



SW Regional Suicide Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: September 09, 2022

Location: Virtual (Zoom)

Present: Ally Kernan (Positive Directions), Theresa Argondezzi (Norwalk Health Department), Jeffrey Santo (RIPPLE), Jules Calabro (Beacon Health Options), Demetria Nelson (Greenwich Department of Human Services), Kristin Mulhern (Greenwich Public Schools), Diamond Sead (The Norwalk Partnership), Keisha Martin Velez (Southwest Family System Manager FAVOR), Ellen Brezovsky (Greenwich Together/Kids in Crisis), Corina Restrepo (Greenwich Together/Kids in Crisis), Aaron Katz (Nuvance Health) Denique Weidema-Lewis (Norwalk ACTS), Julie DeMarca (Fairfield Human Services), Cristin McCarthy-Vahey (State Representative), Gillian Anderson (My Friend Abby) Leigh Goodman (Trumbull EMS), Cathy Hazlett (Fairfield CARES), Margaret Watt (Positive Directions), Elaine Daignault (Westport Human Services), Madeline Mantilla (United Way), Kaitlin Comet (The Hub) Giovanna Mozzo (The Hub), Victoria O’Neill (The Hub)

AGENDA ITEM/TOPIC	SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION	OUTCOME / ACTION/RESPONSIBLE
Alternatives to Suicide Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mission of the Group: A safe, welcoming and accepting group in which you are free to share thoughts of suicidal ideation or other struggles without fear of clinical intervention. Alternatives to Suicide offers a space to identify protective factors, how to combat triggers and receive validation. - TOT: September 28th – 30th at Westport Library (link to sign up here). Lived experience is required/preferred. - The Alternatives to Suicide group will start on Tuesday, October 4th – (recurring weekly on Tuesdays at 7:00 PM <i>in person</i> at Positive Directions location in Westport) - First Responder involvement is only activated if an individual may harm another person. TOT equips facilitators with de-escalation skills as well as diversion and safety tips. - Email Ally Kernan (akernan@positivedirections.org) or Margaret Watt (mwatt@positivedirections.org) with any questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Please sign up via the link if you would like to participate in the TOT. - Alternatives To Suicide will give updates as needed at future RSAB meetings



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The Hub Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>QPR Trainings</u>: The Hub recently trained all of Bridgeport Fire Department (about 200 individuals) and all Darien School District Staff (over 1,000 individuals) in Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR). The Hub will also continue to host QPR training twice a month on Tuesday mornings from 9-10:30 AM (link to sign up for The Hub’s trainings here). The department of public health now recognizes and has approved Narcan and QPR trainings for credit for EMS personnel. - <u>NCEED/The Hub Collaboration “Life on the Brink: Anorexia Nervosa and Lethality”</u>: Took place on 9/14/22 and discussed the prevalence of mental health disorders and suicidality among those who also suffer from eating disorders. - <u>Suicide Campaign</u>: The Hub engaged in a one month suicide prevention campaign throughout the region in honor of September as Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. Towns with train signage include: Westport, Stratford, South Norwalk, Fairfield, Greenwich, East Norwalk, Darien. The Hub also had three printed articles in the Fairfield Citizen, Greenwich Time & Norwalk Hour in the month of September. The Hub also utilized geofencing with suicide prevention and 988 messaging for September. - <u>CT SAB Update</u>: There have been numerous changes as a state level due to retirements and therefore we are currently in a period of transition. Tom Steen has retired. Ann Daegal (suicide loss survivor and Director of the Brian Daegal Foundation) has taken his place as a CT SAB tri-chair. - <u>Statewide Event</u>: All RSAB leads across the state have coordinated a statewide event taking place on September 22nd (in person) at the Hilton Garden Inn in Wallingford. The keynote speaker will be Shelby Rowe, an indigenous person with lived experience. Topics will cover suicide prevention across numerous sectors. Please sign up here. - <u>AFSP Walk</u>: This regional walk will take place on Saturday, October 22nd in Westport at Jessup Green. The Hub will be hosting a regional “Southwest Prevention Team”. All are welcome to join and can sign up here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review The Hub’s website for the mostup to date trainings, resources and information.
My Friend Abby Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My Friend Abby awards grants to individuals who are taking action in relation to mental health and suicide prevention. For more information, please email Gillian Anderson. - My Friend Abby hosted a candlelight vigil titled “A Night to Shine Your Light” on September 9th in Trumbull in honor of National Suicide Prevention Day (September 10th) - My Friend Abby is hosting a fundraising event on Friday, November 11th at Two Roads Brewery with a band, silent auction and guest speaker, David Woods Bartley who is an attempt survivor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Please email Gillian Anderson (gillian@myfriendabby.org) for details surrounding grant applications or the fundraiser.



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<p>Norwalk Health Department Grant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Norwalk Health Department has been approached by the state health department for a grant opportunity titled “A Public Health Approach to Comprehensive Suicide Prevention”. - Upon finalization, the contract will commence and run through August of 2025. It involves the health department convening local partners, stakeholders and experts to identify gaps, promote evidence-based initiatives, track data, and promote suicide prevention and postvention. - The grant will also allow financial resources to expand and broaden their reach across the Norwalk area. 	
<p>Other Stakeholder Updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive Directions is having an open house on National Depression Screening Day (October 6th) and is offering “Check Up from the Neck Up” screenings, therapy animals, prevention activities and a sensory café. - “Kevin’s Afterglow” has presented at Brian McMahan High School (Norwalk) surrounding mental health and the presenters own experience with the loss of his son to suicide. The Norwalk Partnership was able to offer a resource table following the speaking engagement. - FCIAC has taken a stance against name-calling and inappropriate language targeted at players at sports events. - “Will to Live Foundation” offered a speaking event in partnership with FCIAC to the various sports captains, teams and coaches. The talk surrounds being a “Life Teammate”. There are currently efforts to bring the speaker, a father with connections to Fairfield who lost his son to suicide, to Westport for the students and an evening presentation for the parents (TENTATIVELY November 18th & 19th) 	
<p>Discussion of 988</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Since our last meeting 988, the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, has been soft launched. It is a 3 digit number that you can <i>call</i> or you can <i>text</i>. It DOES NOT replace the Lifeline (1-800-273-8255). - THERE IS NO WRONG DOOR! Whether you utilize 988, 211 (option 1,1 again for youth), or the old ten digit lifeline you will be connected to help and supports. - The CT SAB also has a webpage (linked here) specific to the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline with many resources and additional information. - Andrea Duarte reported that 988 calls wait no more than 2 minutes. - Please share feedback with United Way about experiences with 988 / 211. - It is vital that we educate people on what these services are and their purpose so as to avoid misuse. Review the difference between a warmlines and hotlines as well as examples here from Jeffrey Santo with Rocking Recovery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Please feel free to share out and information, resources, posts ect. from The Hub surrounding 988 with the region.



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Other Topics of Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- MTA signage on a regional level. Adding town specific pre/post vention information on town platforms. East Norwalk Train Station has signage with hotline and crisis text line.- The Regional Suicide Advisory Board will continue to revisit and potentially offer a region wide post vention sub-committee meeting due to increased interest and capacity.- Begin to outreach to local malls (ex. mall security guards) to offer QPR trainings and resources as there have been numerous suicide attempts and losses throughout the state at shopping malls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Follow up with MTA as well as towns with existing signage for logos and pre/post vention information included- Conduct outreach to MTA for representation at future RSAB meetings.- Organize outreach to formulate postvention subcommittee meeting