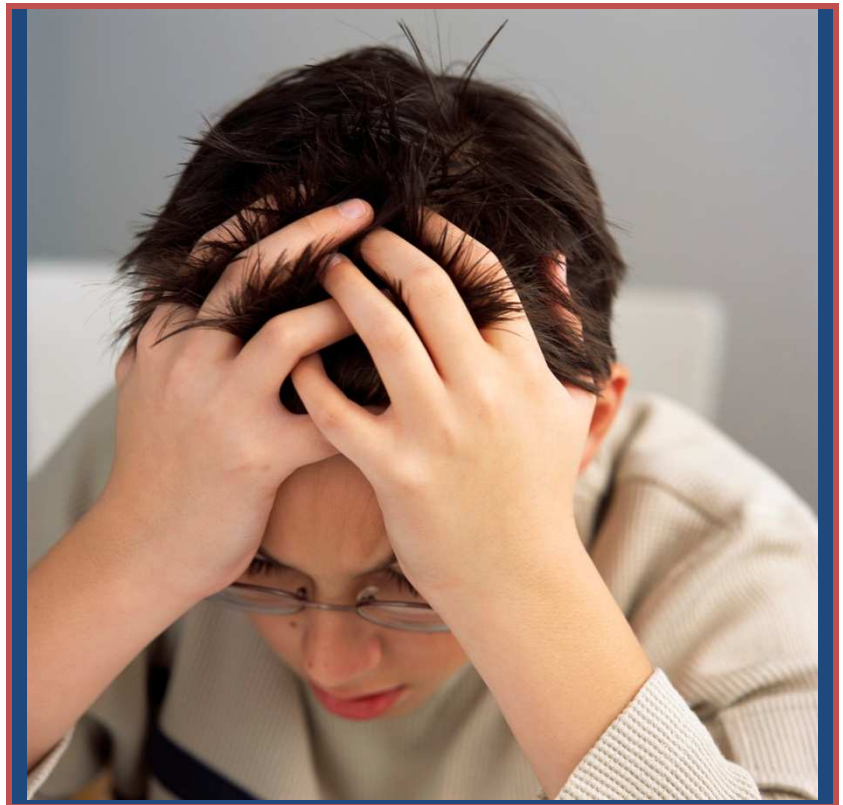


**NEW MEXICO**  
**DEPARTMENT OF**  
**HEALTH**



6/4/2009

# **New Mexico Youth Suicide Prevention**

**Fiscal Year 2009 Summary of Activities**

New Mexico Department of Health Office of School and Adolescent Health

# New Mexico Youth Suicide Prevention

## Fiscal Year 2009 Summary of Activities

Suicide is the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of death for youth in New Mexico. Youth suicide prevention is among New Mexico's greatest health priorities. The state's suicide rate (19.1 per 100,000 people) is historically nearly twice the national rate, ranking 4<sup>th</sup> highest nationally. In 2007, 14.3% of adolescents participating in the New Mexico Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey (YRRS) state they have attempted suicide and 19.3% seriously considered killing themselves in the previous 12 months.

### Department of Health Office of School and Adolescent Health (OSAH)

Comprised of regional and statewide staff, OSAH is a department within the New Mexico Department of Health (DOH) Public Health Division Health Systems Bureau. OSAH's mission is to improve the health of all students and adolescents in New Mexico through promoting resiliency and increasing universal access to high-quality, integrated prevention programs, primary care and behavioral health services. OSAH is charged with a number of Governor's Health Priorities, including funding **59** of the 85 school based health centers (SBHCs) statewide during FY09, adolescent health promotion, and youth suicide prevention. This report offers a summary of staff and funded partner youth suicide prevention activities for most of Fiscal Year 2009 (FY09), July 1, 2008 to May 31, 2009, to inform the New Mexico Child Fatality Review Board Youth Suicide Panel.

