

CT Suicide Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: July 10, 2025

Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Present: Dani Amaral (SERAC), Edith Atwerebour (DPH), Jeanette Baker (United Way), Scott Barton (SPRC), Madison Beach (CHR), Nicole Bengston (Amplify), Rob Bibbiani (Tri-Town Youth Svcs), Kate Bohannan (CSDE), Kevin Borrup (CT Children’s), Dana Bossio (CES), Bill Brassard (NSSF), Brendan Burke (OCA), Heather Clinger (Wheeler), Ann Irr Dagle (Brian Dagle Foundation), Alice DeMeo (DCF), Jennifer Esposito (Judicial Branch), Amy Evison (CHR), Taylor Gainey (APW), Rob Harrison (YNHH), Kayla Hendrickson (Newington Human Svcs), Emma Hollis (Western CT Coalition), Eric Hudson (CT Judicial Branch), Kevin Iglesias (Catalyst CT|The Hub), Mark Irons (SERAC), Angela Jimenez (DPH), Angelika Karwowski (Bristol-Burlington Health District), Caitlyn Koripsky (Catalyst CT|The Hub), Cathy Ludlum (Second Thoughts CT), Mollie Machado (DMHAS), Steve MacHattie (Charter Oak Family), Abby Wood Maldonado (Western CT Coalition), Lesley Mara (CSCU), Amanda Mihaly (UConn SSW/DMHAS), Allyson Nadeau (Amplify), Leah Nelson (Jordan Porco Foundation), Tonya Patricia (Commonthread Warmline Operator), Steven Rogers (CT Children's), Nicole Shea (Veterans Health Administration), Cathy Sisco (Wheeler), Rebecca Sorornejad, Alyeska Tilly (United Way CT), Sara Wakai (UConn Health), Jennifer Waldo (Windsor Health Dept), LoriBeth Williams (DSS) and Meredith Yuhas (CSCU).

AGENDA ITEM/TOPIC	SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION	OUTCOME/ACTION /RESPONSIBLE
I. Welcome and Introductions	Ann Irr Dagle and Alice Demeo welcomed attendees	
II. Presentation <i>CT Violent Death Reporting system (CTVDRS) Data Update</i> Michael Makowski, MPH Epidemiologist 3 Injury and Violence Surveillance Unit Connecticut Department of Public Health Michael.Makowski@ct.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CTVDRS began collecting data in 2015 - Hit a peak in 2019 with suicide rate; 2023 was an anomaly with the age adjusted suicide rate being the lowest since began collecting data - About 3/4 deaths by suicide are male - Male rates nearly three times higher than females - 93% suicide deaths in CT are non-Hispanic - Age-specific suicide rates 2020-2024: lowest rates 10-17 year old age group; highest age specific rate ages 45-64 - Nationally, firearms is the leading cause of suicide; in CT, the leading cause is hanging-strangulation followed by firearms and poisonings - Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM): limiting access to methods - Most common risk factors for suicide 2015-2023 98% (N=3,326) of risk factors or circumstances are known Most Common Risks — if known, not mutually exclusive: - 1) Mental Health Problem 41.3% (N=1,375); W/ Diagnosis: 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a) Depression 66.2% (N=911); b) Bipolar Disorder 9.6% (N=132); c) Anxiety 5.6% (N=77); d) Schizophrenia 4.5% (N=63) - Depressed Mood 34.6% (N=1,150) - Substance Misuse-Reported as Alcohol & Substance Misuse 34.0% (N=1,144) - Physical Health Problem (Acute, Chronic, Terminal Illness or Pain) 21.7% (N=722) - Intimate Partner Problem (divorce; break-up) 18.2% (N=606) - History of Suicidal Ideation 17.6% (N=586) - Previous Suicide Attempt(s) 16.0% (N=532) - Substances found in blood at time of autopsy 2015-2023: alcohol; common to have multiple substances <p style="margin-left: 40px;">75% of the findings were above the legal limit for alcohol, followed by benzodiazepines, opiates, marijuana and cocaine</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">To view the presentation, visit: https://www.ctclearinghouse.org/Customer-Content/www/files/PDFs/July_2025_CTSAB_presentation_MMakowski2_JV.pdf</p>	
<p>III. CTSAB Business Reports & Minutes Approval</p> <p>Alyeska Tilly Program Manager United Way of CT 2-1-1 Alyeska.Tilly@ctunitedway.org</p>	<p>Statewide News/Updates from Tri-Chairs: State Plan 2030</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tri-chairs are reviewing the goals and objectives submitted by committees <p>Suicide-related Grant Initiative Update: GLS-Partnerships for Hope & Healing (PH2)</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, DPH; Alyeska Tilly, United Way of CT/211; and Sara Wakai, UConn Health Center for Population Health, is the evaluator - Partners 	

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	<p>Education Development Center The Center for Population Health and The Center for Prevention Evaluation and Statistics at UConn Health Five Regional Behavioral Health Action Organizations: The Hub, Alliance for Prevention and Wellness, SERAC, Amplify and Western CT Coalition Five school systems and their communities: Darien, New Milford, Thompson, Vernon, and Wallingford</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 <p>To view the presentation, visit: https://www.ctlearninghouse.org/CustomContent/www/files/PDFs/GLS-PH2_Overview_PPT_071025.pdf</p>	

