

CT Suicide Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: November 13, 2025

Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Present: Dani Amaral (SERAC), Megan Avery (DMHAS), Jeanette Baker (United Way CT), Rebekah Behan (CHDI), Nicole Bengtson (Amplify), Amery Bernhardt (CT Ctr for School Safety), Kate Bohannon (CSDE), Chelsea Bourn (Brian Dagle Foundation), Stephanie Bozak (DCF), Bill Brassard (NSSF), Haley Brown (DMHAS), Brendan Burke (OCA), Kevin Burns (CT DOT), Jessica Casella (VA CT), Beth Castillo (RHAM), Kali Cavanaugh (JBCSSD), Kathleen Chapman (CT Psychological Assn.), Heather Clinger (Wheeler), Ann Irr Dagle (Brian Dagle Foundation), Sarah Darlagiannis (consultant), Alice DeMeo (DCF), Andrea Duarte (DMHAS), Kelley Edwards (DMHAS), Amy Evison (CHR), Taylor Ford (Second Chance Educational Alliance/Reflections Psychotherapy Services), Taylor Gainey (APW), Lisa Girard (DCF), Grace Grinnell (NAMI Farmington Valley), Katherine Haley (DMHAS), Eve Hein (Alliance for Prevention & Wellness), Brianna Herrera (Norwalk Health Dept.), Emma Hollis (Western Coalition), Russ Iger (Coventry PD), Kevin Iglesias (Catalyst CT/Western CT Coalition), Neena Jacob (DPH), Angela Jimenez (DPH), Barbara Jimenez (Catholic Charities), Angie Karwowski (Bristol-Burlington Health District), Caitlyn Koripsky (Catalyst CT), Amanda Kriz (Carelton Behavioral Health), Susan Logan (DPH), Steve MacHattie (Charter Oak Family Ctr), Mike Makowski (DPH), Abby Wood Maldonado (Western Coalition), Cristin McCarthy-Vahey (CGA), Noelle Michaud (CHR), Amanda Mihaly (UConn SSW/DMHAS), Michael Monterosso (DPH), Allyson Nadeau (Amplify), Isabel O'Donnell, Nashaly Olivieri (The Village for Families & Children), Lucy Orellano (OCA), Natasha Randolph (VA CT), Steve Rogers (CT Children's), Kara Sepulveda-Fonseca (Alliance for Prevention & Wellness), Richard Siddall (SMART Recovery), Alyeska Tilly (United Way CT), Kelley Tomlinson (Norwalk Health Dept.), Laura Vandermeulen (DMHAS), Sara Wakai (UConn Health), Jennifer Waldo (Windsor Health Dept.), Emmalyn Walenda (SERAC), Marissa White (CHQIS), Brittney Wilcox and LoriBeth Young (DSS).

AGENDA ITEM/TOPIC	SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION	OUTCOME/ACTION /RESPONSIBLE
I. Welcome and Introductions	CTSAB tri-chairs Ann Irr Dagle and Andrea Duarte welcomed attendees. CTSAB tri-chair Stephanie Bozak joined the meeting after introductions	
II. CTSAB Business Reports Minutes approval	<p>Amery Bernhardt moved to approve the October 9, 2025, minutes. Caitlyn Koripsky seconded. Minutes approved.</p> <p>State Plan 2030 updates and discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure walk through and gaps analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Restructure Goal – Not to change goals or objectives but adjust the content to be less academic and more engaging to those who are not professionals in suicide prevention. Create a useful document for anyone to pick up and understand the opportunities available and how to get involved. It is a guide to help everyone “swim in the same direction”, as we all have our own lens based on our background. ○ Sara Darlagiannis - hired in June to assist in revamping suicide prevention plan 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sara came in with no background in suicide prevention ▪ She has worked in Public Health for 20 years as an emergency preparedness coordinator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with Local Health Departments, police, schools, etc. to help make hazard plans, drills, exercises • Was a Medical Reserve Corps coordinator ▪ Sara's process for the prevention plan was to read through each goal and mark if something wasn't clear enough to someone new to suicide prevention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reworded goals • gap analysis – see if objectives and opportunities really aligned with goals allowing tri-chairs to go through and address each concern ○ Slide show of the new table of contents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dedication and Acknowledgement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants to acknowledge the work everyone has done • Acknowledge those who worked in breakout groups and held conversations about what we want for this new plan ▪ You're Not Alone, and Help is Always Available. You Matter. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section explains how to seek help if needed, not only about how to help others ▪ Letter from Commissioners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar to 2025 report, a joint Commissioner statement – from DMHAS and DCF, as they oversee CTSAB ▪ Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • removed statement from CTSAB tri-chairs to keep it more audience friendly • Similar to 2025 plan, but more condensed • Still gives some context and data as an intro to suicidality in CT ▪ Goals, Objectives, and Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 Plan included examples of possible strategies • 2030 Plan to focus on where opportunities lie with RSABs and CTSAB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ identify opportunities for continued growth and where we can go rather than just discuss history 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify how to reach those not a part of our coalitions ▪ Appendix A – Glossary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important for those who don't know certain acronyms or references ▪ Removed CTSAB areas of focus and demographic groups and suicide risk in 2030 Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • felt repetitive and added to the length of document • 2030 Plan is broader rather than focused ▪ Appendix B – Acronym List ▪ Appendix C - Risk and Protective Factors ▪ 2025 Appendix D (Training Options)– removed in 2030 Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently thinking of other ways and strategies to ensure people are aware of the trainings that exist • Previous meeting (10/9/2025) discussed comprehensive list for trainings ▪ 2030 Appendix D - Types of Grants ▪ Past Plan Appendix E and F will be in the 2030 data supplement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT suicide rates by age and sex and the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) survey data ▪ References ▪ 2030 Plan will have a data supplement ○ Questions, thoughts, or comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr. Kathleen Chapman- How will the data supplement be accessed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan will be distributed electronically. Plan to develop an information card for the state plan, with goals on one side and objectives on other. The card will have a QR code so people can access it. We will assess the need for print copies, upon request, as we do not want to overprint materials. ▪ Taylor Ford - Is there a supplement on demographic groups and risk factors? Will it also be available to folks who are incarcerated on their tablets as they were interested in reading through the plan? They have limited internet access so it would have to be approved to be downloaded onto the tablets. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both demographics and risk factors will be a part of the data supplement. • We would have to work with the Department of Corrections (DOC) to see what would and would not be approved, but for us, we want to make it widely accessible. DOC would go through their process of approvals, but it would be something we can work with. We could also make it a pdf version that can be downloaded. ▪ Susan Logan – For types of grants, can you explain what you mean for that? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As far as grants we have received for suicide prevention – DMHAS has a 988 and Garrett Lee Smith grant which DPH and DCF participate on. DPH also has the Comprehensive Suicide Prevention grant. We wanted to highlight those grants that help build infrastructure and activities promoting suicide prevention • Andrea made a chart to outline departments and agencies that received a grant and the activities associated with that grant ○ E-mail tri-chairs for any questions or ideas regarding the 2030 State Plan ○ Tri-chair Stephanie asks all to think about how to best disseminate the final plan to those who are not in the world of suicidality • Committee work planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For committees preparing - goals, objectives, and content are the same, but the level of specificity needs to differentiate between committee work and state plan work ○ Tri-chairs are requesting committees to identify 2-3 activities to focus on and see progress on in the next year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify SMART activities – those that can be measured and tracked over time ▪ No need to drop current projects, as those are still applicable ○ Collect successes and challenges to do a report out at the end of the period so there is some accountability and a guide for 2035 Plan ○ Work Plan Templates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ E-mail Andrea if you would like a copy of the work plan template 	

