

CT Suicide Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: October 10, 2024

Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Present: Dami Amaral (Amplify), Gerry Baird (Clifford Beers), Jeanette Baker (United Way CT), Nicole Bengiston (Amplify), Amery Bernhardt (CT Ctr for School Safety), Rob Bibbiani (Tri-Town YSB), C.J. Boggs (YMCA New Britain), Kate Bohannon (CSDE), Kevin Borrup (CT’s Children), Stephanie Bozak (DCF), Bill Brassard (NSSF), Kevin Burns (CT DOT), Bridget Cepalia (Vita Steve), Heather Clinger (Wheeler), Natalie Crino, Ann Irr Dagle (Brian Dagle Foundation), Alice DeMeo (DCF), Anastasiya Dominich-Kovaslesky (Torrington Area Health District), Amy Evison (CHR), Michaela Fissel, Taylor Gainey (APW), Lisa Girard (DCF), Grace Grinnell (NAMI CT), Laura Grubb (SAMHSA), Eva Hein (Alliance for Prevention & Wellness), Brian Hembrook (New Milford Youth Agency), Emma Hollis (Western Coalition), Russ Iger (Coventry PD), Kevin Iglesias (McCall Ctr for Behavioral Health), Mark Irons (SERAC), Angela Jimenez (DPH), Robert Kanehl (CT Poison Control), Chelsea Kapitancek (Western COT Coalition), Angelika Karwowski (BBHD), Pamela Kelley (CSSD), Caitlyn Koripsky (Catalyst CT), Matthew Kowaski (Cromwell Youth Svcs), Valerie Lepoutre (NAMI CT), Susan Logan (DPH), Cathy Ludlum (Second Thoughts CT), Mollie Machado (DMHAS), Steve Machattie (Charter Oak Family Ctr), Mike Makowoski (DPH), Abby Wood Maldonado (Western Coalition), Lesly Mara (CSCU), Jessica Markure (VHA), Michelle McCarty (CTNG) Michael Monterosso, Giovanna Mozzo, Allyson Nadeau (Amplify), Lucinda Orellano (OCA), Jonathan Perleo (CCAGV), Marie Plumer (Living Works), Erica Previtti (DPH), Kara Sepulveda-Foriesca (Alliance for Prevention & Wellness), Cathy Sisco (Wheeler), Laura Stamatien (CTNG), Imara Steve, Taylor Tantaquidgeon (OCA Intern), Paul Tieger, Alyeska Tilly (United Way CT), Kasey Timberlake (CTNG), Jon Trouvern-Trend (CTNG), Nadine Tulloch (DPH), Sara Wakai (UConn Health), Marissa White (CHQIS), Tyshaunda Wiley (DPH), Kelly Wilson, Kiley Young (CT Ctr School Safety), and LoriBeth Young (DSS).

AGENDA ITEM/TOPIC	SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION	OUTCOME/ACTION /RESPONSIBLE
I. Welcome and Introductions	Stephanie Bozak and Ann Irr Dagle welcomed attendees Ann and Stephanie acknowledged it was World Mental Health Day and thanked everyone for all of the work they do and especially the events held in September	
Review of Minutes	August minutes approved	
II. Presentation <i>Language to Support Recovery</i> Michaela Fissel, MA Executive Director Advocacy Unlimited, Inc. mfissel@advocacyunlimited.org	<p>Practicing mindfulness and mindfulness is highly correlated with benefits in the mental health space. Breathing Mindfulness Benefits: When you're breathing, you're activating the parasympathetic nervous system which automatically brings your body and your mind to a state of relaxation. It might only be subtle, but it is activating your relaxation response.</p> <p>Breathing recommendation: The more often you intentionally breathe and practice mindfulness, the more often you're going to give your body a chance to do what it's naturally designed to do, which is rest and repair. So just taking 2 min a day to just sit with yourselves doing something mindfully, or even just simply noticing the breath is beneficial</p>	

