

Suicide Prevention Community Summit: Summary Report

Overview

San Juan Basin Public Health (SJBPH) is grateful for your participation in the Suicide Community Prevention Summit, held at Miller Middle School on May 11th. The voice and ongoing involvement of community members is so important as we all work together to reduce suicides.

The summit included a Brief Suicide Intervention Training, breakout sessions, a resource fair, and feedback gallery. Goals for the summit included raising awareness about how to help someone contemplating suicide, as well as gaining feedback from attendees on local strengths, weaknesses, and unmet needs related to mental health and wellness.

Preventing suicides will require all of our community members and organizations working together to share strengths and address unmet needs. We at San Juan Basin Public Health (SJBPH) look forward to building the foundation for a coordinated effort that can grow over time and allow partner organizations to build the long-term capacity to continue this critical work in the future.

In creating a plan for collaboration of community partners, SJBPH has chosen the *10 Pillars of a Suicide Safer Community* as a guide. This framework was developed by LivingWorks and more information can be found at www.livingworks.net/community.

Action Plan: using summit feedback to inform our next steps

1. **Leadership/Steering Committee** – SJBPH will bring a diverse group of community leaders together to guide our collective efforts to prevent suicide. The group will include representatives from schools, healthcare providers, faith community, law enforcement, local human service organizations, and others. This committee will focus on how best to ensure all community resources are working together to create the greatest positive impact on the most people.
2. **Community Needs Assessment and Action Plan**- This leadership committee will be guided by community statistics and needs assessments. Community feedback gathered at the suicide prevention summit and in other settings will act as the basis for the priorities chosen and the Action Plan written.

3. **Mental Health and Wellness Promotion** - This is the area that community members emphasized the most, and will be a key focus area in the Action Plan. There are many existing wellness resources in our community that can be enhanced to make an even greater positive impact on local wellness needs. Examples include mindfulness trainings, support groups, and family-friendly gathering places.
4. **Suicide Prevention Awareness** - This was a second area of emphasis from respondents, also focusing on how to prevent suicidal thoughts from ever occurring. As with wellness promotion, our local communities have many existing initiatives in this area that can be expanded. Examples include stigma reduction and anti-bullying campaigns.
5. **Training** – Several local organizations have already invested in training staff who can teach other leaders and community members the skills to identify people at risk suicide and link them to support. It will be important to spread these trainings widely through schools, employers, churches, healthcare organizations and more. Additional trainings may be needed for other suicide prevention efforts and the identification of these needs and resources to implement the trainings are still in process.
6. **Suicide Intervention** - Once an individual is thinking about suicide it is essential for all of us to understand how to respond with safety as the primary goal. SJPBH will work closely with current suicide intervention services such as crisis providers and counselors to be sure they are ready to provide treatment for those in need.
7. **Clinical and Support Services** - The need to improve collaboration and communication across services was made clear and the Action Plan will provide a roadmap to improve the efficiency of coordination across programs. Understanding gaps in current services also helps inform our strategy to address unmet needs.
8. **Suicide Bereavement** - The Action Plan will help local communities build upon existing resources for supporting people bereaved and affected by suicide. It will be vital to ensure bereavement resources are readily accessible, and individuals and families are aware of grief counselors and survivor support groups.
9. **Evaluation and Dissemination** - To understand the impact of this work on reducing suicide in our local communities, the Action Plan will include a mechanism for evaluation. Our goal is to expand efforts that are making a positive difference and to change or stop those that do not. Throughout the process, information will be shared with community members and partners to maintain a long-term dialog on how we can all improve together.
10. **Capacity Building and Sustainability** - Finally, SJBPH aims to share this work with a wide array of partners so that our communities' capacity to prevent suicide is built into a long-lasting strength. The Action Plan will be successful when multiple partners commit to sustaining their unique contributions for years to come. This network will focus our strengths on developing the community resiliency needed to save lives.

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How
are
you?

What happens next?

Preventing suicide is a challenge that will require combining the many existing community resources as well as developing some new ones. Over the next few months, San Juan Basin Public Health will bring partners together to develop a long-term strategy through the Action Plan. While the Action Plan is under development, SJBPH is ready to continue the conversation started at the Suicide Prevention Community Summit through a mental health stigma reduction campaign. Please look for the campaign to begin in the next few months and for information on many additional efforts to follow.

Thank you for being a part of building resiliency in our local communities and neighborhoods as we join our strengths in the movement to prevent suicide.

For more information, please visit sjbpublichealth.org.

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