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<p>III. Updates</p>	<p>Job Openings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFSP is looking for the CT Area Director - AFSP-CT Area Director <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focus on suicide awareness, prevention, and postvention for families through the healing conversations program ○ Director receives a lot of support from volunteers and other directors ○ There is a hope the director can be an active role in CTSAB, advocacy days at the state Capitol, training, etc. ○ Previous director, Alisha Scott, offered to speak with anyone about the position if interested– ascott@afsp.org , 860-614-7208 • Amery Bernhardt - Center for School Safety at Western Connecticut State University - https://westernconnecticutstateuniversity.applytojob.com/apply/LtPbTdMsvm/Regional-School-Safety-Coordinator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has funding to hire two more regional school safety coordinators to support the 4 regional coordinators ○ The center does research related to school safety, coordinates school mental health support crisis teams, and provides professional development across the state <p>Other Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundraiser for Brian Dagle foundation – Jingle 5k on December 13th at McCook Point Park in Niantic CT https://brianshealinghearts.org/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hoping for 1,600-1,800 people this year ○ Wear costumes, walk, or run • Website Updates – https://www.preventsuicide.org <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CTSAB minutes will have an archive page for minutes for the past 3 years. ○ Jeanette previously sent out a graphical element for board to choose from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will now send color scheme options to the board to vote on • <i>Gizmo's Pawesome Guide to Mental Health</i> Updates - https://www.gizmo4mentalhealth.org/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New materials being ordered from out of state <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There will be a limit on the number of materials being ordered for out of state due to expense and funding, this will enable CT individuals to get first access ▪ Can request brochure and sticker, or can have the professional version to do local printing for easier statewide distribution 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bottom of the page has social media messages to promote the use of materials ▪ Gizmo's new video – Gizmo Graphics – Gizmo 4 Mental Health ○ NAMI report showed 25 out of 50 states, including CT, have legislation requiring 988 language on the back of student ID cards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As part of the Garrett Lee Smith grant, this is an opportunity to allow others to use the resources. • Amy Evision – put up a 988 promotion sticker on a bridge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are other signs or promotional materials that do not include 988 but the old number, the old number still works 1-800-273-8255 ○ Carry stickers with you to public places that allow stickers to be put up (e.g., coffee shops, bars, etc.) ○ You can order stickers for free on the 988 website orders.gpo.gov/SAMHSA988/Pubs.aspx 	
IV. Close of Coalition Meeting	Coalition meeting ended at 10:13 am	

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V. Board Meeting	No board meeting today.	
2025-2026 Meeting Schedule Meetings are the second Thursday of the month Coalition meeting: 9:00am—10:30am Board meeting: 10:30am-11:00am	2025 Meeting Dates/Presentations (2nd Th. monthly): - 12/11 - Christina Cipriano, Ph.D., Ed.M., Yale Child Study Center Director, the Education Collaboratory at Yale, <i>Social Emotional Learning and Intersectionality</i> 2026 Meeting Dates/Presentations (2nd Th. monthly): - 1/8 - 2/12 (state holiday, no meeting) - 3/12 - 4/9 - 5/14 - 6/11	

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Meetings are currently scheduled virtually. Please refer to the monthly meeting announcement for meeting information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 7/9 - 8/13 - 9/10 (World Suicide Prevention Day) - 10/8 - 11/12 - 12/10 <p>Subcommittee meetings are listed in the monthly meeting announcement sent on the CTSAB listserv.</p>	