

CT Suicide Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: March 13, 2025

Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Present: Dani Amaral (SERAC), Edith Atwerebour (DPH), Natasha Austin (VA CT), Jeanette Baker (United Way CT), Scott Barton (SPRC), Madison Beach, Rebekah Behan (CHDI), Nicole Bengston (Amplify), Amery Bernhardt (CT Ctr for School Safety), Kate Bohannon (CSDE), Kevin Borrup (CT Children's), Dana Bossio (CES), Stephanie Bozak (DCF), Bill Brassard (NSSF), Heather Clinger (Wheeler), Kathleen Chapman (CT Psychological Assn.), Kaitlin Comet (Catalyst CT), Claire Cote (CT Aging & Disability Svcs.), Natalie Crino (Health Education Ctr.), Ann Irr Dagle (Brian Dagle Foundation), Andrea Duarte (DMHAS), Tracy Duran (Judicial Branch), Erika Echevarria (DMHAS), Allison Fulton (Western CT Coalition), Taylor Gainey (APW), Jose-Michael Gonzalez (CT CHRO), Grace Grinnell (NAMI Farmington Valley), Kristen Harp (Ellington Youth Svcs), Rob Harrison (YNHHS), Eve Hein (APW), Brianna Herrera (Norwalk Health Dept), Emma Hollis (Western CT Coalition), Eric Hudson (CT Judicial Branch), Russ Iger (Coventry PD), Mark Irons (SERAC), Neena Jacob (DPH), Angelika Karwowski (Bristol-Burlington Health District), Caitlyn Koripsky (Catalyst CT | The Hub), Amanda Kriz (Carelton Behavioral Health), Valerie Lepoutre (NAMI CT), Kelly Leppard (DMHAS), Susan Logan (DPH), Cathy Ludlum (Second Thoughts CT), Mollie Machado (DMHAS) Steve MacHattie (Charter Oak Family Ctr) Mike Makowski (DPH), Abby Wood Maldonado (Western CT Coalition), Lesley Mara (CSCU), Leslie Matos-Jubrey (JBCSSD), Jessica Matyka (CT State Police), Stacey Mayer (CAGV), Michelle McCarty (CTNG), Krystal Medley (United Way CT), Amanda Mihaly (UConn SSW/DMHAS), Briana Miller (ACCESS Mental Health), Rashida Miller (Weston Human Services Youth and Family Services), Michael Monterosso (DPH), Giovanna Mozzo (Catalyst CT), Allyson Nadeau (Amplify), Lucy Orellano (OCA), Ashley Perreira (Hartford Healthcare), Samantha Peters, Erica Previti (DPH), Stephanie Schillat (ESDHD), Mallory Schultz (CT Council on Problem Gambling), Kara Sepulveda-Fonseca (Alliance for Prevention and Wellness), Nicole Shea (Veterans Health Administration), Richard Siddall (SMART Recovery), Jennifer Sussman (UConn Health), Taylor Tantaquidgeon (OCA Intern), Alyeska Tilly (United Way CT), Kelly Tomlinson (Norwalk Health Dept.), Nadine Tulloch (DPH), Sara Wakai (UConn Health) Emmalyn Walenda (SERAC), Tyshaunda Wiley (DPH), and LoriBeth Young (DSS).

AGENDA ITEM/TOPIC	SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION	OUTCOME/ACTION /RESPONSIBLE
I. Welcome and Introductions	CTSAB tri-chairs Stephanie Bozak, Andrea Duarte and Ann Irr Dagle welcomed attendees	
II. Presentation History and Impact of Regional Suicide Prevention Infrastructure in CT Regional Suicide Advisory Boards Region 1: Caitlyn Koripsky - ckoripsky@catalystct.org Region 2: Taylor Gainey - tgainey@bhcare.org	The five Regional Suicide Advisory Boards (RSABs) are a core function of the five Regional Behavioral Health Action Organizations (RBHAOs) and are a coordinated effort with DCF and DMHAS contracts. History <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - July 2021-June 2024 RSABs were established within RBHAO scope of services - SAMHSA COVID funds were used to establish RSABs - Scope of RSAB services were expanded by ARPA(March 2023-August 2025) - July 2024-June2027 RSABs secured in RBHAO contract language within DMHAS-Attorney General Memorandum of Understanding Professional Development	

