Suicide Prevention: A Multi-Campus Approach

Oregon College & University Suicide Prevention Project
Google: OCUSPP
Outline

- Exercise & Film Clip
- Strategy & Approach
- Research – What works?
- Lessons Learned & Cultural Shifts
- Q & A
The Bridge

- Film Clip
Two Questions

- Does she have the right to commit suicide?
- Does he have the right to stop her?
Why Suicide Prevention?

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for college students.²

CDC- National Center For Health Statistics, 2005
Where to Begin?

“Safeguarding Your Students Against Suicide”
Awareness

Education

Triage & Screening

Professional Training

Policies Procedures & Environments
Awareness – Student Survey

440 students surveyed at UO in spring 2005

- 57% - Suicide is slightly or not at all a problem
- 22% were “somewhat” to “very aware” of campus resources
Awareness Goals

- Suicide public health problem often preventable
- Resources on campus that can help with depression, substance abuse and suicidal thoughts
he actually went through with it
i can't believe it happened
he actually went through with it
this is about suicide

i can't believe it happened
no one confronts suicide

Over 6,000 university students seriously considered suicide during the last year in Oregon.
If a friend mentions wanting to kill themselves, take action immediately. Help your friend get help.
Ask...

have you been feeling suicidal?
asking the question will not put the
idea in someone’s head.

Listen...

with care, support, and no judgement
expressing your genuine concern already
makes a difference.

Refer...

professionals are here on campus
to help your friend and to consult with
you, don’t try to do everything yourself.
Education

- Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training for Faculty, Staff & RAs
- Seminars for first-year and other at-risk student groups
Health Center Triage-Screening

- NYC Dept of Health Online Article – “Detecting and Treating Depression in Adults”

- Suggested two question screen:
  Over past 2 weeks have you been bothered by:
  1) little interest or pleasure in doing things
  2) feeling down, depressed or hopeless
Basic Suicide Triage in Health Setting

- First find out if depressed or otherwise at risk
- If at risk, ask about suicide
- If suicidal, ask about intent, plans, means, and history
Policies, Procedures & Campus Environment
Mandated Suicide Assessment
Means Restriction: Why? → How?

THE COAL GAS STORY

(Kreitman, 1976)

Sex-specific suicide rates by mode of death: England & Wales

- Males
  - Total
  - Non CO
  - CO

- Females
  - Total
  - Non CO
  - CO
Research
Students: “Market Penetration”

Source: 1st Year Student Survey
Students: Knowledge & attitudes

Effective Help is Available On Campus
"Agree or strongly agree"

- Brochure: 61.5%
- Poster: 53.4%
- Seminar: 65.4%

N = 443

Source: 1st Year Student Survey
Students: Improving Skills

If a friend shared with me that they had thought of suicide I would know what to do.
"Agree or Strongly Agree"

Source: 1st Year Student Survey
Multi-campus Coalition – Lessons Learned

- Foster Relationships
- One Size Does Not Fit All
- Don’t Wait for Slow Pokes
Benefits of Statewide Coalitions

- Great economy of scale
- Export and share the wheel rather than reinvent it
- Efficient way to disseminate “best practices”
- Wonderful and rich opportunity to learn from each others’ efforts and to see a bigger picture
Cultural Shifts and 100th Monkey Effect
Active Minds
Questions?
Resources

- “Safeguarding Your Students Against Suicide” (Adapts the national strategy to campuses – available online)
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)
  - Mark Evans, Ph.D.  mevans@uoregon.edu
  - Ross Artwohl, LCSW  Ross.Artwohl@oregonstate.edu
Sources

1. CDC- National Center For Health Statistics, 2005

