

# STATE OF COLORADO

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Colorado Department  
of Public Health  
and Environment

## **Suicide Prevention in Colorado Programs and Activities**

Submitted to the Colorado Joint Budget Committee,  
the Health, Environment, Welfare, and Institutions Committee of the House of Representatives,  
and the Health, Environment, Welfare and Institutions Committee of the Senate  
by the Prevention Services Division

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

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## Document Information

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Office of Suicide Prevention Annual Legislative Report

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## **Executive Summary**

In 2002, Colorado ranked seventh in the nation for suicide death rates, with a suicide rate that is nearly 40 percent higher than the national rate. Suicide is the state's eighth leading cause of death, as well as the second leading cause of death in every age group from 10 to 34. Last year, over 700 Coloradans died by suicide. More than four times that number are medically hospitalized every year due to suicide attempts. As many as 9,600 Coloradans are estimated to be seriously considering death by suicide in any year. The total of direct and indirect costs to the state due to suicide deaths and attempts is estimated to be more than \$552 million annually.

During the 2000 session of the Colorado Legislature, House Bill 00-1432 was passed establishing the Office of Suicide Prevention as the coordinator for suicide prevention programs throughout the state. The charge of the office is to address suicide and suicidal behavior among Coloradans of all ages in order to reduce the suicide rate in Colorado.

Pursuant to 25-1-107, C.R.S., the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment is required to report annually on or before November 1 on the status of the department's efforts to coordinate statewide suicide prevention services. The goal of this report is to consolidate in-depth knowledge about current activities at the state and local level, private and public partnerships and statewide programs that address the problem of suicide in the state.

## **Strategies Successfully Completed**

In fiscal year 2003-2004, the Office of Suicide Prevention noted success in coordinating suicide prevention efforts across the state. Progress and accomplishments of the Office of Suicide Prevention's suicide prevention and intervention plan include:

- sponsored trainings for trainers in three nationally acclaimed suicide prevention gatekeeper training models;
- provided grants to 14 local communities for suicide prevention and education services;
- collaborated with private partners at The Colorado Trust for effective implementation of its Preventing Suicide in Colorado Initiative. This \$2.5 million initiative results in 10 Colorado communities receiving additional funds over three years for suicide prevention;
- directed a public awareness campaign that includes statewide distribution of 35 types of informational material, and presentations to state and national audiences;
- developed and distributed public service announcements for radio and television with a broad reach of households;
- provided outreach and suicide prevention information to more than 17,707 Coloradans throughout the state;
- built capacity and mobilized statewide infrastructure through training to statewide regional representatives. An additional 28 became suicide prevention trainers in the training network. A total of 47 trainers are available to provide community-based suicide intervention/prevention skills training;
- coordinated 47 trainers across the state providing suicide intervention skills at the community level, with more than 3,351 Coloradans trained this year;
- leveraged key partnerships through participation on the Colorado Violent Death Reporting System Advisory Board and the Violence Prevention Advisory Committee;
- gained national recognition with professional presentations at the American Association of Suicidology national conference and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officers conference;
- ensured the operation of a statewide, toll-free suicide crisis number which has responded to over 7,000 suicide crisis calls in Colorado since the office's inception

- built a state safety-net by disseminating “community toolkits” for suicide prevention.

### **Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment’s Role as Lead Entity**

Following the completion of the report of the Governor’s Suicide Advisory Commission, Governor Bill Owens took immediate action. The Governor directed the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Colorado Department of Human Services to submit a plan for implementing the recommendations from the advisory commission. The plan included the endorsement of the Department of Public Health and Environment to serve as the lead entity for coordination of the state’s suicide prevention efforts, as suicide is a public health issue. This plan resulted in the passing of House Bill 00-1432 establishing the Office of Suicide Prevention.

The department works closely with the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado in an effort to strengthen public and private partnerships. Representatives from the department serve on the board of directors for the coalition.

### **General Fund:**

**\$272,892**

The Office of Suicide Prevention received \$272,892 through state appropriation in the 2003-2004 fiscal year. This funding was used for grants to local communities, public awareness activities, operating expenses, personnel costs, training, supporting the hotline, building the capacity of the state coalition, and creating and distributing public service announcements.

### **Federal Grants:**

**\$35,500**

The Health Resource Services Administration (HRSA) provided a \$10,500 grant to support training for trainers updating the network of trainers the state has in the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training curriculum.

The Office of Suicide Prevention received \$25,000 from the Preventive Health and Human Services Block Grant (PHHS) to continue the Partners for Teen Suicide Prevention (PTSP) project, which supports ongoing youth specific suicide prevention activities in communities across Colorado. The PTSP received funding from the Substance Abuse/Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in 2000 for the planning and development of a youth specific suicide prevention strategic plan. The SAMHSA grant ended in August 2003 following a no cost extension period of one year. This grant project set a foundation for ongoing comprehensive youth suicide prevention activities. Three pilot communities were originally selected under the SAMHSA grant project to create a model for implementation of youth suicide prevention efforts. In these sites, each component of a community-based youth suicide prevention plan was evaluated for both process and implementation success. Additional support and technical assistance maximized the possibility that these communities were able to solidify community ownership of, not only suicide-related issues, but also the need to creatively work together to address prevention of related issues.

Following the conclusion of the SAMHSA grant, the infrastructure for these communities was in place to continue suicide prevention efforts, thus the PHHS Block Grant was used to support on-going youth suicide prevention efforts in two of the previously funded pilot communities, as well as supported the planning and development of youth suicide prevention efforts in two new communities. Two of the original SAMHSA pilot communities received multi-year funding through a suicide prevention initiative sponsored by The Colorado Trust.

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## **Introduction**

Pursuant to section 25-1-107, C.R.S., the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment submits this report describing the effectiveness of the department as the coordinator for suicide prevention efforts statewide and summarizing all suicide prevention programs in the state.

The charge of the Office of Suicide Prevention is to address suicide and suicidal behavior among Coloradans of all ages in order to reduce the suicide rate in Colorado. The goal of this report is to consolidate in-depth knowledge about current suicide prevention activities at the state and local level, private and public partnerships and statewide programs that address intervention and prevention to reduce suicidal behavior. It is required that this report be sent to the members of the Health, Environment, Welfare and Institutions Committee of the Colorado House of Representatives, the Health, Environment, Welfare and Institutions Committee of the Colorado Senate and to the members of the Joint Budget Committee by November 1, 2004.

Serving as the lead agency coordinating suicide prevention programs, the Office of Suicide Prevention's strategic work plan, guided by the state Suicide Prevention and Intervention Plan, includes the following program areas:

- technical support and capacity building;
- statewide needs and resource assessment;
- training;
- public awareness and education campaign;
- grant making to local suicide prevention efforts; and
- management of a cash fund of gifts, grants and donations.