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<p>Kara Sepulveda-Fonseca</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ksepulveda-fonseca@bhcare.org <p>Region 3: Dani Amaral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - damaral@seracct.org <p>Region 4: Nicole Bengtson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - nbengtson@amplifyct.org <p>Region 5: Abby Maldonado</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - amaldonado@wctcoalition.org - Emma Hollis - ehollis@wctcoalition.org <p>https://www.ctclearinghouse.org/Customer-Content/www/files/PDFs/RSAB_Coordinator_Bios.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In June 2024 RSAB leads attended NAMI NH Connect Postvention TOT and have since trained over 50 community members - RSABs developed two statewide goals to each recruit representation from two additional sectors and translate at least three resources in at least one additional language by June 30, 2025 - Additional Train the Trainer opportunities this spring - Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative: Partnerships for Hope & Healing has enabled the RBHAOs to fund four new coordinator positions for the grant in five communities <p>Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RSABs offer a variety of trainings through the state in the areas of suicide prevention, postvention and mental health - Trainings include Mental Health First Aid, L.E.T.S. Save Lives, SOS Signs of Suicide, HOPE Health Outcomes from Positive Experiences, Talk Saves Lives, CALM Counseling on Access to Lethal Means, QPR Question Persuade Refer Suicide Prevention training, and Connect Postvention - In 2024, more than 4,000 people trained statewide in suicide prevention and mental health <p>Information Dissemination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work collaboratively with state and local partners to share information - Suicide is a lifespan issue and the RSABs are strategic in how they share information to reach different target populations - Information shared through tabling events, bus ads, documentary screenings, presentations, Gizmo read alongs, etc. <p>Postvention Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RSABs play a key role in the implementation of effective postvention services working alongside partners Mobile Crisis Intervention Services and the Center for School Safety - Technical assistance and consultation provide on safe messaging, return to school preparation, language and public facing communication, memorials, and postvention plans <p>Legislative Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Call to action for advocacy around suicide prevention - Become involved with local RSAB 	

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	<p>A map of the Regional Behavioral Health Action Organizations (RBHAOs) and more information can be found here:</p> <p>https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/dmhas/prevention/rbhaomappdf.pdf</p> <p>https://portal.ct.gov/DMHAS/Commissions-Councils-Boards/Index/Regional-Behavioral-Health-Action-Organizations-RBHAOs</p> <p>Regional Suicide Advisory Board (RSAB) Info Brief: https://www.preventsuicide.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/RSAB-info-brief-0325.pdf</p> <p>CTSAB one-pager: https://www.preventsuicide.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/CTSAB-ONE-PAGER-FINAL-031423.pdf</p> <p>To view the presentation, visit: https://www.ctclearinghouse.org/Customer-Content/www/files/PDFs/RSABs_History_Impact_in_CT-0325.pdf</p>	
III. CTSAB Business Reports & Minutes Approval	<p>Lesley Mara moved to approve the February 13, 2025 minutes. Allyson Nadeau seconded. Minutes approved.</p> <p>Statewide News/Updates from Tri-Chairs: State Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Five-year plan - Currently undergoing an update for PLAN 2030 - Committees are going over their goals and objectives to update and align with the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: https://www.hhs.gov/programs/prevention-and-wellness/mental-health-substance-use-disorder/national-strategy-suicide-prevention/index.html - Updated goals and objectives being submitted to Alexis May, Ph.D. <p>Suicide-related Grant Initiative Update: Garrett Lee Smith-Partnerships for Hope and Healing 2023-2028</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funded by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Cooperative Agreements for the Garrett Lee Smith State/Tribal Youth Suicide Prevention and Early Intervention Program - Advisory and Project Team: CTSAB; Andrea Duarte, Project Director, DMHAS; Stephanie Bozak, Co-Project Director, DCF; Susan Logan, Co-Project Director, 	