### OSAH Staff Activities

Youth Suicide Prevention frames many activities for both statewide and regional staff, comprised of the Youth Suicide and Adolescent Health Coordinators, Regional School Mental Health and Health Advocates, and Behavioral Health Manager. OSAH Behavioral Health Staff reported a total of **889.25** hours of training and technical assistance in Youth Suicide Prevention, reaching **6,855** youth and adults from July 1 to May 31, 2009. OSAH staff activities include planning and implementation support for regional and state youth suicide prevention summits, offering training and technical assistance to youth, parents, schools, SBHC, community providers, organizations and state agencies and promoting youth engagement and peer-to-peer youth suicide prevention strategies. Contact Anna Nelson, LISW, at 505.841.5877 for more information.

### OSAH Youth Suicide Prevention Funded Partners

A total of **\$1,270,692** was allocated in FY09 for DOH youth suicide prevention initiatives. This amounts to \$669,000 from New Mexico General Funds and \$601,692 from Federal Funds ending June 30, 2009.

## Youth Suicide Prevention in Native American Communities

### *Native Helping Our People Endure (HOPE) Prevention Program*

Resulting from the legislative youth advocacy of the Laguna-Acoma High School SBHC, OSAH receives funding for Native American peer-to-peer suicide prevention initiatives statewide.

OSAH funds the culturally relevant Native HOPE Program in communities statewide.

Administered to **200** youth, **50** adults and implemented in **3** schools during FY09, Native HOPE is a peer-to-peer suicide prevention training which incorporates the Native American values of spirituality, humor, belonging, mastery, interdependence and generosity. Native HOPE supports youth in developing a community needs assessment and strategic action plan, identifying individual and community strengths, and enhancing self- or peer-to-peer referral for behavioral health needs. During FY09, **300** youth received Native Hope at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Indigenous Soccer Cup. Native Hope was also offered to youth through the Laguna Prevention Coalition, Youth Forum Town Hall, Laguna Tribal Village meeting, BIE Safe Schools Conference, Institute of American Indian Arts Suicide Prevention Conference, and the Dine Local Collaborative 15 and 11 Behavioral Health Coalitions. Native HOPE has been implemented at Zuni High, Laguna Middle, and Navajo Preparatory High Schools.

### *Project TRUST (Truth, Responsiveness, Understanding, Self-Determination and Transformation)*

In response to educational and health disparities and an understanding of the complex interrelationship between historical trauma and current inequity, Project TRUST emerged. Project TRUST aims to develop and share guidelines for culturally-appropriate, client-centered approaches to behavioral health care for Native American youth and their families. A community-led multidisciplinary partnership, Project TRUST activities include a comprehensive literature review regarding historical trauma, evidence-based and promising practices, and culturally competent processes for working with Native American youth, hosting community advisory meetings with Native American youth, parents, elders, and service providers, and the development and dissemination of recommendations with providers, policy makers, and potential funding sources. During FY09, members of Project TRUST have provided total of **20** presentations, including two national conference workshops, impacting an estimated **500** participants. For more information, please see:

<http://hsc.unm.edu/chpdp/Projects/ProjTRUST.htm>.

### **Statewide Suicide Hotline Network**

A total of three contracts are funded through State General Funds and issued annually to support a statewide suicide hotline network. Currently funded members of the Network include the University of New Mexico Agora Crisis Line, New Mexico State University Crisis Assistance Listening Line, and Presbyterian Medical Services Santa Fe Crisis Hotline. Each provides bilingual services to callers in crisis and act as back-up responders to calls unanswered by the other hotlines, acting as a 24 hour network of response.

