

Cape & Islands
Suicide Prevention
Coalition

A circular logo with the words "awareness", "action", and "education" arranged in a circle, separated by dots.

Annual Report
June 30, 2011

2010/2011 Steering Committee

Beth Albert, Co-Chair

Barnstable County Human Services

Beverly Costa-Ciavola, Treasurer

Neighborhood Support Coalition

Scott Fitzmaurice, Secretary

Cape & Islands Gay Straight Youth

Jenny Garneau

Nantucket Community Organizer

Sally Ann Imes

Barnstable Youth Services

Kate McHugh

Barnstable Counseling Associates

Steve Jochim

Department of Mental Health

Steven Ryan

Dept. of Children and Families

Kathleen Shine O'Brien

Massachusetts Maritime

Tim Lineaweaver, Co-Chair

Quissett Counseling & Consulting

Gail Wilson

Mashpee Human Services

Maura Wilson

Samaritans of Cape Cod and the Islands

MISSION

The Mission of the Cape and Islands Suicide Prevention Coalition is to increase suicide awareness and prevention for people of all ages.

BACKGROUND

Although significant numbers of people attempt suicide, suicide is not a common event. Yet when they occur, suicide threats, attempts and deaths ripple across all layers of a community. With suicide rates higher than the state average, Cape Cod and the Islands have identified suicide prevention as a public health priority. A comprehensive community suicide prevention program includes recognizing risk and protective factors, restricting access to potentially lethal means, providing adequate screening and treatment for mental health and substance use and promoting social networks.

In January 2009 the region was awarded a capacity building grant from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to raise awareness about suicide through the formation of a suicide prevention coalition. Currently the coalition has 40 active members and a mailing list of over 300 individuals from Cape Cod, Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard and represents partnerships from many disciplines including state and local government, schools, social service and mental health providers, law enforcement and emergency medical service personnel, and suicide survivors.

COALITION ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2010/2011

Community Forums

The Coalition sponsored and/or supported five community forums across the region, including forums in Barnstable , Harwich, Falmouth, and Truro . The forums drew over 200 community members who were part of meaningful dialog about raising awareness on the issue of suicide.

Training

The Coalition endorses evidence based “gatekeeper” training models and supported several trainings in 2010/11. Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) training provides practical skills anyone can use to help someone who may be in crisis. The Coalition also co-sponsored a three day CONNECT Training conducted by the NAMI NH which added sixteen trainers to the pool of trainers for the Cape & Islands.

Public Education

The Coalition developed and printed over 20,000 suicide prevention brochures in English, Spanish,& Portuguese. *Real Men. Real Depression*, a public education campaign targeting men and depression received support from the Coalition and the Department of Public Health. At the request of first responders, the Coalition developed *Crisis Cards* with resources for police and EMS. The Coalition uses the media to raise awareness of suicide and Coalition members and events have been on featured on local television, in newspapers, and on radio.

Collaboration

The Cape and Islands Suicide Prevention Coalition collaborates with a wide range of state and local agencies, including the Department of Public Health, Department of Mental Health, Barnstable County, Nantucket Suicide Prevention Coalition, Youth Suicide Prevention Project, and the Massachusetts Suicide Prevention Coalition.

A complete list of members is on the last page.

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Harwich—Sheila House, Harwich Youth Counselor and Robin Titus, Harwich School Psychologist were trained in QPR and S.O.S. Signs of Suicide Prevention programs. During the 2010-2011 school year, we administered the school-based S.O.S. screen to Harwich and Chatham high school students grades 9-12. We had support from Harwich and Chatham administrators and guidance staff, as well as Jean Calvert from Department of Mental Health. [We] also trained a total of 147 teachers, parents, public safety employees and community center staff from both towns in QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) Suicide Prevention Training. *Submitted by Shelia House, Harwich Youth Counselor*

Falmouth—Falmouth Human Services collaborated with the Dept. of Mental Health in visiting local businesses and talking about suicide and the treatment of depression with the employees following the increase in suicides in Falmouth in the fall of 2010. By collaborating and splitting up the work, we were able to reach nearly 100 local businesses in a relatively short amount of time. We started a Falmouth men's depression support group along with Dr. Tony Dingman of DMH. Kathy Mohler-Faria of Falmouth Human Services started a women's depression support group in response to input from citizens at last October's depression forum at the Falmouth Public Library. *Submitted by Mark Abbot, Falmouth Human Services*

Barnstable County— In May 2011, Barnstable County Department of Human Services released a case study report authored by Christine Clements Stein, A Community Response: Addressing Suicide and Depression Among Men on Cape Cod. The report summarizes the rapid collaborative response to a troublesome increase in deaths by suicide in the Town of Falmouth in 2010, most of whom were men. Synthesizing the results of her interviews with Falmouth response participants, Christine documented the strategic alliance among representatives from town, county and state government; other local human services organizations; the Cape and Islands Suicide Prevention Coalition; and media. The report concludes by noting introduction to the region of the National Institute of Mental Health's public health awareness campaign, Real Men Real Depression, a joint initiative of the Cape and Islands Suicide Prevention Coalition and Barnstable County Department of Human Services. In conclusion, the case study report provides local stakeholders with a written history of the Falmouth response and offers a product that we can share with others beyond our region that may be grappling with similar circumstances. *Submitted by Christine Stein, Department of Human Services*

