommittees:
- Help Line Collaborative – coordinate efforts of local help lines
- Training Subcommittee – aid in informing development and implementation of local trainings
- Faith Organizing Outreach- coordinate with faith provider to share suicide prevention resources
- Media Subcommittee – impact responsible reporting on suicide in the media
- Higher Education Subcommittee- coordinates suicide prevention and mental health efforts across the higher education institutions in the San Diego county
- SPC Co-Chairs: Beth Sise, Scripps Mercy Hospital Trauma Service and Carol Skiljan, Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program
- SPC Contact information: Yeni L. Palomino, Community Health Improvement Partners, 858-609-7969, ypalomino@sdchip.org
- **QPR Gatekeeper Trainings**
- ***QPR stands for Question, Persuade, Refer***, and is designed to give members of the general public the basic skills necessary to recognize a crisis and the warning signs that someone may be contemplating suicide.
- QPR is like CPR - an emergency mental health intervention for suicidal persons.
- On behalf of the SPC, over 40 San Diegans have been trained as Certified QPR Gatekeeper Instructors, and are available to give this one hour training as requested throughout San Diego County.
- To schedule or attend a training, contact Elizabeth Vaughan at evaughan@sdchip.org or call 858-609-7971.