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	<p>Goal for Today: Introduce the idea of language recovery; integrate language and recovery together.</p> <p>Focus Topics: Cultural humility, recovery, orientation, trauma, responsive person-centered choice, personal agency and informed consent.</p> <p>Piaget, Cognitive learning 2-7 yrs develop symbolic thought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Associations which create a Cognitive Schema (not everyone has this capabilities) - Noted extreme Learned Association between mental illness and the associated stigma of potential for violence against self and others. - Research shows that people are more likely to be the victims of violence than to perpetrate violence. - This learned association is modeled by media, movies, education etc. <p>Illness Identity is strongly associated with the amount of time someone has engaged in psychiatric care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For people who have a psychiatric diagnosis, there's a constant reinforcement of fear and fear of and protection paternalistic approach. - Psychiatric diagnosis, highly high reported rate of internalized stigma, where the language that our society uses about those people ends up reinforcing negative attitudes and beliefs a person may hold about themselves which then can lead to people feeling unworthy feeling, sense of loss of community and connection isolation. - Reinforcing the schema by using stigmatizing language. <p>Learned helplessness is the result of repeatedly facing uncontrollable, stressful situations that are perceived or are beyond a person's control over time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A person dependent on protective factors will learn that they are helpless in a situation and no longer try to change it. And once they begin to develop learned helplessness, they lose motivation in other areas of their life as well. So even if the opportunity arises that allows the person to alter their circumstances, or, let's say, join an advisory board or something like this they won't, because they literally have been conditioned to be conditioned again. <p>Combating Psychiatric Oppression: A Civil Rights Issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A mental health diagnosis is the only societally assigned label that gives authority to institutions to take away all the rights of the person at the sole discretion of the 	

