

# STATE OF COLORADO

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Colorado Department  
of Public Health  
and Environment

**Office of Suicide Prevention Annual Report  
Suicide Prevention in Colorado  
2009 – 2010**

Submitted to the Colorado Joint Budget Committee,  
the Health and Human Services Committee of the House of Representatives,  
and the Health and Human Services Committee of the Senate  
by the Prevention Services Division  
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment  
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Suicide Prevention in Colorado Annual Report 2009-2010

Principal Authors: Jarrod Hindman, M.S., Program Manager  
Office of Suicide Prevention

Shannon A. Breitzman, M.A., Unit Director  
Injury, Suicide and Violence Prevention  
Prevention Services Division

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Full Report Pages 1-8  
Appendices A and B

For additional information or copies of this report contact:

Jarrod Hindman, M.S., Program Manager  
Office of Suicide Prevention  
Prevention Services Division  
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment  
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South  
Denver, Colorado 80246-1530  
303.692.2539  
jarrod.hindman@state.co.us

# Office of Suicide Prevention

## Suicide Prevention in Colorado Annual Report 2009-2010

### Executive Summary

#### The Impact of Suicide in Colorado

Suicide in Colorado continues to challenge public health professionals and concerned citizens throughout the state. In 2009, Colorado's suicide rate of 18.4/100,000 was the highest rate recorded since 1988. Furthermore, the number of Coloradans who died by suicide in 2009 (940) accounted for the highest single year total in the state's history. For purposes of comparison, the number of suicide deaths in 2009 exceeded the number of deaths for homicide (190), motor vehicle crash (553), influenza and pneumonia (655), and diabetes (778). The reasons for the increase in the rate and number of suicide-related deaths in Colorado during 2009 are not clearly understood. However, according to the American Association of Suicidology, "economic strain and personal financial crises have been well documented as precipitating events in individual deaths by suicide. Stressful life events, financial and others, have significant impact on those vulnerable to suicide where typical coping mechanisms are compromised by the effects of mental disorder, substance use, acute psychiatric symptoms, and a host of other risk factors associated with suicide."<sup>1</sup> Given that there is a clear and direct relationship between rates of unemployment and suicide as reported by the American Association of Suicidology, current economic conditions coupled with an unemployment rate in Colorado of 8.1 percent (as of July 2010) may have contributed to recent increases in the number of suicide deaths.

In 2009, suicide was reported as the seventh leading cause of death for all Coloradans. Coloradans ages 85 and older demonstrated the highest suicide rate in Colorado, with a rate of 46.9 deaths /100,000 in 2009.<sup>2</sup> Among youth and young adults ages 10 to 34, suicide constituted the second leading cause of death. In 2007, the most recent year of data available nationally, Colorado had the sixth highest suicide rate in the United States.<sup>3</sup>

Modest estimates from the American Association of Suicidology suggest there are between six and eight people left behind who are acutely impacted by the suicide death of a loved one,<sup>4</sup> suggesting that the 940 suicide deaths in Colorado in 2009 resulted in between 5,640 and 7,520 grieving individuals. These family members and friends are faced not only with the tragedy of losing a loved one, but must navigate through their loss in a society that continues to stigmatize suicide. Furthermore, research suggests that individuals with a family history of suicide are two-and-a-half times more likely to die by suicide than those without such a history.<sup>5</sup>

Suicidal behavior poses a significant financial burden to the state. Each suicide death in Colorado costs on average approximately \$3,738 in direct costs (health care expenses, autopsies and criminal investigations) and \$1,414,842 in indirect costs (estimate of productive years of life lost). In terms of suicide attempts, each hospitalization costs an average of \$10,014 in direct costs and \$11,987 in indirect costs.<sup>6</sup>

The Colorado Office of Suicide Prevention is designated by the state Legislature as the entity charged with leading statewide suicide prevention and intervention efforts in Colorado. The efforts of the office to coordinate focused, data-driven, research-based suicide prevention efforts statewide are key in addressing the burden of suicide in Colorado.