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<p>IV. Review of Activities Since Last Report Out</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"> - September 29 & 30 hosting two educational sessions on grief with Dr. Alan Wolfelt - CECs available - Email: Ann@brianshealinghearts.org <p>AFSP-CT https://afsp.org/chapter/connecticut</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walks are posted on website <p>Jordan Porco Foundation https://rememberingjordan.org/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - July 20 Scooper Sunday at Yard Goats <p><u>Committees</u></p> <p>Intervention-Postvention Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviewing best practices for postvention response - Anyone is welcome to attend the meetings <p>Attempt Survivor/Lived Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seven "Why We Didn't Tell You" presentations throughout the East Coast - Will be presenting at IOL in September and at the National Guard Officer Annual Training 	

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	<p><u>Regional Suicide Advisory Boards (RSABs)</u></p> <p>North Central: Amplify</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trained over 90 community members in QPR - Gizmo read-alongs at Barnes and Noble - Collaborating with CT State: Manchester - Completed regional priority needs report - Postvention training on July 30 at Amplify, 9:00am-4:00pm - Hosting Yard Goats game on September 6 <p>Western: Western CT Coalition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 235 students trained in SOS (Signs of Suicide) - Engaged with unique partners in May - Mental Health Meet and Greet for everyone who works in the same building as the coalition - QPR trainings for parks and rec - RSAB meeting: conversation about adult men's mental health and reviewing May events - Two staff became CALM trainers - Planning for September events 	

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V. Updates from Awareness Campaign/Website/Outreach Efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In June, over 11,000 visits to website - Wrapped up athletic campaign in five high schools and SCSU - July and August: 2x5 retractable banners being displayed at 35 fraternal and military organizations such as American Legions, VFWs, Knights of Columbus 																																														
VI. Close of Coalition Meeting	<p>Mike Makowski moved to approve the June 12, 2025, minutes. Nicole Bengtson seconded. Minutes approved. Coalition meeting ended at 10:46am</p>																																														
VII. Board Meeting	<p>Board meeting began at 10:48am 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 (SPRC)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kate</td> <td>Bohannan</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>Bill</td> <td>Brassard</td> <td>National Shooting Sports Foundation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ann Irr</td> <td>Dagle</td> <td>The Brian Dagle Foundation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Amy</td> <td>Evison</td> <td>Community Health Resources</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cathy</td> <td>Ludlum</td> <td>Second Thoughts Connecticut</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Steve</td> <td>MacHattie</td> <td>Charter Oak Family Center</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Abby</td> <td>Maldonado</td> <td>Western CT Coalition</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lesley</td> <td>Mara</td> <td>CT State Colleges and Universities (CSCU)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Allyson</td> <td>Nadeau</td> <td>Amplify, Inc.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Steven</td> <td>Rogers</td> <td>CT Children's</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sara</td> <td>Wakai</td> <td>UConn Health</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Loribeth</td> <td>Young</td> <td>CT Dept. of Social Services (DSS)</td> </tr> </table> <p>Coalition members in attendance (non-voting): Edith Atwerebour (DPH), Alice Demeo (DCF), Alyeska Tilly (United Way of CT)</p>	Scott	Barton	Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)	Kate	Bohannan	CT State Dept. of Education	Kevin	Borrupt	CT Children's	Dana	Bossio	Cooperative Educational Services (CES)	Bill	Brassard	National Shooting Sports Foundation	Ann Irr	Dagle	The Brian Dagle Foundation	Amy	Evison	Community Health Resources	Cathy	Ludlum	Second Thoughts Connecticut	Steve	MacHattie	Charter Oak Family Center	Abby	Maldonado	Western CT Coalition	Lesley	Mara	CT State Colleges and Universities (CSCU)	Allyson	Nadeau	Amplify, Inc.	Steven	Rogers	CT Children's	Sara	Wakai	UConn Health	Loribeth	Young	CT Dept. of Social Services (DSS)	
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	Jeanette Baker from United Way reported that a vendor has been chosen for the update and revitalization of the website.	
	<p>Allyson Nadeau brought forth a discussion about what can board members do with the guardrails set in place to advocate for the suicide prevention work that is done</p> <p>Kate Bohannon reported on the current pause put in place by the Federal government for certain funding</p> <p>Kate Bohannon, Alice DeMeo, and Jeanette Baker met about potentially providing mental health resource kits to schools</p> <p>Board meeting adjourned at 11:00am.</p>	
<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"> - 8/14: Dr. Christopher Barsotti, MD, FACEP, FAAEM, Co-Founder and Program Director of American Foundation for Firearm Injury Reduction in Medicine AFFIRM at the Aspen Institute, <i>Building community support for safe firearm storage</i> - 9/11: State Plan 2030 release - 10/9: Nate Checketts, CEO & Co-Founder of Rhone Apparel Inc., <i>How a sportswear company is changing the narrative about "Mental Fitness" in the athletic world</i> - 11/13: TBD - 12/11: TBD <p>Subcommittee meetings are listed in the monthly meeting announcement sent on the CTSAB listserv.</p>	