The Office of Suicide Prevention has coordinated statewide suicide prevention activities and programs. Coordination of these services has been achieved by:

- 1) limiting duplication of suicide prevention efforts by serving as an information clearinghouse and by creating a service for referring successful local suicide prevention programs to other communities in Colorado for consultation and implementation;
- 2) canvassing the state to become familiar with specific programs and to provide information and training in coalition building and program development to communities with no existing program;
- 3) examining and reporting on the unique needs of Colorado's diverse population and, through its role as coordinator of suicide prevention efforts, working to meet local needs effectively;
- 4) creating and maintaining a network of trainers in suicide intervention/prevention skills who collaborate with one another to provide effective prevention training programs throughout the state;
- 5) organizing and co-hosting the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Colorado Suicide Prevention Summit, providing networking opportunities to attendees;
- 6) establishing a strong partnership with the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado, a statewide organization with representation from public/private entities, to increase suicide prevention activities;
- 7) ensuring that the 1-800-SUICIDE crisis hotline number is operational 24 hours per day, seven days per week;
- 8) responding to communities in the aftermath of a suicide, providing resources and referrals;
- 9) developing suicide prevention expertise within the Office of Suicide Prevention.
- 10) co-hosting the second annual public suicide prevention fundraiser with the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado

## **Part 1: Private and Public Partnerships**

### **Suicide Prevention Fundraiser- *Prisms of the Heart***

The Office of Suicide Prevention partnered with the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado in co-hosting the second annual suicide prevention fundraiser. The fundraiser was held at Grant Humphreys

Mansion in Denver on February 12, 2004. The event attracted over 170 people from across Colorado. Members of the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado provided personal stories of loved ones lost to suicide in an effort to raise awareness about suicide and the need for prevention efforts. This event raised over \$11,584 for coalition activities.

### **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and Ant Hill Marketing**

The Office of Suicide Prevention worked in conjunction with representatives from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and Ant Hill Marketing for the development of public service announcements focusing on teen suicide prevention. The campaign has two main goals: 1) increase awareness and use of the 1-800-SUICIDE hotline by teens, and 2) reduce the secret-keeping behavior common among adolescents who are suicidal or have friends who are suicidal. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention provided matching funds to adapt already created public service announcements to be Colorado-specific. Ant Hill Marketing provided the expertise for adapting the spots and marketing them to the major media outlets in five Colorado communities. Ant Hill Marketing is tracking the airing of these spots and will work with the Office of Suicide Prevention to continue dissemination of the spots across Colorado. The potential reach for these public service announcements is broad.

### **Ongoing Training and Mobilization of a Statewide Suicide Prevention Infrastructure**

The Office of Suicide Prevention hosted three “training for trainers” events in the LivingWorks Education-Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), the Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program, and the Suicide Awareness for Everyone Program (SAFE: Teen).

- The “training for trainers” prepares individuals to train community members in suicide intervention/prevention skills.
- As a result, 74 individuals, representing all geographic regions of the state, are trained to provide community based training in suicide intervention/prevention skills.
- There have been more than 1,458 community members trained to-date through ASIST; and post-evaluations, measuring knowledge gain and comfort level regarding suicide risk assessment and suicide prevention and intervention strategies, have reflected an average rating of 9 on a 10-point scale.

The Yellow Ribbon program prepares trainers to offer training in community initiative development, offering step-by-step implementation strategies, and gatekeeper training highlighting the key message that it is “always okay to ask for help.”

The ASIST program prepares trainers to offer intervention-skills training that increases a caregiver’s comfort with preventing the immediate risk of suicide.

The SAFE: Teen program prepares trainers to work with individual schools to train staff, parents, and students to recognize and respond to suicidal youth.

## **Part 2: State Funding**

### **Public Awareness and Education Campaign**

The office shared information through presentations, informational booths and dissemination to the general public throughout the 2003-2004 fiscal year. More than 21,288 pieces of public awareness materials were distributed to people from every region of the state and nationally regarding suicide, suicide prevention, and Colorado’s suicide prevention efforts. Some of the organizations and groups that received information included attendees at the Colorado Public Health Association State Conference; the American Association of Suicidology Conference; the 9Health Fair Sites, county health

departments, high schools, colleges and universities, hospitals, faith based communities and mental health centers across Colorado.

The Office of Suicide Prevention continued development and distribution of the media campaign utilizing the messages from the 14 posters initially designed in the year 2001. Targeted statewide circulation of the posters and distribution of an elderly depression booklet and a resource book targeted to family members of individuals who have attempted suicide is underway. The materials are being distributed by regions of the state in order to track any increase in calls to the national hotline number or the local mental health crisis numbers.

### **1-800-SUICIDE Hotline**

The Office of Suicide Prevention continues to provide support to the 1-800-SUICIDE Hotline number. This number is part of the nationwide 1-800-SUICIDE network. Colorado has an American Association of Suicidology certified 1-800-SUICIDE site in Pueblo. The hotline is housed in the Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center and is staffed 24 hours a day and seven days a week with volunteers trained to respond to crisis calls. All calls originating in Colorado are routed to the Pueblo line first so that Colorado residents will be connected with someone aware of local resources. The continuing support of this hotline is critical to suicide prevention efforts in Colorado. Between 2002 and 2003, calls to the hotline increased by 62%. The 1-800-SUICIDE number is listed as a crisis resource on every document created and distributed through the Office of Suicide Prevention. The Office of Suicide Prevention encourages all programs and communities to advertise this number as a resource as well.

### **Training**

The Office of Suicide Prevention continues to make training a priority. The management and coordination efforts across Colorado continue to expand. Significant suicide prevention training and development related to increasing the trainer network for this fiscal year included:

- Twenty-eight trainings were offered across Colorado by a network of 22 trained ASIST trainers.
- Resources were leveraged to provide scholarships to 73 individuals from local communities to attend a Training for Trainers in three gatekeeper-training models. These individuals now are part of a training network providing suicide intervention skills training to community members statewide.
- A training database for trainers was created to systematically track all training occurring statewide, including the programs being utilized, cost, time commitment, contact person and trainer information.

### **Administration of Local Grants**

**\$83,395.66**

### **Suicide Prevention and Education Services Grant Program**

Fifteen grants up to \$7,000 each were awarded to local entities for suicide prevention and education services. This grant program is designed to support communities working on comprehensive suicide prevention programs, and to improve and expand suicide prevention at the local level.