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<sup>1</sup> AAS Statement on the Economy and Suicide. Retrieved September 15, 2010, from [http://www.dmh.ca.gov/PEIStatewideProjects/docs/SuicidePrevention/AAS\\_StatementEconomySuicide.pdf](http://www.dmh.ca.gov/PEIStatewideProjects/docs/SuicidePrevention/AAS_StatementEconomySuicide.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Retrieved September 15, 2010 from <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/cohid>

<sup>3</sup> Retrieved September 12, 2010 from <http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/mortrate.html>

<sup>4</sup> Retrieved September 10, 2010 from <http://www.suicidology.org/web/guest/suicide-loss-survivors>

<sup>5</sup> Retrieved September 10, 2010 from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12387960>

<sup>6</sup> Suicide Prevention Resource Center. *Colorado Suicide Prevention Fact Sheet*. Retrieved September 15, 2010 from [http://www.sprc.org/stateinformation/PDF/statedatasheets/co\\_datasheet.pdf](http://www.sprc.org/stateinformation/PDF/statedatasheets/co_datasheet.pdf).

## The Impact of the Office of Suicide Prevention

Ten years ago, the Office of Suicide Prevention was created in legislation and housed at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Prior to 2000, suicide prevention efforts in Colorado were uncoordinated and fragmented. Only a few community-based programs existed to address the issue. The creation of the Office of Suicide Prevention provided these local suicide prevention agencies with technical assistance, including data analysis, training and funding. Partnerships now have been established in every region of Colorado, resulting in coordinated suicide prevention efforts statewide. These efforts include a shared understanding of suicide data, an emphasis on data-driven and evidence-based prevention practices, and implementation of statewide goals and objectives through funding for community-based grantees.

Data sources, such as the Colorado Violent Death Reporting System, allow the Office of Suicide Prevention to make data-driven funding decisions and to set programmatic priorities. Data from the Colorado Violent Death Reporting System were used to design outreach efforts to adult men, who account for the highest number of suicide deaths in Colorado. The office is working closely with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, the Carson J Spencer Foundation, and Cactus Marketing Communications to develop a social marketing campaign targeting working-age men in Colorado. The creation of the campaign garnered national attention from top researchers and scholars in suicide prevention, who are serving as the advisory committee for the campaign. No other state has adequately addressed the challenges of reaching working-age men, as these men tend to avoid seeking help and are less responsive to emotionally driven communication. A website and marketing campaign will be designed and tailored to effectively target this challenging population, with a scheduled launch in 2011.

Through *Project Safety Net*, the Office of Suicide Prevention's youth-at-risk suicide prevention initiative, 478 Coloradans were trained to recognize and intervene with suicidal youth in 2009-2010. Three- and six-month follow-up surveys with trainees revealed that 49 youth who showed signs of being suicidal were referred for mental health services. Over the next two years, *Project Safety Net* will train an additional 800 individuals who work with youth and will develop referral protocols across all youth-serving agencies in communities funded by the Office of Suicide Prevention. Referral protocols enable the efficient exchange of information about suicidal youth between youth-serving agencies. The Office of Suicide Prevention's evaluation of the project has received national attention and is being used by training developers to strengthen the training programs.

Through the Office of Suicide Prevention's community grants initiative, eight grantee agencies covering more than 20 Colorado counties trained 625 Coloradans to recognize and intervene with identified high-risk populations in 2009-2010. High-risk populations being targeted for training include older adults; men ages 25 to 54; Native Americans; women ages 45 to 64; first responders; returning veterans; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth ages 18 to 24.

There is evidence that the Office of Suicide Prevention and other partners have raised awareness about suicide prevention, while decreasing the stigma about seeking help for those who are suicidal. Since 2000, calls to the suicide prevention Lifeline (1.800.273.TALK), which is funded by the office, have gone up dramatically. (See table below.) At the same time, the suicide rate in Colorado remained steady (with the exception of 2009), suggesting that awareness of this life-saving resource has increased considerably in Colorado. The office includes the hotline number on all informational materials distributed throughout Colorado, and concerted statewide efforts to disseminate materials promoting the Lifeline have increased the number of people using this resource.