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	<p>treating physician, and a judge, without evidence beyond the opinion of the medical professional. This includes the person's right to decide what happens to their body, and the person does not need to be present for their own hearing.</p> <p>Growth Mindset Approach: The language that we use to promote recovery; focusing on potential (not deficits)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To resolve internalized stigma, Illness Identity, Learned Helplessness, and Psychiatric oppression. - By reorienting ourselves in our attitudes, our language, our beliefs, policies, practices, by reorienting ourselves in a direction of recovery. <p>SAMSHA definition of Recovery is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential. (no diagnostic language because everyone at some point in their life is going to have to apply the principles of recovery to navigate a challenge or circumstances that are seemingly beyond your control)</p> <p>10 Principles of Recovery: Hope, person driven many pathways, holistic peer support, relational cultural addresses, trauma, 6 principles of trauma informed spaces.</p> <p>Integration of recovery supports across 4 domains: Health, Home, Purpose & Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The values of recovery-oriented services are based on the recognition that each person is the agent of their own recovery, and all services can be organized to support recovery. Create spaces and places for individuals receiving services to actively participate in the design, delivery and implementation of those services <p>Disrupt passive service using (created by learned helplessness)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create more inclusive spaces where we reduce that power differential. - Transition from the Institutional Care Medical Model: Crisis oriented, professionally directed, acute care options that emphasize discrete treatment episodes. (Community Mental health Act, 1963) - The Medical Model is not translating into community settings. <p>Recovery Orientation Model (2004) actively shifting design and delivery care in CT.</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Person directed, long-term supports, recognizes that many pathways, options & services offered for health and wellness, Meet the person where they're at depending on what part of their transition they're in. - Shift from "Treatment compliance" to whether they have access to information, choices and services "An experience together, learning and growing and thriving together". - Purpose focus: how do we create more time and space for that sense of fulfillment and purpose to be activated? - Individuals have multiple domains of their life, seek to feel fulfillment and purpose within including emotional, occupational, environmental and spiritual; Cultural Humility, Trauma informed. <p>Recommendations: embrace practices and policies that work to eliminate stigma and discrimination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stop someone as they're speaking, and ask them to use different language, to describe a person or a person's circumstances, you are allowed to disrupt stigma and discrimination in the moment. - Overcome stigmatizing language and behaviors, including developing programs and policies and procedures that incorporate input from multiple stakeholders, including the people who receive services and providing robust staff training on stigma and discrimination. - Move from oppressive mental health language to recovery, oriented language (I.E., no longer use the word crazy) <p>Maladaptive behavior as a symptom of survival trauma; conditioned through the patterns of engaging in the world differently than someone who did not have those experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maladaptive behavior descriptions such as "manipulative, noncompliant, maladaptive, defiant, oppositional and attention seeking behavior" are stigmatizing as well. - Creating space for that person to have and grace for that person to be able to become aware of how their behaviors had once served them in a survival situation, are no longer going to lend to the same results that they once did. - Time, patience, grace, care, compassion, consideration are because our service system design <p>Recommendations:</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a supportive, safe environment for this person to be able to become aware of how they're engaging in the world, and maybe different ways that they can go about it. - Change your mind, change your brain. What you focus on grows growth, mindset neuroplasticity - Work with attention, intention, time, and repetition, disrupt truly oppressive language and ways in which we view other people's struggles. - Disrupt that and shift towards recovery: Oriented language and perspective <p>To view the presentation, visit: https://www.ctclearinghouse.org/Customer-Content/www/files/PDFs/FOR_DISTRIBUTION_SAB_Language_to_Support_Recovery_Oct_2024.pdf</p> <p>Presenter bio: https://www.ctclearinghouse.org/Customer-Content/www/files/PDFs/Oct_2024_CTSAB_Presenter_Bio.pdf</p>	
III. CTSAB Business Reports	<p><u>CTSAB Board and New Meeting Structure for 2024</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Committee and foundation report-outs will be alternating each month - The coalition part of the meeting will be 9:00am-10:30am - The board meeting will begin at 10:30am - As we move forward, committees/foundations to share what is upcoming and happening in the future and there will be a quarterly update. <p>2025 Statewide Conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Let Stephanie or Ann know if interested in joining committee <p><u>Suicide-related Grant Initiatives</u></p> <p>CDC Comprehensive Suicide Prevention Grant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Year 4 at-a-glance September 2023-August 2024 - Currently four health departments: Bristol-Burlington Health District, Norwalk Health Department, Torrington Area Health District and Uncase Health District - Annual progress report submitted to CDC with part one in March and then September included a full snapshot of the entire year of work that was done in the state and provided additional clarification to CDC and updates on data for the close out of the year 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current funding ends in August 2025, - Forecasted funding opportunity for 2025 - 23 community-based QPR trainings, 350 individuals trained - 4 ASIST trainings held, 30 individuals trained - Added suicide prevention signage to bridges - Education around safe storage of firearms, prescriptions and over the counter medications - Promotion to existing programs: Gizmo, Fresh Check Days, 4 What’s Next, and community outreach and engagement - Healthcare facilities in each of the health department areas contacted about suicide prevention and CALM (Counseling on Access to Lethal Means) trainings - Zero suicide outreach ongoing for all health district areas - School districts contacted about the Gizmo curriculum and the 4 What’s Next program - Video campaign created: https://www.preventsuicidect.org/get-materials/audio-video/ <p>To view the presentation, visit: https://www.ctclearinghouse.org/Content/www/files/PDFs/CSP_CTSAB_Updates_10_10_2024.pdf</p> <p><u>Regional Suicide Advisory Boards</u> https://www.preventsuicidect.org/about-us/regional-sab-business/</p> <p>Region 1/Southwestern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Victoria O’Neill relocated and Caitlin is the new regional RSAB coordinator - Connect TOT for RSAB coordinators - Several speaking engagements with the VA - Collaborated with Carelon on a three-part autism and suicide prevention presentation - Continue to host QPR and Narcan trainings twice a month - Lighthouse presented C-SSRS - Supported Norwalk Health Department in their efforts - Released a call to action after untimely deaths in the region <p>Region 2/South Central</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Press release during national suicide prevention month to discuss some suicide data in Connecticut, warning signs, safe storage and 988 resources 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interview with News Channel 8 including suicide warning signs and 1 Word 1 Voice 1 Life - Hosted a free film screening of <i>Moving America's Soul</i> on suicide in North Haven at the Cinemark Theater - Trained over a hundred educators from Shelton public schools during their professional development day - Partnered with the New Haven Health Department to provide signs of suicide presentations to two middle schools in New Haven - Participated in the AFSP Out of Darkness Walk - Participating in Fresh Check Day at Quinnipiac University - Next meeting: October 15 in person at Meriden Public Library <p>Region 3/Eastern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New suicide prevention program lead will begin on November 4 - October meeting featured a presentation by the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs on their greater resiliency information toolkit - A series of tabling events: a local business, Fresh Check Day at CT State: Three Rivers, National Guard event at the 5 K, Out of the Darkness Walk, and a high school. - QPR training at a local oil and heating business during suicide prevention month - Gizmo read along with Uncas Health District - Depression and older adults presentation with the tribal community - Maddie Halloran Foundation Talk - Next meeting: November 5 <p>Region 4/North Central</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth Mental Health First Aid training in September - 10th anniversary, Believe 208 Run for the Brave in East Hartford - Strategic community planning across the regions - Tabled at The KV Foundation for Mental Health, Inc. golf tournament. https://www.kvfoundationformentalhealth.org/ - Will be attending the Wethersfield parent book club for a discussion of <i>The Anxious Generation</i> <p>Region 5 /Western</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outreach and training in September - Conscious posting of resources and information on social media accounts, billboards, and tabling events in September - September RSAB meeting reviewed and digested the two bulletins released by 	