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	<p>DPH; Alyeska Tilly, United Way of CT/211; and Sara Wakai, UConn Health Center for Population Health, is the evaluator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Education Development Center o The Center for Population Health and The Center for Prevention Evaluation and Statistics at UConn Health o Five Regional Behavioral Health Action Organizations: The Hub, Alliance for Prevention and Wellness, SERAC, Amplify and Western CT Coalition o Five school systems and their communities: Darien, New Milford, Thompson, Vernon, and Wallingford - State level objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Develop a Training Collaborative that supports increased capacity and expertise in suicide risk identification, screening and treatment particularly among those serving youth and young adults o Create Data Dashboard that links to existing data resources accessible to guide suicide prevention planning o Promote the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline with the state's suicide prevention campaign o Prepare and release the CT Comprehensive Suicide Prevention Plan 2030 (PLAN 2030) - Local level objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Develop and implement intensive school-community-based efforts in five priority communities, one in each suicide prevention service region to build the capacity to prevent suicide as measured by the evaluation o Each school-community partnership will perform suicide prevention, intervention and response strategic planning and implementation - Community Led Suicide Prevention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Community teams and RSAB teams attended a Community Led Suicide Prevention (CLSP) Pre-Academy webinar and a two-day in person academy o RSAB leaders and PH2 coordinators attended Training of Trainers o Each school-community partnership will perform suicide prevention, intervention and response strategic planning and implementation - School-based Strategies and Curricula <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Multi-Tiered Suicide Prevention for Schools (MTSP) o QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) Training for faculty, staff and high school students 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Early identification, referral to mental health services and follow-up to support connections to care and family ○ Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS) screener and assessment ○ Safety Planning with Counseling Access to Lethal Means (CALM) ○ Elementary: Gizmo's Pawesome Guide to Mental Health © Elementary Curriculum (3 rd grade, enhanced evaluation) ○ Middle School: Signs of Suicide (SOS) Middle School Curricula ○ High School: Signs of Suicide (SOS) High School Curricula ○ Kick-off was January 30 and Communities of Practice meet on the fourth Thursday <p>- Relevant CT Legislation discussed, including that each local and regional board of education include the 988 National Suicide Prevention and Crisis lifeline information on all identification cards distributed to students in grades 6-12</p> <p>To view the presentation, visit: https://www.ctclearinghouse.org/Customer-Content/www/files/PDFs/GLS-PH2_Overview_PPT_031325.pdf</p> <p><u>Statewide Announcements of Upcoming Events/Trainings from Regional Suicide Advisory Boards (RSABs), Committees, and Foundations</u></p> <p>Brian Dagle Foundation https://brianshealinghearts.org/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LAX2LIVE program for college and high school lacrosse teams to create mental health and suicide awareness; last year participated at 35 schools - Will be launching a LAX2LIVE ambassador program who will be speakers at the schools - https://brianshealinghearts.org/events-unique/lax2live/ - Email: Ann@brianshealinghearts.org <p>State Department of Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kate Bohannon shared that the department hosted a youth suicide, prevention, intervention and postvention webinar on February 27 with over 200 attendees <p>Rhode Island</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rob Harrison shared that 10 schools in southern Rhode Island have peer-to-peer programs were trained by University of Michigan Center for Depression; the training was sponsored by the Chris Collins Foundation 	

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	<p>RBHAO Adult Alcohol Awareness Conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tuesday, April 1, 2025, Hilton Garden Inn - https://amplifyct.org/register/ <p>NAMI-CT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suicide attempt survivor support group leader training April 12 - Contact Val Lepoutre vlepoutre@namict.org <p>SPRC Needs Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - https://s.alchemer.com/s3/NSNA25?utm_source=hootsuite&utm_medium=&utm_term=&utm_content=&utm_campaign= 	
<p>IV. Review of Activities Since Last Report Out</p>	<p><u>Committees</u></p> <p>Intervention/Postvention Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working on updating their section of the State Plan - Contact Mark Irons, SERAC, mirons@seracct.org or Ann Dagle, Brian Dagle Foundation, ann@brianshealinghearts.org <p>Attempt Survivor/Lived Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working on updating their section of the state plan - Continuing to do trainings - Contact Valerie Lepoutre, NAMI-CT, vlepoutre@namict.org and Steve MacHattie, Charter Oak Family Center, smachattie47@gmail.com 	

