

# Suicide Prevention on College Campuses

### Suicide Prevention Grantee Orientation Meeting December 14, 2005

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### Crisis on Campus

- Mental health issues are increasing
  - 45% of students self-report depression depression is believed to be one of the strongest predictors of not graduating from college
  - Depression doubled, suicidal ideation tripled, sexual assault quadrupled over 13 years
  - 91% of counseling center directors believe that students with significant psychological problems are a growing concern on campus
- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among collegeage students
  - More teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from all medical illnesses combined
  - The majority of college suicides are students who were not seen by the counseling service
  - Only 13% of students report receiving suicide prevention information from their college

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### **Barriers To Progress**

- Senior management lack of awareness
- Inflexible infrastructure
- No one in charge of wellness
- Poor use of potentially available psychiatric resources
- Departmental "silo effect"
- Legal blur
- Lack of urgency in dealing with highest risk students
- Insurance policy weakness



What Changes Need to Happen on Campus to Save Lives?



### Requires Cultural Change

- Senior administrative awareness and support is critical for cultural change
  - Willingness to reallocate resources to reduce stigma of help-seeking behavior and increase access to services
  - Address the legal barriers that stop many colleges from establishing proactive programming
  - Obtain and maintain appropriate training regarding confidentiality exceptions
  - Clarify and/or institute policies regarding parental notification



### Requires Multiple Strategies

- Multi-pronged, preventive approach is needed to reduce depression and campus suicides as well as enhance the overall mental health well being of the student body
- Suggest combination of a high-risk approach and population-based, prevention programs



## Building an Effective Safety Net

- Designate leadership to direct the program building efforts
  - Create a new, senior-level administrative position that is in charge of overall student health and well-being (e.g., university health commissioner) to lead this process
  - Organize a mental health task force or committee consisting of representatives of students and departments across campus to examine mental health issues and services
  - Encourage the creation and involvement of a student mental health advocacy group in this process



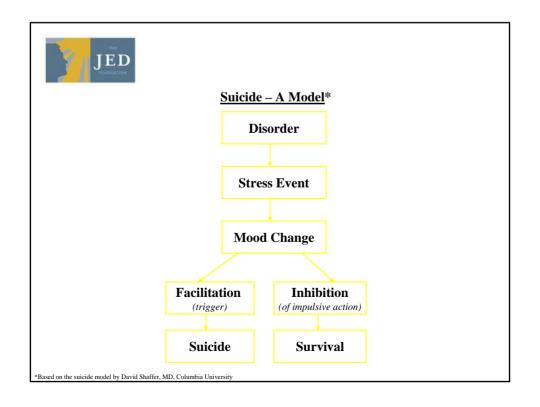
## Building an Effective Safety Net (cont'd)

- Market research assess your current situation and identify areas for improvement
  - Survey your students to understand the landscape of mental health issues on your campus
  - Survey your students to understand their perception of mental health services on campus; repeat yearly to observe trends and determine progress
  - Survey your peer institutions to learn best practices, compare capabilities
- Allocate resources
- Ensure coordination and communication across various departments and organizations on campus

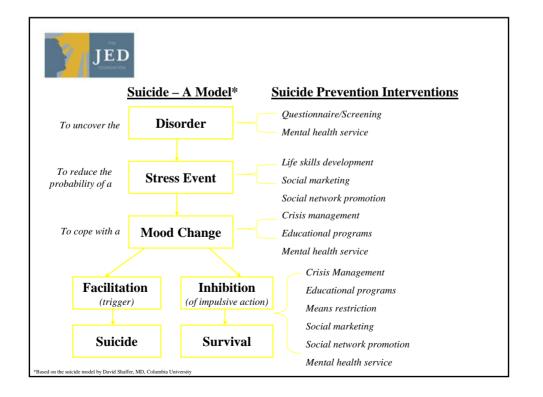


## Example Market Research Questions

- What do students think about the offerings of the counseling service on their campus?
- How does the offerings of the college counseling center compare to those of peer institutions (e.g., number of FTE, range of services offered, etc.)
- What are the range of emotional disorders present on a particular college campus?
- What is the mental health profile of the first-year class?
- Who are the students at-risk for suicide?