***University of New Mexico (UNM) Agora Crisis Center, 866.HELP-1-NM, or 505.277.3013***

Agora offers statewide free, confidential crisis prevention and intervention for youth and adults. Services include a volunteer-staffed warm line, walk-in clinic, information & referral, community education and volunteer opportunities. Agora holds membership in the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and New Mexico Suicide Prevention Coalition. Accredited by CONTACT USA and Lifeline International, Agora hosts the toll-free NM Crisis line at 1 866-HELP-1-NM and answers Lifeline calls. Volunteers receive 40 hours of training before answering our phones, and later are given the opportunity to receive 16 additional hours of ASIST suicide awareness and intervention training. Outreach activities during FY09 include targeted public awareness and advertizing through newspapers, and on radio and television stations, and participation at local health fairs and conferences. During FY09, Agora provided ASIST training for community agencies, educators, students and clinicians, speaking engagements at schools and community organizations and collaboration with the United Way of Central NM, Albuquerque Police Department, and a wide variety of area non-profits and community service organizations. Nationally, Agora represented New Mexico at three national conferences during FY09 as workshop presenters and consulted with state universities regarding formation of crisis lines in their community. Agora responded to a total of **9573** calls, where **507** calls were from youth, during FY09. See <http://www.unm.edu/~agora/> for more information.

***New Mexico State University (NMSU) Wellness, Alcohol and Violence Education (WAVE) Crisis Assistance Listening Line (CALL), 575.646.2813***

In its first year of existence, the CALL offers free, confidential, crisis prevention and intervention to anyone in need of emotional support and referrals. Administered by the NMSU WAVE Program and acting as the regional crisis line for southern, border area New Mexico, the CALL incorporates national standards and best practice guidelines administered by the American Association of Suicidology (AAS). The CALL staff and volunteers attended several suicide prevention trainings, including gatekeeper and post-vention training, and three 40-hour trainings. To support recruitment and sustainability, volunteering at the CALL can now be taken as a class at NMSU. The CALL has 46 volunteers, students, and staff. During FY09, the CALL responded to a total of **279** calls and provided outreach to nearly all the NMSU student body.

The CALL is involved in public relation efforts and community outreach throughout NMSU, Las Cruces and the larger southern NM community. On April 4, 2009, NMSU WAVE and Department of Social Work held a Community Outreach Fair, where CALL information was distributed to 500 residents. During FY09, the CALL was featured on K-Fox TV and K-SNM radio. A CALL Public Service Announcement is currently playing on three Las Cruces radio stations. The CALL promotional materials were disseminated Las Cruces faith organizations, therapist offices, Mesilla Valley Hospital, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Border Area Mental Health in Deming, Holloman Air Force Base in Alamogordo, Hidalgo Medical Center in Silver City, and the Regional Substance Abuse Treatment Initiative Program in Fort Sumner. A

billboard advertising CALL service is circulating Las Cruces. See <http://www.nmsu.edu/~wave/> for more information.

***Presbyterian Medical Services Santa Fe Community Guidance Center, 505.820.6333***

The Santa Fe Crisis Line offers bilingual crisis response and referral to youth and adults in Northern New Mexico. With expertise in crisis response, the Santa Fe Crisis Line provides training to professionals in the signs of suicide and crisis response and offers routine training to the students and staff of the Santa Fe Indian School. During FY09, the Santa Fe Crisis Line responded to a total of **3175** calls, with fully a third of callers reporting mental health as their primary area of concern.

**Center for Rural and Community Behavioral Health (CRCBH)**

A component of the UNM Psychiatry Department, the Center for Rural and Community Behavioral Health partners with other non-DOH supported sites to provide extensive direct patient care and provide consultation. Additionally, CRCBH continues to collaborate on the expansion and promotion of telebehavioral health. Most recently, CRCBH, OSAH and Envision New Mexico collaborated toward a broader provision of psychiatric consultation services to SBHCs in FY10. The first three quarters of FY09 data show that a total of **6** SBHCs and Indian Health Services consistently access televideo case consultation services and direct patient care. Also, two child psychiatrists delivered approximately **250** hours of direct consultation.

