

Postventions: Protocols for Responding to Campus Suicides

Susan Bell, PhD
Counseling and Psychological Services
University of California, Berkeley

Presentation Outline

- Process of setting up postventions
- Developing Protocols
- Postvention models– CISD model, new approaches
- Challenges for staff– training, stress, secondary trauma

Process of Setting Up Postventions:

- Find out more about individual
- How did the individual complete suicide?
Who is affected?
- How long ago did it happen?
- What has been communicated? How
much can be shared?
- How are people coping?

Process of Setting Up Postventions

- Consult about what might be helpful
- Encourage smaller group postventions
- Talk to campus staff about how they will
let people know about the postvention,
best time/place

Developing Protocols

- Goals: to make sure that response to students, faculty, and staff is:
 - Organized
 - Timely
 - Appropriate
 - Sustainable (tied to positions rather than specific individuals)
 - Free of bias
- Protocols should:
 - Set up Communication channels
 - Establish clear procedures
 - Delegation of responsibilities
- Examples of Protocols
 - University-wide
 - Counseling and Psychological Services

UC Berkeley Protocols

- UC-wide protocol for Deaths
<http://death-response.chance.berkeley.edu/>***
 - **Student Deaths:** Typically, campus or community police notifies **Student Affairs** or **Chancellors Office**, and **University Housing** (if relevant)
 - These three offices are responsible for informing each other and for verifying death and registration status of student.
 - Dean of Students makes initial contact with parents to offer information and support.
 - CPS will be notified (by police or other University Office) to initiate response for students and faculty/staff who worked with student.
 - **Faculty Deaths:** Chancellor's Office and faculty member's department are notified.
 - Coordinator is assigned ([see campus death protocol](#))
 - CARE is notified ([see campus death protocol](#))
 - CPS may provide support for CARE services, to both augment capacity of CARE and/or to work with students who are affected by the faculty death.

Counseling and Psychological Services Protocol

- Identifying a lead (outreach manager, or other)
- Communication with others in health service and in CPS
- Contact with affected individuals
- Determining Appropriate intervention
(most personal/intrusive for those closest and most traumatized)

CPS Structures that Support Postvention

- Evening/Weekend outreach back-up schedule
- Crisis kits (handouts, phone numbers)
- Advice Counselor (counselor available for drop-in or urgent consultation)
- Campus Liaisons
- Partnerships with:
 - CARE services (for faculty/staff)
 - Dean of Students (Office of Student Affairs)
 - Residential Living
 - Campus Police

Postvention Models

- CISD (Mitchell & Everly, 1996)
 - evidence based
 - Well-articulated group interventions with stages
 - Newer research that does not support effectiveness
 - Evidence that can be retraumatizing
 - difficult to implement on college campuses (often difficult to do multiple interventions, lack of control over size and participation in group interventions)
- Psychological First Aid
 - Newer model
 - Less research
 - Less retraumatizing, less pathologizing
 - No manuals for group intervention

Challenges for Staff

- Training
- Stress
- Secondary Trauma

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Contact Info:

Susan Bell
Counseling and Psychological Services
University of California, Berkeley
suebell@uhs.berkeley.edu