### **Suicide Prevention and Education Grant Recipients**

Suicide Prevention Partnership Pikes Peak  
Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center  
Mesa County Suicide Prevention Coalition  
HIS Ministries, Adams County  
HEARTBEAT  
Suicide Education and Support Services of Weld County



Suicide and Crisis Intervention Lifeline  
Suicide Resource Center of Larimer County  
Suicide Prevention Intervention Network (SPIN)  
San Luis Valley Mental Health  
Eagle River Youth Coalition  
The Andy Zanca Youth Empowerment Program  
Yellow Ribbon International (Light for Life Foundation)  
The Second Wind Fund

**Eagle River Youth Coalition, Eagle County**

**\$3,000**

The Eagle River Youth Coalition used funds to increase community awareness of suicide prevention resources; to increase education on depression and ideas on suicide; to increase the level of comfort for people to discuss ideas of suicide and depression; and to increase understanding of how these issues appear in Eagle County. Community members raised awareness through meetings, ASIST trainings, presentations, newspaper articles, and discussion forums with medical professionals. Additionally, the Eagle River Youth Coalition worked in conjunction with the “Better Understanding Depression and Suicide (BUDS)” project. This project is a local youth action research project aimed at understanding how local youth culture and beliefs; social and environmental influences; and building of social skills may prevent depression and suicide.

**Mesa County Suicide Prevention Coalition, Mesa County**

**\$7,000**

The Mesa County Health Department used funding to increase community awareness of suicide as a public health concern; to provide suicide prevention training for individuals in the community; and to partner with similar agencies to promote healthy life alternatives. Funds were used to conduct several advertising campaigns targeting both senior citizens and youth. Presentations were given to over 330 individuals from area groups, ranging from the Mesa State Psychology Club to the Area Stephens Ministry. Mesa County Suicide Prevention Coalition partnered with St. Mary’s Hospital Emergency Medical Services Program; Build a Generation; and the Community Prevention Policy Board for Mesa County. ASIST workshops were provided to 388 individuals, who potentially have contact with individuals in crisis in Mesa County. A follow-up evaluation found that trainees responded appropriately to individuals in crisis. County specific intervention focus groups were assembled and identified goals for future efforts. These goals included identifying local individuals to provide the ASIST training, forming critical incident teams across agencies, and combining services to reduce costs. The numbers reached through various public awareness presentations, health fairs, radio and television coverage was over 5,000.

**San Luis Valley Comprehensive Community Mental Health Center, San Luis Valley**

**\$7,000**

The San Luis Valley Comprehensive Community Mental Health Center, through the Suicide, Substance Abuse and Violence Education community-wide coalition (SSAVE), used funds to promote suicide prevention awareness; to reduce the stigma associated with suicide; to train community members in intervention skills; to build and support coalitions; and to evaluate methods. Staff trained community members, using the ASIST curriculum, provided several suicide awareness presentations to groups including the Boys and Girls Club, Pathways Day Treatment and groups of athletes at a local high school. Using the media and the distribution of suicide prevention materials, staff promoted suicide awareness throughout the community. The SSAVE Coalition supported the development of youth

suicide prevention coalitions in local high schools by providing staff guidance; by providing youth scholarships for training; and by creating leadership opportunities for youth in the SSAVE Coalition. Currently three of the local high schools have youth suicide prevention coalitions that are active in the larger community coalition.

### **Suicide Education and Support Services, Weld County**

**\$6,928.16**

Targeting middle-aged and senior citizens in Weld County, the Suicide Education and Support Services used the funding to train staff at the Area Agency on Aging; to provide displays for all county Senior Centers; and to train long-term care staff and seniors at a local senior center. Funds also were used to develop a support group for relatives and friends of suicidal people; to purchase and distribute suicide prevention materials including postcards, newsletters, public service advertisements; and to conduct an art and poetry contest, which was sponsored by the Weld County Bar Association. New workshops were introduced, which included themes of suicide prevention for adults and seniors; suicide prevention in the workplace; and basic suicide prevention. Funds also were utilized to conduct extensive outreach to the difficult to reach professional populations of mental and medical health providers including regular mailings of postcards and newsletters.

### **Teen HEARTBEAT, Colorado Springs**

**\$5,977**

The funds received by Teen HEARTBEAT supported a program for adolescents who had lost a loved one to suicide. The program was designed to provide bereavement support opportunities to a maximum of 12 teens bereaved by the suicide of a parent, sibling or friend; to normalize their grief experience; to allow for exchange of support and empathy with peer grief; to teach coping techniques when life losses occur; and to ultimately reduce the possibility of participating teens ending their lives. Child grief specialists administered the eight-week series, which included projects and social events. There has been extensive community support for this project.

### **Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program, Adams County**

**\$7,000**

Funding was used to provide the Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program “Be-A-Link” gatekeeper training in five Adams County schools. Training also included identification of resources available within the school and community. This training was provided to students, teachers, administrators and staff in Adams County school districts 12 and 50. Trainees learned intervention skills and the available resources, and received suicide prevention materials. Yellow Ribbon continues to partner with Adams County school districts for the expansion of this program.

### **Suicide Prevention Partnership Pikes Peak Region**

**\$7,000**

The Suicide Prevention Partnership received funding to assist and continue the prevention and intervention components of the program. Funding was used for purchasing brochures, posters, literature, and to print a newsletter that discusses issues pertaining to suicide prevention. These materials were presented in schools, religious organizations, senior citizens programs and other programs visited as part of their Speakers Bureau. Funding was also given to the Partnership to maintain the office operations and staffing needs of the local suicide prevention hotline.

### **Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center**

**\$7,000**

The Center is a full service crisis center providing many services not normally associated with a suicide prevention center. Funding was provided for the local hotline, which has been serving Pueblo County for 36 years. This line averages 300 calls per month. Also funded was a teen hotline, one of the few in the state, covered by trained teens in the Prevention Center office from 4 to 9 pm on week nights with the lines being forwarded to the local hotline at other times so that the phone is answered 24 hours a day, year round. Training materials, brochures, and advertising for the lines was also included in the funding.

### **HIS Ministries, Adams County**

**\$3,000**

Funding was given to Adams County to focus on increasing collaboration between mental health professionals, school personnel, business communities and other community agencies regarding suicide in Adams County. The development of a strategic plan for suicide prevention in Adams County also was a focus of the grant.

### **Suicide and Crisis Intervention Lifeline**

**\$7,000**

The collaborative effort between Suicide and Crisis Intervention Lifeline (SCIL), Suicide Awareness Facing the Enemy (SAFE) and the Routt and Moffat county suicide prevention initiatives provided ongoing suicide prevention and education in Routt and Moffat counties. Routt and Moffat counties provide Emergency Services Therapists in both counties available 24 hours a day 7 days a week. In-school training therapists who provide over 30 suicide prevention programs a year in the high schools and middle schools were provided. SCIL also provided in-school guidance for the student volunteer suicide prevention teams, and training for professional and lay groups in suicide prevention including law enforcement, hospital staff, medical offices, teachers and the lay public. Funding went directly toward salary and expenses providing the in-school student volunteer counselor, salary and expenses for SCIL and SAFE support staff time, five weeks of block advertising in suicide prevention, and a video "Out of Darkness".