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Regional Suicide Advisory Boards (RSABs)	<p>Region 4: North Central, Amplify</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hosting an information session on Out of the Abyss suicide support group https://namict.org/support-and-education/support-groups/oota/ - Hosted Bill Brassard from National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) who spoke about efforts in the firearm industry to reduce suicide, including Child Safe https://projectchildsafe.org/ - Delivered NAMI Connect Postvention training in January to the Town of Enfield - Will be assisting Enfield in April to establish a new postvention plan - Have received many QPR requests, including Glastonbury High School Peer Education group and Simsbury Boy Scout master leaders and parents as well as the High School-age Scouts senior leaders - Presented overviews of suicide prevention in the region - Tentatively hosting a CALM training for the RSAB leads and PH2 coordinators - 100% of towns represented in Region 4 priority needs report - Collaborating with Honor Wellness Center in Glastonbury, a nonprofit mental health organization for the needs of first responders and veterans https://www.honorwellness.org/ - Next meeting: April 8 with a presentation from For All Ages-convenor of the Collaborative to End Loneliness - Contact Nicole Bengtson nbengtson@amplifyct.org <p>Region 5: Western, Western CT Coalition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presented Teen Mental Health First Aid to a group of students at a private school 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Last RSAB meeting was a focus group around what is happening in the region to help inform the regional priority report process - Promote Gizmo read-alongs; hope to increase to more than seven this year - Will be assembling Gizmo youth mental health swag bags, including different fidget toys and mindfulness activities - Next meeting: March 26 - Contact Abby Wood Maldonado amaldonado@wctcoalition.org and Emma Johnson Hollis ehollis@wctcoalition.org 																									
V. Updates from Awareness Campaign/Website/Outreach Efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - February: more than 4,400 website views with top pages viewed postvention and protective factors - Through DPH funding, media spots in April with NBC and Telemundo - C-SSRS pads now available to order on www.preventsuicidect.org 																									
VI. Close of Coalition Meeting	Coalition meeting ended at 10:42am																									
VII. Board Meeting	<p>Board meeting began at 10:43an with the following voting members in attendance:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">Scott</td><td style="width: 33%;">Barton</td><td style="width: 33%;">Suicide Prevention Resource Center</td></tr> <tr> <td>Rebekah</td><td>Behan</td><td>Child Health and Development Institute</td></tr> <tr> <td>Amery</td><td>Bernhardt</td><td>CT Center for School Safety and Crisis Preparation</td></tr> <tr> <td>Kate</td><td>Bohanan</td><td>CT State Dept. of Education</td></tr> <tr> <td>Kevin</td><td>Borrupt</td><td>CT Children's</td></tr> <tr> <td>Dana</td><td>Bossio</td><td>Cooperative Educational Services (CES)</td></tr> <tr> <td>Stephanie</td><td>Bozak</td><td>CT Dept. of Children and Families (DCF)</td></tr> <tr> <td>Bill</td><td>Brassard</td><td>National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF)</td></tr> </table>	Scott	Barton	Suicide Prevention Resource Center	Rebekah	Behan	Child Health and Development Institute	Amery	Bernhardt	CT Center for School Safety and Crisis Preparation	Kate	Bohanan	CT State Dept. of Education	Kevin	Borrupt	CT Children's	Dana	Bossio	Cooperative Educational Services (CES)	Stephanie	Bozak	CT Dept. of Children and Families (DCF)	Bill	Brassard	National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF)	
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	<p>Ann Irr Dagle The Brian Dagle Foundation CT Dept. of Mental Health & Addiction Services (DMHAS)</p> <p>Andrea Duarte Russ Iger Coventry Police Department</p> <p>Valerie Lepoutre National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) CT</p> <p>Cathy Ludlum Second Thoughts Connecticut</p> <p>Steve MacHattie Charter Oak Family Center</p> <p>Abby Wood Maldonado Western CT Coalition</p> <p>Lesley Mara CT State Colleges and Universities (CSCU)</p> <p>Allyson Nadeau Amplify</p> <p>Marissa White Correctional Healthcare Quality Improvement Solutions</p> <p>LoriBeth Young CT Dept. of Social Services (DSS)</p> <p>Coalition members in attendance (non-voting):</p> <p>Edith Atwerebour, DPH</p> <p>Claire Cote, Aging and Disability Services, Bureau of Aging</p>	
	<p>Discussion ensued that there has been interest from someone about joining the board. Once the form is completed it will be shared with board members for a vote at the next meeting. If approved, it will be go to the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families who will officially appoint the person to the board.</p> <p>Stephanie Bozak shared that she, Andrea Duarte and Amery Bernhardt will be meeting with the Office of the Child Advocate to review the current postvention process.</p> <p>Allyson Nadeau reminded everyone to connect with their RBHAO regarding advocacy for suicide prevention with their legislators.</p>	

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	Board meeting adjourned at 10:58am.	
<p>2025 Meeting Schedule</p> <p>Meetings are the second Thursday of the month Coalition meeting: 9:00am—10:30am Board meeting: 10:30am-11:00am</p> <p>Meetings are currently scheduled virtually. Please refer to the monthly meeting announcement for meeting information.</p>	<p><u>2025 Meeting Dates/Presentations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4/10: Paul Tieger, TPI-C (Tieger Personality Indicator for Children) and Expanded Research - 5/8: State Conference - 6/12 - 7/10: Michael Makowski, CT DPH, CTVDRS Data Update - 8/14 - 9/11: State Plan 2030 release - 10/9 - 11/13 - 12/11 <p>Subcommittee meetings are listed in the monthly meeting announcement sent on the CTSAB listserv.</p>	