### **Prescription for Prevention** Ouestionnaire/Screening to: Mental Health Service (MHS) to: Identify high-risk and potentially high-Train MHS providers to identify and treat Means Restriction to: depression, threats of suicide, and other · Limit access to potentially lethal · Provide landscape of mental health on emotional disorders campus Refer cases as appropriate • Lead: Buildings & Grounds, Public Proactively work (programs, treatment) Institute procedures (e.g., intake form) Safety, Residential Life, Chemistry with identified students Enhance accessibility of MHS Dept., Athletic Dept., Alcohol & · Lead: Admission Office or Freshman · Engage in prevention & outreach activities Substance Abuse Office Dean with MHS and the Health Service · Lead: Suicide prevention experts Target: MHS, community resources, local · Target: Entire campus community · Target: Students Crisis Management to: Life Skills Development (Protective · Establish policies and implement Promote Mental Health Awareness Factors) to: programs (including medical leave and & Well-Being & Prevent Suicide · Improve students' management of re-entry) that respond to suicide attempts · Coordinate and communicate across campus the rigors of college life and high-risk behavior departments & organizations · Equip students with tools to Respond with comprehensive · Develop and/or revise institutional policies and recognize and manage triggers and postvention program operating procedures Create interface between disciplinary Institute campus-wide risk surveillance system, · Lead: VP of Student Affairs, Deans process and counseling/MHS tracking all fatal & non-fatal self-injuries and of Students, MHS, Faculty & Staff, Lead: VP Student Affairs, MHS. safety- and health-related indicators (e.g., violent Advisors, Residential Life Disciplinary Committee behavior, criminal activities, & substance abuse) Target: Students Target: Students; gatekeepers (with Leadership: President's Office implementation responsibility) Social Network Promotion to: Educational Programs to: Social Marketing to: Train gatekeepers and students to: (1) · Reduce student isolation and · Stimulate campus-wide cultural change that identify signs of individuals in distress; (2) promote feeling of belonging de-stigmatizes mental health, removes take the steps that get them help · Encourage the development of barriers, and encourages help-seeking smaller groups within the larger · Train personnel on confidentiality, behavior notification, and legal issues campus community · Target both high-risk students and general Lead: Provost, VP Student Affairs · Lead: Deans of Students, Faculty & campus community Lead: VP Student Affairs, Deans of · Target: Students and gatekeepers (Deans of Staff, Residential Life, Student Gov't, Student & Greek Orgs., Chaplainry • Target: Students Students, Faculty & Staff, Advisors, Students, MHS, Marketing Department, Residential Life, Student Gov't, Student & Campus Media Greek Orgs., Athletic Dept., Dining · Target: Entire campus community Services, Public Safety, Chaplainry) © Jed Foundation/EDC





### **JED** Essential Program Elements

- On-site client-centered counseling and psychiatric services
- Means restriction
- Mental health surveys (pre- and post-enrollment)
- Social network promotion
- Social marketing
- · Educational programs and materials
- Stress-reduction programs
- Life skills development
- Non-clinical student support network
- Medical leave policies and re-entry after medical leave
- Postvention programs



### **13e**d Foundation Initiatives

- Ulifeline (www.ulifeline.org)
- Framework for Developing Institutional Protocols for the Acutely-Distressed or Suicidal College Student
- University Pilot Program to Promote Mental Health and Prevent Suicide
- Social Marketing Campaign with mtvU
- CampusCare
- Study Abroad Brochure
- Understanding Depressive and Bipolar Disorders (www.UDBD.org)
- APA Collaboration with The Jed Foundation on Transition from High School to College
- Adapting AAS/SPRC Core Competencies Training Course for the college mental health professional audience
- · Depression Screening Initiative with New York City



### Ulifeline (www.ulifeline.org)

- Available at more than 580 colleges
- Free, Internet-based resource that provides information to students about mental health and the signs and symptoms of emotional problems
- Customized site for each school with direct link to college counseling center
- Includes the Self E-Valuator, a screening tool developed by Duke University exclusively available on Ulifeline



### JED Ulifeline (www.ulifeline.org)

- New ULifeline launching in early 2006
  - Goes beyond students includes a new section for counselors and administrators
    - Data (Self E-Valuator, Web traffic)
      - -8,413 Self E-Valuator screening initiated over past 9 months, of which 73% were completed
    - Resource library
    - Survey tool
    - Fact Sheets
    - National Directory
  - Improved student features (student polls, personal stories)



### **UDBD.org**

- Understanding Depressive and Bipolar Disorders (UDBD.org)
  - Free website designed to help college counseling and other healthcare professionals learn to better distinguish between depressive disorders (unipolar depression) and bipolar disorders in the college population
  - Provides information about these mood disorders and the key questions to ask when evaluating students
  - Includes useful tools, such as tips for differentiating among types of depression and case studies



### CampusCare

- Joint initiative of The Jed Foundation and SPRC
- Provide collaborative, consulting services to colleges on an individual basis regarding mental health promotion and suicide prevention
- Currently developing the protocols for this unique service offering, including strategic planning and implementation technical assistance



- No consensus about what constitutes a comprehensive, campus-wide approach to managing an acutely-distressed or suicidal student
- Expert roundtable convened in November; co-sponsored by ACHA, ACPA, AUCCCD, and NASPA
- Document will address the following topics: 1) Developing a safety protocol for the student at risk for suicide; 2)
   Developing an emergency contact notification protocol; 3)
   Developing a medical leave of absence and re-entry protocol; and
  - 4) Disseminating and providing education around protocols
- Every college will be able to develop protocols specific to its culture and resources based on the final framework



### Linical Core Competencies

- Adapted Clinical Skills Core Competencies
   Curriculum for Mental Health Professionals
   Working with Individuals at Risk for Suicide, a
   new course developed by AAS and SPRC, for
   college mental health professionals
- More than 100 college counseling center directors participated in October 2005 course pilot
- Planning additional course presentations beginning in Spring 2006



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