### **Suicide Resource Center of Larimer County**

**\$7,000**

The third annual "A Season to Remember" suicide awareness walk and candlelight vigil took place on May 14, 2004. As part of the event, participants received custom designed t-shirts, which continue to spread the message throughout the year. Funding was provided to cover the cost of t-shirts, posters and promotional mailings. Funding was also used to cover printing and postage for the spring edition of the newsletter, and the printing of 3,000 brochures used for promotion in expanded venues such as churches and businesses. Finally, funding was provided to cover the facilitator fee for the Spring 2004 depression support group. This is a four-week educational class for family and friends of those who are struggling with depression and suicidal thoughts. Funding was also provided to pay for 5,000 Yellow Ribbon Cards and to support salaries of key staff at the Resource Center.

### **Suicide Prevention Intervention Network (SPIN)**

**\$7,000**

SPIN received funding to support continuing programs of HEARTBEAT, individual support, community training, professional training and ASIST. These programs serve thousands of people in the community providing prevention and intervention training and support. Support for these efforts

included brochure printing and distribution, Powerpoint projector, books for HEARTBEAT support groups, ASIST workshop materials, co-director's salary, and outreach to the faith-based communities.

**Andy Zanca Youth Empowerment Program**  
**\$5,500**

The Andy Zanca Youth Empowerment Program is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the empowerment of youth through media and the arts. Their on-air programming includes music, talk shows, radio drama, journalism, commentaries, poetry, stories and public service announcements, all produced by youth between the ages of 13 and 19. Funding was used to pay part of the Executive Director's salary and contract services. The Executive Director coordinated suicide prevention programs for broadcast—providing technical assistance, facilitating after school program, workshops and mentor relationships with a bilingual therapist. Contract services were provided by a bilingual therapist who worked on program implementation, recruitment, and on-air interviews with youth for suicide prevention

**The Second Wind Fund**  
**\$2,990.50**

The Second Wind Fund provides funding for short-term clinical therapy for students who are identified by school counselors as having depression issues that may raise suicide concerns and financial need resulting in an inability to pay short-term therapy. Each year the Second Wind Fund puts on a walk/run event to raise money for services. This year, the OSP provided funding to help with expenses for the walk. Expenses included t-shirts, postage, printing, miscellaneous supplies, signs and banners and food products. The run/walk event raised over \$60,000.00 with over 1,000 participants.

**Part 3: Federal Funding**

**Health Resources Services Administration**

In June 2001, the OSP, with support from local foundations, offered training for trainers designed and provided by an organization called LivingWorks. This training for trainers (T4T) is a five-day course that trains individuals to conduct the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). This training prepares individuals to be able to confidently and competently provide intervention and awareness regarding issues of suicidal behavior.

In September 2003, LivingWorks released an updated curriculum, ASIST Version X. This curriculum is required for use by all LivingWorks Trainers worldwide. The Office of Suicide Prevention offered a training update for all interested Colorado trainers from March 28-30, 2004. The funds for this training made it possible to continue to support these individuals as resources for Colorado's suicide prevention efforts while providing an invaluable service to their respective communities.

**Preventive Health and Human Services Block Grant**

The Office of Suicide Prevention received funding from the Preventive Health and Human Services Block Grant (PHHS) to continue the Partners for Teen Suicide Prevention (PTSP) project, which supports ongoing youth-specific suicide prevention activities in communities across Colorado. The PTSP received funding from the Substance Abuse/Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in 2000 for the planning and development of a youth-specific suicide prevention strategic plan. The SAMHSA grant ended in August 2003 following a no cost extension period of one year. This grant project set a foundation for ongoing comprehensive youth suicide prevention activities. Three pilot communities were originally selected under the SAMHSA grant project to create a model for

implementation of youth suicide prevention efforts. In these sites, each component of a community-based youth suicide prevention plan was evaluated for both process and implementation success. Additional support and technical assistance maximized the possibility that these communities were able to solidify community ownership of not only suicide-related issues, but also the need to creatively work together to address prevention of related issues.

Following the conclusion of the SAMHSA grant, the infrastructure for these communities was in place to continue suicide prevention efforts, thus the PHHS Block Grant was used to support on-going youth suicide prevention efforts in two of the previously funded pilot communities, as well as supported the planning and development of youth suicide prevention efforts in two new communities. Two of the original SAMHSA pilot communities received multi-year funding through a suicide prevention initiative sponsored by The Colorado Trust.

The PHHS Block Grant funding supported coalition building, gatekeeper training, and public awareness and education efforts.

## **Appendix A**

### **Suicide Prevention Programs in Colorado**

#### **Denver County**

##### **Colorado Link** **Mental Health Association of Colorado**

6795 East Tennessee Avenue, Suite 425  
Denver, Colorado 80224  
(303) 377-3040  
(303) 377-4920 *fax*

Contact: Jeanne Mueller-Rohner

The Mental Health Association serves as the lead agency, working in collaboration with the United Way, The Colorado Trust, OMNI Research, Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention program and other community agencies, for the Colorado Link project. The Colorado Link is a violence and suicide prevention project located in Denver. The shared goals of this project are to reduce teen violence and suicide among youth. The Mental Health Association is piloting this project in Denver's North High School and two locations for homeless and runaway youth, Urban Peak and The Spot.

There are three main components to the Colorado Link project—education, screening and treatment. The Yellow Ribbon Program provides the educational component of the project. This piece brings together stakeholders who might positively influence the life of an adolescent. These stakeholders are educated on how to react and what to say to an at-risk youth, as well as where to refer an at-risk youth. Students also are educated on suicide warning signs and risk factors, and what to do if a friend is suicidal. The screening piece of the project includes the use of the Columbia TeenScreen Program on “screening days” at the two high schools. The Mental Health Association, Servicios de la Raza and CADREC, a substance abuse treatment agency, are providing the treatment component of the project. Access to quality, immediate treatment is essential as high-risk kids are identified.

##### **The Shaka Franklin Foundation for Youth**

8101 E. Dartmouth Ave., Number 11  
Denver, Colorado 80231  
(303) 337-2515  
<http://www.shaka.org/>

Contacts: Les and Marianne Franklin

Les Franklin and community activists founded the Shaka Franklin Foundation for Youth in 1990 after the suicide death of 16-year-old Shaka Franklin, Les Franklin's son. The foundation focuses on correcting the self-destructive behavior of young people ages 12 to 21 years and the various problems in their lives that precipitate negative feelings, which can lead to suicide. The foundation's premise is that suicide is often the result of violent behavior towards oneself as well as towards others. The foundation also informs and educates young people and adults about the dangers and myths that surround suicide, depression and grief.

The Shaka Franklin Foundation is supported by individuals, corporations and private foundations that understand the importance of helping young people develop into healthy, responsible adults.