**Envision New Mexico**

Envision New Mexico (ENM) is a healthcare quality improvement (QI) program of the UNM Department of Pediatrics, Health Sciences Center. ENM currently works with primary care providers in community practices and School-based Health Centers (SBHCs) throughout the state. Its QI Initiatives address a number of pediatric healthcare topics, including behavioral health and adolescent depression, and promote provider practice improvement. During FY09, ENM conducted a survey of all OSAH-funded SBHCs, to determine site readiness for participation in a QI process, yielding important organizational data regarding SBHC behavioral health services. During FY09, ENM partnered with **4** sites statewide to enhance their use of the Student Health Questionnaire to consistently identify students with depression early. The first three quarters of FY09 also yielded **17.67** hours of telehealth psychiatric consultation to SBHCs for complex case consultation. More information can be obtained at <http://www.envisionnm.org/>.

**Natural Helpers Youth Suicide Prevention Program**

The Natural Helpers Youth Suicide Prevention Program is a peer-to-peer helping model that trains youth to offer support for one another. Participants attain knowledge of youth issues, practice effective helping skills, and become familiar with helping resources. Youth are connected with caring adults and trusting adult/youth relationships are nourished. Natural Helpers engages youth in service activities that promote a more caring, accepting, healthy school community and encourages positive youth culture. Natural Helpers also results in the emergence

of youth leaders. Training is administered during overnight retreats, where youth create cohesion and bond. Supported by adult school sponsors, the youth meet regularly at school to offer support to one another and implement peer-to-peer prevention activities. Natural Helpers define needs specific to their communities, plan and carry out service projects in both their schools and larger communities.

During FY09, over **100** youth involved in SAMHSA GLS Project were trained, with more Natural Helpers training occurring through other funding statewide. Unquantifiable are the numbers of youth referred by Natural Helpers to adults and behavioral health professionals when signs of depression or suicide emerge. Program surveys indicate the entire school population is positively impacted by the one-on-one help and services performed by Natural Helpers. Their reach is literally every school member and numbers increase as their work spills over into the community.

### **New Mexico Suicide Intervention Project (NMSIP)**

Founded in 1994, the New Mexico Suicide Intervention Project (NMSIP) is the single organization in Northern New Mexico specifically aimed at reducing the risks associated with youth suicide. With services recognized as “best or promising” by the Centers for Disease Control, the NMSIP employs culturally relevant youth suicide prevention approaches in Santa Fe County and Northern New Mexico. Services aim to identify early and prevent youth suicide, address direct suicide risk factors, and simultaneously increase protective factors.

Programmatic components of NMSIP include training and education activities to enhance workforce and community capacity to identify and respond to youth at risk for suicide, evidence-based methods for assessment, evaluation and treatment services for at-risk youth, and implementation of the Natural Helpers peer approach to suicide prevention. The NMSIP was instrumental in the development of a Santa Fe County Postvention team and manual for offering professional support to schools after a student suicide.

During FY09, the NMSIP provided training to **876** students and adults in Santa Fe, Bernalillo and Rio Arriba County schools, community based organizations, and corporations, including the Sandia National Laboratories Employee Assistance Program. A total of **83** Natural Helper students were trained at **4** Santa Fe County middle schools. The NMSIP offered counseling and suicide risk assessment for **1,111** children and adolescents ages 3-21 in Santa Fe County and surrounding communities. The NMSIP provided school-wide postvention response at Capital High School in Santa Fe County. Eleven graduate interns from New Mexico Highlands University, College of Santa Fe, Southwestern College and Pacifica College received **600** hours of supervised training in suicide assessment and behavioral health family counseling. Finally, nine Family Practice Physicians received 9 hours of skills training in recognition, diagnosis and intervention, and referral for behavioral health conditions. See <http://nmsip.org/> for more details.

