

Seasons Greetings and Happy Holidays to ALL!

The Alamo Area Teen Suicide Prevention Coalition (AATSPC) has been very productive over the year! We are grateful for the passion and expertise so many have brought to our initial prevention efforts since the beginning of 2015. The January Roundtable event brought together diverse stakeholders who have a wealth of expertise to launch our local teen suicide prevention efforts. Subsequent strategic planning facilitated amazing progress to include the securing of funding and creating a presence in the community.

Strategic Planning produced the following focus areas and tasks to be completed by task groups:

- Fund, Formalize and Staff the Coalition
- Create a Leadership Structure
- Explore and Utilize Best Practices related to Teen Suicide Awareness and Prevention
- Community Response Network – Create & maintain a “Crisis & Suicide Prevention Resource” list
- School Re-Entry: Create brochure for parents to understand the importance the school as an important part of their child's medical home as they return to school after crisis hospitalization
- Increase Awareness and Training in schools, churches and the community
- Engage the Community with the creation of a Teen Advisory Board

Our Progress:

We are grateful for the leadership and leverage provided by the Kronkosky Foundation with the AATSPC Executive Committee to successfully fund the project. The Kronkosky Foundation, along with the Goldsbury, Greehey, Mays and Najim foundations have provided 18 months of funding to cover the costs of a half time coordinator and operations. An Interim Coordinator was brought on board in September.

Coalition Leadership:

Executive staff from the Children's Bereavement Center, Clarity Child Guidance Center and Voices for Children of San Antonio, Bexar County Juvenile Probation, National Alliance on Mental Illness SA and Porter Loring Mortuary provides leadership and collaborates with the larger steering committee. The Steering Committee includes representatives from mental health and social services providers, local governmental agencies, school districts including military schools, advocate organizations and others.

Community Response Network and School Re-entry:

A Crisis Services and Prevention Resource List has been completed and has been provided to school counselors through ESC Region 20. A parent brochure offering recommendation to facilitate a smooth transition back to school has been drafted and will be finalized for 2016.

Teen Advisory Board Structure and Formation:

Recruitment for the Teen Advisory Board is underway and a few applications have been submitted for membership consideration. Recruitment will continue over the next few weeks.

The Teen Advisory Board (TAB) will provide a unique perspective on teen suicide prevention and other teen emotional health issues for the Coalition. Activities could include: community, church and school awareness events, social media participation, presentations, developing materials, having input to the website, videos etc. The application process and all documents necessary to the process were vetted by the task group and the Coalition membership. TAB membership will be finalized and receive training after the New Year.

Increasing Community Awareness:

The Coalition Interim Coordinator and members are actively representing the Alamo Area Teen Suicide Prevention Coalition in a variety of activities, meetings and partnerships across the community. Schools are moving forward to

comply with the new legislative mandate for suicide awareness training (SB 2186). The most notable local awareness building activities follow:

- Participation in World Mental Health Awareness Day
- Presentation to the Directors of Counseling at ESC Region 20
- Collaboration with the new chapter for American Foundation for Suicide Prevention – Southern Texas Chapter
- Participation in the Out of Darkness Walk and National Survivors of Loss Day
- Participation at Community Conversations (about Children’s Mental Health) through the Bexar County Health Collaborative’s Youth Mental Health Council
- Collaboration with Tarrant County Teen Suicide Prevention Coalition and the Jordan Foundation
- Participation in the San Antonio Christian Leadership Group

We are excited about the activities planned for 2016. We will formally launch the AATSPC website with input from the Teen Advisory Board. You will receive a save the date for the 2016 Roundtable soon!