### **Eagle County**

#### **Eagle River Youth Coalition**

PO Box 672  
Minturn, Colorado 81645  
(970) 827-5412  
[eryc@vail.net](mailto:eryc@vail.net)  
[www.eagleyouth.org](http://www.eagleyouth.org)

Contact: Beth Reilly

The Eagle River Youth Coalition (ERYC) is a not-for-profit organization addressing suicidal behavior in youth of the Vail Valley. This organization began following a survey in which Eagle County youth reported higher rates of suicidal thoughts and depression than youth on a national survey. ERYC provides suicide intervention skills training to local community members and suicide awareness presentations via wellness events and parent forums to increase the overall community understanding of suicide. ERYC also works to build awareness among medical providers regarding appropriate screening for patients. In the last year, ERYC has conducted research project with the local mental health agency and a local researcher to gain a more in-depth perspective on suicide ideation and depression among local youth. Local teenagers have been trained to assist in this project.

#### **The Andy Zanca Youth Empowerment Program**

1344 Barber Drive  
Carbondale, Colorado 81623  
(970) 963-1302  
[annmark@sopris.net](mailto:annmark@sopris.net)

Contact: Anne Marie Zanca

The Andy Zanca Youth Empowerment Program is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the empowerment of youth through media and the arts. Anne Marie Zanca created the program in memory of her brother, Andy Zanca, who completed suicide at age 21. The program funds a youth radio group called Identity Crisis Youth Radio. The group produces a weekly, half-hour talk radio program produced by youth, ages 10 to 18, on issues important to youth. This group also showcases young literary and musical talent in addition to conducting interviews with community members of all ages on youth-related topics.

Participants are recruited by word-of-mouth and by referral from schools and youth organizations. The professionals working with these youth have backgrounds in counseling, education, journalism and technology. Goals for the program include empowering youth by giving them a voice to express their opinions and creative interests in their own words; by providing effective training in journalistic skills to assist them in possible educational or career pursuits; and by breaking down cultural, socioeconomic, generational and geographic barriers that isolate youth from each other and the rest of the community.

## **El Paso County**

### **Suicide Prevention Partnership of the Pikes Peak Region**

P.O. Box 1692

Colorado Springs, Colorado 80935

(719) 573-7447

(719) 572-0763 *fax*

Hotline Number: (719) 596-LIFE (596-5433)

[Prevent@codenet.net](mailto:Prevent@codenet.net)

<http://www.codenet.net/suicideprevention>

Contact: Joan Morrill, Executive Director

The Suicide Prevention Partnership of the Pikes Peak Region is a nonprofit organization founded in 1992 to unite the community in confronting suicide as a preventable health problem. These community individuals represent the combined efforts of law enforcement, mental and public health, the military, government, business, the religious community, educators and local citizens.

The Partnership educates the general public and community care providers on the dynamics and issues surrounding suicide prevention; intervention and postvention resources through a speakers' bureau; resource library including videos, pamphlets, books; frequently updated statistics; crisis response team development; support resources for survivors of suicide in conjunction with a survivor group, called Heartbeat; and workshops and awareness training. The Partnership provides a suicide prevention hotline available to the entire region, staffed with trained volunteers. Volunteers assess each caller's situation and then provide information on resources for long-term problem resolution.

The Partnership has developed crisis training response teams for the military; victim's assistance training for the El Paso County Sheriff's Department; recruitment and training for speakers' bureau participants. The partnership also conducted school presentations and participated in local health fairs.

The Partnership recently entered into a memorandum of understanding with the El Paso County Health Department to support trainings in the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Curriculum and training for first responders based on the manual created through the Office of Suicide Prevention grant received by the Suicide Prevention Partnership.

## **Jefferson County**

### **Jefferson Center for Mental Health**

5265 Vance St.

Arvada, Colorado 80002

(303) 432-5174

(303) 431-0548 *fax*

[elizabethf@jcmh.org](mailto:elizabethf@jcmh.org)

Contact: Elizabeth Ford, Development Manager

The Jefferson Center has been a leader in the field of youth suicide prevention since the 1980s, recognizing suicide as a critical health issue for the community. The center helped start many grassroots



suicide prevention efforts, including the Columbine/Chatfield Coalition for Youth. A group of Jefferson Center staff members meet monthly to plan the center's prevention efforts and collaborations. Center staff members often lead debriefings for school staff, students and families following a teen suicide. A suicide prevention coalition for Jefferson County works on training and program implementation.

Jefferson Center responds to requests from schools, businesses and community groups for presentations on suicide and other mental health issues. Its staff also attends various resource fairs throughout the year. Speakers' bureau ambassadors present information on mental health issues, including mental illness, depression, suicide prevention, senior issues and parenting issues. The Jefferson Center has done segments on the local cable access channel for seniors on depression and suicide. In 1999, the center distributed more than 2,500 educational booklets and handouts on suicide prevention. In 2000, additional Jefferson Center efforts have included the development of fact sheets, coordination with other local groups and in-house training on assessing suicide risks.

Jefferson Center for Mental Health was the lead agency implementing the Partners for Teen Suicide Prevention project in Jefferson County, which was selected as a pilot community by the Office of Suicide Prevention. The Jefferson Center was recently selected by The Colorado Trust Foundation to participate in a three-year comprehensive suicide prevention initiative.

### **Second Wind Fund**

Jefferson Foundation  
809 Quail Street, #1  
Lakewood, Colorado 80215

Contact: Jeff Lamontagne  
(720) 963-0773

The Second Wind Fund was created as a resource for Green Mountain High School students following four completed suicides in the 2001-2002 school year. A run/walk fundraiser was held to raise funds for students, who needed therapy for suicide-related issues and also were in financial need. Protocols were developed and licensed mental health practitioners, who had experience with teens at risk for suicide, were recruited to provide services to these students. The Second Wind Fund became available to students in need beginning December 2002. Schools currently able to access these funds include: Green Mountain High School, Dunstan Middle School, Alameda High School, McLain Community High School and Bear Creek High School. A recent fundraiser will allow the funds to be available to other Jefferson County Schools to be identified at a future date.

### **Kit Carson County**

#### **Suicide Risk Reduction Coalition-LIFESAVER**

528 Julian Ave.  
Flagler, Colorado 80815  
(719) 765-4064  
(719) 765-4064 *fax*

Contact: Kathleen Borden

LIFESAVER is a volunteer coalition dedicated to reducing suicide risk in the Kit Carson County Area through enhancement of support for those at risk of suicide and those whose lives have been touched by suicide; to increasing community awareness of suicide risk factors; to giving voice to those who struggle with suicide or live in its wake, and thereby reducing the suffering of isolation; to providing education to community residents and to helping professionals in suicide risk reduction strategies; and to identifying and promoting the use of resources that help reduce suicide risk.

## **Larimer County**

### **Suicide Resource Center of Larimer County**

315 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Loveland, Colorado 80537  
(970) 635-9301  
(970) 461-2426 *fax*  
[src@webaccess.net](mailto:src@webaccess.net)

Contact: Bev Thurber, Executive Director

The Suicide Resource Center, a grassroots, volunteer-driven organization, coordinates and develops suicide education, prevention, intervention and postvention in communities in Larimer County. Formed in 1989 as a result of growing community concern about the rising rate of suicide, the center's goals are to help reduce the suicide rate and improve the lives of those who have experienced a loss through suicide. The Suicide Resource Center provides resources and programs that complement other community agencies.