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Barnstable Public Schools —Implementing the SOS program at the high school could not have happened without the support from Steve Jochim and the DMH team. They are either on call or on site during our implementation. They offer tremendous support, guidance, and consultation when screening our students for depression and suicidal ideation. We have been implementing the SOS program at BHS for two years and will run it again this year. The counselors and other team members find it an extremely valuable program to continue. *Submitted by Gina Hurley, Director of Student Services*

Nantucket— The Nantucket Suicide Prevention Coalition (NSPC) is grateful for the support of the Cape and Island Suicide Prevention Coalition. The C&ISP brochures are a great vehicle to educate our community on suicide prevention and have been distributed on Nantucket. The addition of the brochures in Spanish and Portuguese are extremely helpful. In addition, the C&ISPC provided the Real Men Real Depression Campaign material to Nantucket and printed extra copies specifically for Nantucket. The monthly meetings are also very beneficial for networking. At one meeting the Nantucket representative met the Clinical Team Leader from the Veterans Administration—which had the positive outcome of arranging for a VA clinician come to Nantucket to serve the islands Veterans. NSPC organized a 40 hour week long training called Crisis Intervention Team Training. This best practice national program is designed to train Police Officers to recognize mental health issues in potential assailants. NSPC partnered with Family and Children’s Services, Nantucket Cottage Hospital and the Nantucket Police Department to offer Police Officers the training. This training was a major success with trainers and officers extolling the benefits. There will be two more sessions and will be expanded to include emergency department nurses. *Submitted by Jenny Garneau, Nantucket Community Organizer*

Mashpee— As the chair of the Elder Working Group our initial focus was surveying 100 individuals who had direct contact with elders. Our goal was to assess how they approached an elder who may be depressed or suicidal and what resources they were aware of if concerned about an elder. The results indicated that there is a lack of knowledge and appropriate resources for elders who need prompt and immediate mental health care. The elder working group is designing a brochure specifically for elders which would serve both as an educational tool and a resource guide. This is a first step towards removing stigma for elders to discuss this very important/life changing topic. Our focus is also educating Primary Care Doctors so concerns about mental status become a standard part of Doctor visits. Our longer term goal would be to sponsor a community forum where an elder who has gone through depression and suicidal thinking can discuss their journey and share valuable thoughts about their road to recovery. *Submitted by Gail Wilson, Mashpee Human Services*

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Barnstable County— In the month of May, which is Mental Health Awareness month, Barnstable County Department of Human Services and the Cape and Islands Suicide Prevention Coalition mailed or hand delivered over 10,000 brochures and over 500 posters of the “Real Men, Real Depression” campaign, along with 5000 Coalition brochures. Letters went to over 700 locations, including libraries, towns, faith organizations, police and fire departments, councils on aging, schools, post offices, gyms, veterans’ groups, health care providers, and mental health care providers. The letters which accompanied the brochures and posters carried the letterheads of both organizations and called attention to the need to raise awareness and concern about men’s depression and its untreated consequences. On Cape Cod, the majority of deaths by suicide are among men ages 35 to 64. The “Real Men, Real Depression” campaign, an effective national public health campaign created by the National Institute of Mental Health, was customized for Cape Cod with local crisis referral information. The distribution of all materials was coordinated by the county’s Community Organizer for lifespan suicide prevention, with assistance from the Administrative Assistant for the Department of Human Services. *Submitted by Candace Perry, Community Organizer Barnstable County*

For more information about the Coalition visit our website at

www.suicideispreventable.net

or contact the Coalition by email at

suicideprevention@capecoalition.com

MEMBERS

Barnstable County Human Services

Bayview Associates, South Shore Mental Health

Cape & Islands District Attorney's office

Cape and Islands Gay Straight Alliance

Cape Cod Child Development

Cape Cod Community College

Cape Cod Human Services/Cape Cod HealthCare

Cape Cod Neighborhood Support Coalition

Child & Family Services

Mass. Department of Children & Families

Community Health Center of Cape Cod

Dept. of Mental Health

Dept. of Veterans Affairs

Elder Services of Cape Cod & Islands

Family Continuity

Free Thinking Psychotherapy

Harwich Council on Aging

Mashpee Human Services

Mashpee Mental Health Center

Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe

Massachusetts Maritime Academy

Mid-Upper Cape Community Health Center

Mobile Crisis Unit - Dept. of Mental Health

HAC/Noah Shelter

Quissett Counseling & Consulting

Riverview School

The Gathering Place

The Samaritans on Cape Cod & Islands, Inc.

Town of Barnstable Youth Services

Town of Harwich, Youth & Family Counselor

Yarmouth Fire Department