Responding after suicide in a rural county

Feb. 13, 2013
Small county webinar
Welcome!

• Please **mute** your line
• If you have a **question**, please type it into the “Questions” box or “raise your hand” by clicking the hand logo on your control panel

We will address questions throughout the webinar, which is being recorded.
Webinar Overview

• Who’s here?
• Essential elements of suicide crisis response
• What’s different in rural communities?
• Resources
• Discussion
Who’s here?

- Amador
- Calaveras
- Colusa
- Lake
- Marin
- Nevada

- Shasta
- Sierra
- Tuolomne
- Superior Region
What do I do *first*???

- There is no single script to follow
- MH is probably not the first agency to respond
- What to do may depend on who died, who is affected, what is known about the event
- The resources provide frameworks to help you plan ahead
Essential elements of suicide crisis response

- Rapid, Coordinated and Prepared actions to help you:
  - Control contagion
  - Manage rumors
  - Support “survivors” and practice self-care
  - Plan ahead for triggering events
Essential elements of suicide crisis response

• *Rapid*
Essential elements of suicide crisis response

- Rapid
- *Coordinated*
Bringing the community together
POLL
Essential elements of suicide crisis response

• Rapid
• Coordinated
• *Prepared*
Existing crisis response plans

• College or university
• County agencies
• Schools
• Nursing homes and senior living facilities
• Etcetera

• Is suicide an event that triggers the plan or parts of the plan?
Essential elements of suicide crisis response

- Rapid
- Coordinated
- Prepared
- Control possible contagion
Essential elements of suicide crisis response

• Rapid
• Coordinated
• Prepared
• Control possible contagion
• Manage rumors
Essential elements of suicide crisis response

- Rapid
- Coordinated
- Prepared
- Control contagion
- Manage rumors
- Support “survivors” and practice self-care
Support...

- Smaller groups, rather than large assemblies, are better for processing grief publicly
- Provide stress management
- Conduct debriefings for staff and responders
- Take the time needed for recovery
- Make room for grief but don’t forget the positive
Essential elements of suicide crisis response

- Rapid
- Coordinated
- Prepared
- Control contagion
- Manage rumors
- Support “survivors”
- Plan ahead for triggering events
Essential elements of suicide crisis response

• Rapid
• Coordinated
• Prepared
• Control contagion
• Manage rumors
• Support “survivors”
• Plan ahead for triggering events
• Anything else?
Treating suicide “the same”

• The “After a Suicide” school toolkit recommends that staff handle all student deaths the same way, regardless of cause.
Treating suicide differently

• Be mindful for potential of contagion
• Silence can contribute to stigma
• Person who died may have been your client
What’s different about rural?

• Anonymity may be impossible
• Stronger social bonds may mean more people are personally affected
• Might be easier to get stakeholders together
• With limited resources, be careful about diverting all your energies into *response*
Resources

• Bringing in outside help (LOSS program, CERT, etc.)
• Free resources from SAMHSA, SPRC and other sources
• We’ll email you a list after the webinar
Handling Memorial Services and Public Observances

After a Suicide

Recommendations for Religious Services & Other Public Memorial Observances

Know the Signs >> Find the Words >> Reach Out
Reaching seniors
Guide for funeral directors

Supporting survivors of suicide loss

Help at hand
Challenges of First Responders to Suicide in Indian Country:

BIA-Office of Justice Services
Division of Professional Standards

8/12/2011

Know the Signs >> Find the Words >> Reach Out
All-inclusive School Toolkit

After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools

Know the Signs >> Find the Words >> Reach Out
Website for crisis preparation and response

Crisis Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Resource Center

Coping with Crisis Situations
Resources for educators, health providers, and the community.

Immediate Crisis Counseling
Call 1-800-985-5990 or text “TalkWithUs” to 66746
The recent event at Sandy Hook Elementary School continues to evoke strong emotions across the country. This toll-free hotline is available 7-days a week, 24-hours a day to anyone who needs help dealing with the many issues that may arise from this tragedy.

Resources for Coping with School Shootings

Know the Signs >> Find the Words >> Reach Out
Discussion

• What resources do you use and recommend?

• What have you done in the past in responding to suicidal events?

• Does anyone have a plan for responding to nonfatal suicidal events?

• Your questions?
Thank you!

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Webinar will be archived on www.yourvoicecounts.org