Many of the center's programs are educational with the belief that the first line of defense against self-destruction is knowledge. A speakers' bureau provides trained, experienced volunteers to speak to community groups on a variety of topics related to depression and suicide. The Raising Awareness of Personal Power Program, educates teens to help them identify suicide warning signs and access community services, in an attempt to build their personal power to make positive life changes for themselves and others. The Raising Awareness of Personal Power program is available upon request to schools and youth groups. The center also publishes the Youth Yellow Pages, a pocket-sized resource directory for Larimer County teenagers. The directory, which is distributed through schools and other youth-serving community agencies, provides information for teens dealing with a wide range of challenges including loss, violence and sexuality.

The Suicide Resource Center also provides support to those individuals who have suffered a loss due to suicide. The center holds monthly drop-in Heartbeat grief support groups for adults and teens. Volunteers for the Survivors of Suicide support teams visit homes, schools, churches and businesses to meet with individuals, family members and friends. The volunteers listen and respond to questions and concerns; talk about different aspects of the grief and mourning process; offer an opportunity for survivors to talk with someone who has also survived the loss of a family member or friend through suicide; and provide information on support groups and other community resources.

## **Mesa County**

### **Mesa County Health Department Mesa County Suicide Prevention Coalition**

P.O. 20000  
Grand Junction, Colorado 81506  
(970) 248-6937

Contact: Karen Levad

The Mesa County Suicide Prevention Coalition, located at the Mesa County Health Department, was the lead agency implementing the Partners for Teen Suicide Prevention project in Mesa County, which was selected as a pilot site by the Office of Suicide Prevention. This coalition recently was selected to participate in the three-year comprehensive suicide prevention initiative through The Colorado Trust Foundation.

The Mesa County Suicide Prevention Coalition is a group of committed professionals and survivors of suicide working together to address the rates of suicidal behavior in Mesa County. This group has made Applied Suicide Intervention Skills training available to individuals in contact with youth and elderly who may be at risk for suicide and has trained over 300 community members. The coalition is active in awareness and educational presentations community wide and has active partnerships and collaborations with local medical facilities, school districts, social services, youth serving organizations and senior citizens organizations. Recently, the coalition collaborated with local hospice centers and medical staff to create a pamphlet specifically addressing suicide potential in cancer patients.

## **Moffat County**

### **S.A.F.E. (Suicide Awareness: Facing the Enemy)**

Northwest Colorado Visiting Nurse Association, Inc.  
745 Russell St.  
Craig, Colorado 81625  
(970) 824-8233  
(970) 824-2548 fax  
[nwcovna@cmn.net](mailto:nwcovna@cmn.net)

Contacts: Barbara Seed at Craig Mental Health  
(970) 824-6541

Suicide Awareness Facing the Enemy is a broad-based community group dedicated to the prevention of suicide and suicide attempts in Moffat County. The group's main purpose is to gather information and educate the community on suicide and suicide prevention. Suicide Awareness Facing the Enemy makes presentations to service clubs, church groups and schools.

## **Pueblo County**

### **Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center**

1925 East Orman Ave., Suite G25

Pueblo, Colorado 81004  
(719) 564-6642  
(719) 564-7976 *fax*  
Help Line: (719) 544-1133  
Teen Line: (719) 564-5566  
Statewide: 1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433)

Contact: Eleanor Hamm, Executive Director

Established in March 1968, the Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center is believed to be the oldest suicide prevention program in Colorado and is involved in a comprehensive array of suicide prevention, intervention and postvention services. This organization is the only center in Colorado certified by the American Association of Suicidology. Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center performs community education; provides a 24-hour help line and teen line; and provides grief and trauma support for family and friends who have lost someone to suicide. Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center prints a Youth Yellow Pages, conducts Heartbeat meetings; and works with a victims' support unit with the local police and sheriff's departments. The Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center helped form a school crisis team, in addition to working with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Consortium, the Pueblo Council on Children and Youth and the 2010 Task Force.

The Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center provides the Senior Link, a senior mental health outreach program, that includes free in-home, one-to-one counseling for seniors who are experiencing depression, feelings of suicide or who have been victimized. The Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center also provides a crisis support number for the local Alzheimer's disease support organization.

The Kristin Brooks Hope Center and the Hope Line Network, the national coordinators of suicide hotlines, have selected Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center as the site of the state's suicide prevention hotline. The hotline number is an important step in Colorado's enhanced efforts at intervention, as the calls to the 1-800-SUICIDE line, until recently, were going through a St. Louis center. Pueblo has one of the oldest local, suicide hotline operations in Colorado and in the nation.

The Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center worked as research coordinator on the Colorado Senior Suicide Study addressing suicide among adults 60 years of age and older. Funded by Comprecare and conducted by the Colorado Mental Health Coalition for Older Adults from 1983 to 1987, the research findings were presented by the center's director, Eleanor Hamm, at the 1990 American Association of Suicidology.

As a certified center of the American Association of Suicidology, both the center's director and assistant director are qualified certification evaluators who help certify suicide prevention crisis centers in the western region of the United States. They also have served as consultants in establishing other suicide prevention programs throughout the state.

The Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center works with the Colorado State University, Pueblo and Adams State College in Alamosa in providing suicide prevention and crisis intervention training to students in the graduate and undergraduate levels. The Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center also has provided training for the Colorado Department of Corrections, the Colorado Nursing Association, the Colorado Mental Health Association, the Fort Carson Military Base and both local U.S. Air Force bases. The center

director also served as the consulting suicide prevention instructor for the Suicide Prevention and Crisis Intervention Team training at the U.S. NATO Military Air Force Base in Ramstien, Germany.

### **Routt County**

#### **Suicide and Crisis Intervention Life Line**

P.O. Box 770417

Steamboat Springs, Colorado 80477

(970) 879-1632

(970) 870-1326 *fax*

[vna@steamboat.com](mailto:vna@steamboat.com)

Contact: Linda Mitchem, Coordinator

The Suicide and Crisis Intervention Life Line was formed in Steamboat Springs in 1998 in response to a level of suicide completion in Routt County that was well above the national and state averages for a county of its size. The Suicide Crisis Intervention Life Line implemented a suicide prevention plan, which directs services in the areas of prevention, intervention and postvention.

Its mission is to develop and offer educational programs and services to the communities of Routt County in the areas of suicide and crisis support.

### **San Luis Valley**

#### **San Luis Valley Comprehensive Community Mental Health Center**

##### **Suicide, Substance Abuse and Violence Education Coalition**

1015 Fourth St.

Alamosa, Colorado 81101

(719) 589-3671

(719) 589-9136 *fax*

Contact: Mary Young

The Suicide, Substance Abuse and Violence Education Coalitions, coordinated by San Luis Valley Comprehensive Mental Health Center, developed a suicide education and awareness program in 2002. This program included strengthening suicide prevention knowledge; researching best practice programs; developing a community- and school-based training curriculum; creating a brochure and resource card to share information about warning signs for suicidal behavior; and educating the community about how to get help.