### **New Mexico Suicide Prevention Coalition (NMSPC)**

In FY 09, the NMSPC initiated several targeted activities to reach teens in New Mexico. Recognizing incarceration of a family members as a risk factor for suicide, the NMSPC partnered with Wings for LIFE Ministry to provide education to 20 parents and volunteers about signs of suicide, response and resources, a recurring activity. Notably, the NMSPC trained 50 City of Albuquerque community center employees, aided in creating the city's policy for youth suicide response in community centers, and offered crisis intervention training to between **500** and **600** temporary summer employees. The NMSPC co-sponsored the first annual Youth Jam. Developed entirely by teens in response to the suicide of a peer, the 2009 Youth Jam was attended by approximately **200** youth and **100** adults, including mental health service providers. The event featured a battle of the bands, poetry slam, and local artwork combined with behavioral health service providers, including the NMSPC, UNM Psychiatric Services and EARLY Program, National Association for the Mentally Ill (NAMI), and Agora Crisis Center, providing education and resources. Other accomplishments during this fiscal year include successful legislative advocacy leading to the successful passage of Senate Memorial 18, A Barrier for the Taos Gorge Bridge, hosting a statewide youth suicide prevention conference with nearly **300** participants, and training in Farmington for **25** people, **20** people at Dismas House of Albuquerque, and **15** staff at the Cottonwood Prep School.

### **SAMSA Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) Youth Suicide Prevention Federal Grant**

In its final year of funding, the GLS-funded Youth Suicide Prevention Project is implemented in four communities statewide, Carlsbad, Gallup, Gadsden and Pojoaque. Targeting areas with disproportionately high youth suicide rates, the GLS Project develops multiple points of entry for early identification and referral for students at risk for suicide, including universal screening, and referral through oneself, peers, SBHCs, school and community professionals and gate keepers, or community members trained in identifying and responding to signs of suicide.

The GLS Project follows the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention by promoting behavioral health for all students through Natural Helpers peer-to-peer education and prevention, providing depression and substance abuse screening, and improving access and quality of behavioral health programs. A significant programmatic component is youth engagement, where teen participants are supported in taking their concerns and knowledge of teen behavioral health needs to adults in their communities through youth-developed and led presentations and videos. Learning from this project is shared with interested communities, including the Mescalero Apache Tribe, recipients of similar funding.

Though FY09 data is not yet available, the four schools provided screening to **3771** students and **566** students received case management in FY08. A total of **116** community members received Gate Keeper training during FY 07 and 08. Over **90** students received Natural Helper training during the same period. Finally, school staff contacted the UNM Center for Rural and Community Behavioral Health for **40** Tele-Health consults with a child psychiatrist during FY08. Go to <http://www.nmsuicideprevention.org/index.php> for further information.

### **San Juan County Youth Suicide Preventionist Pilot**

Funded through State General Funds and in its first year, the San Juan County Youth Suicide Preventionist pilot was developed to address the need for a culturally relevant youth suicide continuum of response in communities with disproportionately high rates of youth suicide attempts and completions. San Juan County was selected as the site for its high rate of youth suicide and the community's readiness and engagement. This pilot is focused on developing a sustainable continuum of youth suicide prevention, intervention and postvention, and building community capacity and infrastructure. In partnership with the Region 1 School Mental Health Advocate, the Preventionist collaborated with a number of community partners to offer suicide prevention training, and develop a San Juan County Resource Map and coordinated community youth suicide crisis response team.

### **State-Funded School Based Health Centers (SBHCs)**

OSAH funds a total of **59** SBHCs, school-linked medical and behavioral healthcare centers. Of these 59 sites, 7 are also connected with Indian Health Services, 10 with universities, and 17 with Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). State-funded SBHCs are located in **47** communities and **29** counties throughout New Mexico. All sites are funded to provide behavioral health services. Over **20,000** students receive services annually from State-funded SBHCs. Every student accessing SBHCs, whether for medical or behavioral health concerns, completes a Student Health Questionnaire that includes screening for depression and suicide risk. Among the 55 of 59 SBHCs that responded to a 2009 QI readiness survey administered by ENM, the sites provided an average of 20 behavioral health service (Envision Survey, 2009). For more on SBHCs in New Mexico, see <http://www.nmasbhc.org/>.

### **Need More Information?**

For further details or questions regarding OSAH Youth Suicide Prevention Initiatives, please contact:

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