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	<p>various state agencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to support schools with postvention - Next meeting: November 20 <p>Foundations (report out in April, July, Oct, Dec, Feb)</p> <p>American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) https://afsp.org/chapter/connecticut</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See website for upcoming Out of the Darkness walks - Access events here: Connecticut AFSP - Email: mpeters@afsp.org <p>Brian Dagle Foundation https://brianshealinghearts.org/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - September 30, 2025, will be hosting Dr. Alan Wolfelt from the Center for Loss and Life Transition. More details to come. - 80 to 100 individuals join each month for grief and loss programs - October 23 Yoga for Grief class - Jingle 5K in December, seeking sponsors - Many speaking engagements in September, including at the National Guard in Windsor - 10-year celebration at The Garde Arts Center - Email: Ann@brianshealinghearts.org <p>Jordan Porco Foundation https://www.rememberingjordan.org</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Search for a new executive director has commenced - Goal of 350 Fresh Check Days - Porco Foundation is a silver charity for the Eversource Hartford Marathon <p>My Friend Abby https://www.myfriendabby.org/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No report - Email: gillian@myfriendabby.org <p>Committees (report out in June, Aug, Nov, Jan, March)</p> <p>Awareness Campaign https://www.preventsuicidect.org/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - United Way of Connecticut made a push to get news coverage around 988 to 10 media sources including WTNH, WTIC News 12 and various local papers - Social media push, like the RSABs around mental health, and 988 - United Way staff participated in AFSP Out of the Darkness walks - 9,000 page views in September and 15 scans of the QR code 	

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Member updates	- Lived Experience committee tabling at the Hartford AFSP Walk	
	Coalition meeting adjourned 10:38am	
<p>2023-2024 Meeting Schedule</p> <p>Meetings are the second Thursday of the month, 9:00am—11:00am</p> <p>Meetings are currently scheduled virtually. Please refer to the monthly meeting announcement for meeting information.</p>	<p>Dates/Presentations</p> <p><u>2024 Meeting Dates/Presentations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 11/14: Jessica Casella, VACT, Veteran Suicide Prevention and Compact Act - 12/12: Paulette Schwartz, LCSW, MPH, CPXP, Laurel Reagan, APRN, Kathyria Oyola-Cartagena MPH, MS, TEACH QPR: A Partnership for Hope <p>- Subcommittee meetings are listed in the monthly meeting announcement sent on the CTSAB listserv.</p>	