The San Luis Valley Comprehensive Mental Health Center also has made it a priority to support training. It uses the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills curriculum to train in the counties the center serves. The center was the lead agency in implementing the Partners for Teen Suicide Prevention project in the San Luis Valley. As part of this project, the SSAVE Coalition provided guidance, supervision and other support to local high school youth creating suicide prevention coalitions in area high schools. Currently, three high schools have student run suicide prevention coalitions and youth leadership roles have been developed in the larger community SSAVE Coalition.

## **Sedgwick County**

C-PACT (Community Pro-Active Crisis Team)  
311 West 5<sup>th</sup> St.  
Julesburg, Colorado 80737  
(970) 474-2435

Contact: Jeana Johnson

Community Pro-Active Crisis Team was formed in 2000 after the suicide of a 19-year-old male community member. The crisis team provides Sedgwick County residents with prevention, intervention and postvention services in any crisis, including suicide.

## **Weld County**

### **Suicide Education and Support Services**

3700 Golden St.  
Evans, Colorado 80620  
(970) 506-2737  
(970) 506-2726 *fax*  
[Lchase@endsuicide.org](mailto:Lchase@endsuicide.org)

Contact: Linda Chase, Executive Director

The Suicide Education and Support Services of Weld County was asked to be the lead Weld County suicide prevention entity in March 1999 after community activists involved with the Weld County's Citizen Advisory Committee to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment identified youth suicide as a top priority. Suicide Education and Support Services modeled its program after the same effort that led to establishing Colorado's new Office of Suicide Prevention.

Suicide Education and Support Services is a private, nonprofit organization with a board and committee membership representing a public and private partnership. Membership includes faith community leaders, mental health professionals and survivors. Suicide Education and Support Services has a diverse funding base of private and public resources and continues to develop funding necessary to provide prevention services. Suicide Education and Support Services currently monitors Weld County suicide rates and is developing a monitoring system for reported attempts. Suicide Education and Support Services is working with the University of Northern Colorado to develop other evaluation strategies, in addition to integrating prevention into schools, training for educators, medical staff and other professionals.

Since 1996 Suicide Education and Support Services has trained and helped support teams of volunteer victim's advocates who respond in the aftermath of suicide. In 1999, Suicide Education and Support Services began offering the Adolescent Suicide Awareness Program, led by Diane Ryerson-Peake, the Colorado co-chair of the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado. The program trains school staff, parents and students in suicide prevention. Suicide Education and Support Services is entering its second-year with Adolescent Suicide Awareness Program, and the two high schools that served as pilot programs last year are repeating the program with their own training teams. Suicide Education and Support Services also has introduced Adolescent Suicide Awareness Program to Greeley West and

Valley high schools. Suicide Education and Support Services is providing educator training to the staff of North and South Valley middle schools, which means more than two-thirds of the RE-1 district staff will have received training.

Suicide Education and Support Services launched the Friend for Life program, training students from the University of Northern Colorado's Department of Community Health to deliver suicide prevention training to students who live on campus. Suicide Education and Support Services also has co-sponsored seminars for medical professionals.

Suicide Education and Support Services is working with law enforcement personnel to better document suicide attempts, coordinating meetings with police, mental health staff, paramedics and the District 5 crisis team coordinator. It is hoped that a system can be developed to document reported suicidal behavior and improve the coordination of response from all of these groups. Suicide Education and Support Services also hopes to improve communications between schools and mental health services in order to support youth returning to school after a suicidal incident.

### **Statewide Programs**

#### **Suicide Awareness for Everyone (SAFE: TEEN)**

3700 Golden St.  
Evans, Colorado 80620  
(970) 351-6610  
(970) 506-2737 *fax*

Contact: Diane Ryerson-Peake

The Suicide Awareness for Everyone Program is a comprehensive suicide prevention program for school teaching staffs, parents and students to help them recognize and respond to the warning signs of a potentially suicidal youth. The Suicide Awareness for Everyone Program works with schools to train every member of the administrative, academic and support staff, including administrators, teachers, coaches, janitors and secretaries, because a troubled child may turn to any adult for help. The Suicide Awareness for Everyone Program also works with schools to develop written policies and procedures for responding to suicidal behavior. The Suicide Awareness for Everyone Program educates parents to recognize warning signs for suicidal behavior and to support their child in getting help for a suicidal friend. Finally, the Suicide Awareness For Everyone Program educates students to take all suicidal talk seriously and to understand that suicidal talk should not be kept a secret. It is imperative that students know how to help since they are almost always the first to know of a friend's suicidal behavior.

#### **Suicide Prevention Intervention Network (SPIN)**

5859 S. University Blvd.  
Greenwood Village, Colorado 80121  
(303) 770-1859  
(303) 770-1859 *fax*

Contact: Jan and Bob Burnside

Suicide Prevention and Intervention Network was formed in 2001 with the primary goal of educating the community on preventing suicide and supporting those who have lost loved ones to suicide. Suicide Prevention Intervention Network offers four distinct program areas, including Applied Suicide

Intervention Skills Training, Heartbeat survivors support group, awareness presentations and consultation services to businesses, clergy, schools and community groups.

### **Colorado Mental Health Services**

Department of Human Services  
3824 W. Princeton Circle  
Denver, Colorado 80236  
(303) 866-7400  
(303) 866-7428 *fax*

Contact: Tom Barrett, Ph.D., Director

The public mental health system in Colorado includes 17 mental health centers that span the geographic regions of the state. With all mental health centers playing an active role in suicide prevention, the centers are required to provide 24-hour emergency response including evaluation and risk assessment for individuals who experience suicidal ideation. Clinical techniques and interventions are utilized on an individual basis and address the specific needs of the individual, recognizing environmental resources. The interventions many include assessment for involuntary treatment, hospitalization, other 24-hour care, in-home services, psychiatric intervention that includes medication management, individual therapy and case management. Many mental health centers offer depression screening as a community education and outreach effort and also partner with other community agencies to address the issue of suicide education, prevention and intervention. Listed below are some examples of suicide prevention activities at mental health centers around the state:

- **Colorado West Regional Mental Health** in Mesa County has a 24-hour suicide/crisis hotline. Emergency service clinicians are trained to assess for suicidal risk and to intervene if necessary handle the calls. Colorado West Regional Mental Health in Mesa County provides follow-up care to individuals with suicidal issues that do not require acute inpatient hospitalization.
- **Centennial Mental Health Center** has offices in 10 counties, providing suicide prevention services.
- **North Range Behavioral Health** provides extensive in- and outpatient treatment, a 24-hour mental health crisis line and services to families.
- **San Luis Valley Comprehensive Community Mental Health Center** has therapists in all 14 school districts in the San Luis Valley providing suicide prevention and intervention services. Staff provides suicide prevention presentations as well as serving as a member of the emergency services/access team.
- **Colorado Health Networks** is a partnership between ValueOption and eight community mental health centers in western, central and southern Colorado. This partnership provides mental health services to Medicaid-eligible individuals. Colorado Health Networks supports the development of consumer-run programs, believing these programs enhance the quality of care of consumers. Consumer-run, drop-in centers house programs managed by people who have lived with, and overcome, serious and persistent mental illness. The programs consist of outreach, peer counseling, coaching, referral and other services.



## **Local Health Departments**

**San Juan Basin Health Department Prevention Programs** developed and disseminated two different suicide prevention posters and distributed the Yellow Ribbon for Life cards and pins to teachers and peer educators in southwestern Colorado. San Juan Basin Health Department also offers training on valuing diversity and fostering inclusive classrooms. Success has been achieved using True Colors, Star Power and other training programs. San Juan Basin Health Department is beginning a program called Colorado Classroom Prevention Connection that intends to include information on suicide prevention in the training. Staff at the San Juan Basin Health Department offers the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training program for local community members and representatives from the area Native American population.

**Boulder County Health Department** has implemented a prevention/intervention program. Program services include counselors known as “interventionists” in middle and high schools who address substance abuse; depression and suicide; family and peer conflict; runaway and homelessness; grief and loss; interpersonal relationships; and school issues such as expulsion, dropout, intimidation and harassment. Boulder County Health Department also has been instrumental in working with two local school districts, St. Vrain and Boulder Valley, to train school district staff annually in the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training.

### **Heartbeat**

12 North Meade Ave.

2015 Devon

Colorado Springs, Colorado 80909

(719) 596-2575

[www.codenet.net/suicidprevention](http://www.codenet.net/suicidprevention)

[ARCHLJ@aol.com](mailto:ARCHLJ@aol.com)

Contact: LaRita Archibald

Heartbeat was formed to support those individuals who have experienced a loss through suicide. The group was organized to help survivors absorb the impact of the self-inflicted death, to offer the comfort of empathetic understanding and acceptance and to support each other toward the healthy resolution of grief.

Heartbeat does not replace therapy. The group believes the healing achieved within these groups is the result of understanding, encouragement and caring among the participants. Heartbeat is facilitated through the efforts of volunteers who have all experienced the loss of someone close to them through suicide. These volunteers are not professionals, but share experiences. Recently, Heartbeat began an eight-week course for teen suicide survivors to validate their feelings of loss and grief under the direction and supervision of a child grief specialist. This course will be offered twice annually.

Heartbeat is affiliated with the American Association of Suicidology, a national organization of mental health professionals and non-professionals who join efforts to study and reduce human self-destruction.

### **Parents Surviving Suicide**

Meeting Place: Bethany Lutheran Church, Activity Room 4500 E. Hampden Ave., Denver, Colorado

[vsepublisher@earthlink.net](mailto:vsepublisher@earthlink.net)

Contact: Vivian Epstein  
(303) 322-7450  
Doris Walker  
(303) 988-3567

Vivian Epstein started Parents Surviving Suicide in 1989 after the suicide of her son. This is a group of parents who meet on the third Tuesday of each month for the purpose of supporting to each other. Speakers are invited several times a year and there is no charge to attend the meetings.

### **Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado**

6795 E. Tennessee Ave., Suite 425  
Denver, Colorado 80224  
(303) 377-3040  
(303) 377-4920 *fax*

Contact: Jeanne Mueller-Rohner

The Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado was formed in January 1999 following completion of the work of the Governor's Suicide Prevention Advisory Commission. The coalition has representation from public and private organizations to provide leadership for the implementation of the state's plan for suicide prevention. The mission of the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado is to develop and implement suicide prevention and intervention strategies, focusing on public awareness, education and advocacy through cooperation among organizations, agencies, individuals, surviving family members and government. The coalition currently co-hosts an annual Suicide Prevention Summit and Suicide Prevention Fundraiser with the Office of Suicide Prevention to expand statewide efforts.

### **Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program**

Light for Life Foundation International  
P.O. Box 644  
Westminster, Colorado 80036-0644  
(303) 429-3530  
(303) 426-4496 *fax*  
[ask4help@yellowribbon.org](mailto:ask4help@yellowribbon.org)

Contact: Dale, Dar or Becca Emme

The Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program began in September 1994 after Dale and Dar Emme's son, Michael, completed suicide just minutes before they arrived home. In the days following their son's death, many teenagers came to the family and asked what they could do in response. The Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program was formed out of the great desire of the teens to do something about the tragedy that had affected their lives.

This youth-focused program is involved in advocacy, education and support. Its goal is to bring into focus the high incidence of youth suicide; promote suicide prevention legislation by local, state and national legislators; distribute suicide educational help cards; and assist agencies and coalitions to develop and to implement suicide prevention strategies. It also provides curricula and in-service training

and support for school staff and communities, along with presenting “gatekeeper” training of prevention, intervention and postvention programs for schools, organizations and the public.

The program works to teach suicide prevention, life skills, warning signs, risk factors and coping strategies in an effort to further empower youth and adults. Yellow Ribbon helps coordinate a Community Prevention Task Force that identifies community/school coordinators; establishes a community resource team; establishes ongoing Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program chapters for youth and adults; implements annual evaluations and updates; develops crisis plans and intervention protocols; develops implementation strategies and recommendations; and conducts full school/community presentations and workshops that teach awareness and suicide prevention skills.

Yellow Ribbon reports that more than 1,500 lives have been saved through this program. More than 150,000 youth have been introduced to the program through presentations, with over two million cards having been distributed worldwide. More than 1,900 schools, colleges and universities have implemented this program.

**The Colorado Trust**

1600 Sherman Street  
Denver, CO 80203  
(303)-837-1200  
(800)- 847-9140  
(303)-839-8034 *fax*

Contact: Carole Breslau

In response to the findings of its *Suicide in Colorado* report, The Colorado Trust created the four-year (2003-2006), \$2.55 million Preventing Suicide in Colorado Initiative to address the devastating problem of suicide in the state. Also, in partnership with Mile High United Way, The Trust committed \$450,000 over three years (2000-2003) to reducing teen suicide. The initiative will encourage people at risk of attempting suicide to seek care and improve the care at-risk individuals receive. Grantees include:

- Colorado West Regional Mental Health
- Jefferson Center for Mental Health
- Mental Health Center of Denver
- Mesa County Suicide Prevention Coalition
- Midwestern Colorado Mental Health Center
- Northeast Colorado Health and Human Services Consortium/Rural Solutions
- The Pinon Project
- Southeast Mental Health Services
- Suicide Education and Support Services
- Suicide Prevention Partnership Pikes Peak Region