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Number of Calls	318	1,516	2,018	3,287	3,232	3,641	4,667	6,089	7,457	9,683

The Office of Suicide Prevention developed new partnerships in 2009-2010 by collaborating on initiatives with agencies working statewide, including the Colorado School Safety Resource Center, the Colorado Department

of Education, the State Emergency Medical and Trauma Advisory Council, the University of Colorado Depression Center and Safe2Tell. Collaborative work included two suicide symposia for school personnel, shared talking points and press releases that were disseminated statewide, and the development of a training program designed specifically for Emergency Medical Trauma providers.

By identifying and addressing strategic priorities, such as using data to inform funding decisions and partnering with other entities to extend statewide reach, the Office of Suicide Prevention is making significant strides in moving suicide prevention efforts forward in Colorado. Suicide continues to be a challenge in Colorado. The 2009 data, while not evident of a trend, reinforce the need for ongoing suicide prevention and intervention efforts statewide, along with more in-depth evaluation of current efforts to determine what is truly effective in preventing suicide deaths. The Office of Suicide Prevention remains well-positioned to lead continuing efforts to promote prevention efforts designed to reduce the tragedy of suicide across all populations in Colorado.

# Office of Suicide Prevention Annual Report

## Suicide Prevention in Colorado 2009-2010

### Introduction

Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statute Section 25-1.5-101(1)(w)(III)(A), the Office of Suicide Prevention at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment is required to report annually on the status of program efforts to coordinate statewide suicide prevention services. This report details the office's suicide prevention initiatives throughout Colorado during the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

The mission of the Office of Suicide Prevention is to serve as the lead entity for suicide prevention and intervention efforts in Colorado, collaborating with communities statewide to reduce the number of suicide deaths and attempts in Colorado. In an effort to broaden the reach and impact of state-level suicide prevention efforts, the office emphasizes using state funding to address strategic priority areas. These priority areas include funding local initiatives, supporting a statewide crisis line, increasing knowledge about suicide risk and prevention resources, collaborating with partners at the state and local level, and training individuals to recognize and respond to suicidal crisis.

### The Impact of Suicide in Colorado

Suicide is a public health problem that impacts all Coloradans, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation. In 2009, Colorado's suicide rate of 18.4/100,000 was the highest rate recorded since 1988. Furthermore, the number of Coloradans who died by suicide in 2009 (940) accounted for the highest single year total in the state's history. For purposes of comparison, the number of suicide deaths in 2009 exceeded the number of deaths from homicide (190), motor vehicle crash (553), influenza and pneumonia (655), and diabetes (778). The reasons for the increase in the rate and number of suicide-related deaths in Colorado during 2009 is not clearly understood; however, "economic strain and personal financial crises have been well documented as precipitating events in individual deaths by suicide. Stressful life events, financial and others, have significant impact on those vulnerable to suicide where typical coping mechanisms are compromised by the effects of mental disorder, substance use, acute psychiatric symptoms, and a host of other risk factors associated with suicide."<sup>7</sup> Given that there is a clear and direct relationship between rates of unemployment and suicide as reported by the American Association of Suicidology, current economic conditions coupled with an unemployment rate in Colorado of 8.1 percent (as of July 2010) may have contributed to recent increases in the number of suicide deaths.

In 2009, suicide was reported as the seventh leading cause of death for all Coloradans. Coloradans ages 85 and older demonstrated the highest suicide rate in Colorado, with a rate of 46.9 deaths /100,000 in 2009.<sup>8</sup> Among youth and young adults ages 10 to 34, suicide constituted the second leading cause of death. In 2007, the most recent year of data available nationally, Colorado had the sixth-highest suicide rate in the United States.<sup>9</sup> As shown in Figure 1 on Page 2, suicide rates are higher among males compared to females for every age group, and males ages 75 and older account for the highest rates of suicide in Colorado.

Modest estimates from the American Association of Suicidology suggest there are between six and eight people left behind who suffer acute impacts of the suicide death of a loved one,<sup>10</sup> suggesting that the 940 suicide deaths in Colorado in 2009 resulted in between 5,640 and 7,520 grieving individuals. These family members and friends are not only faced with the tragedy of losing a loved one, but must navigate through their loss in a

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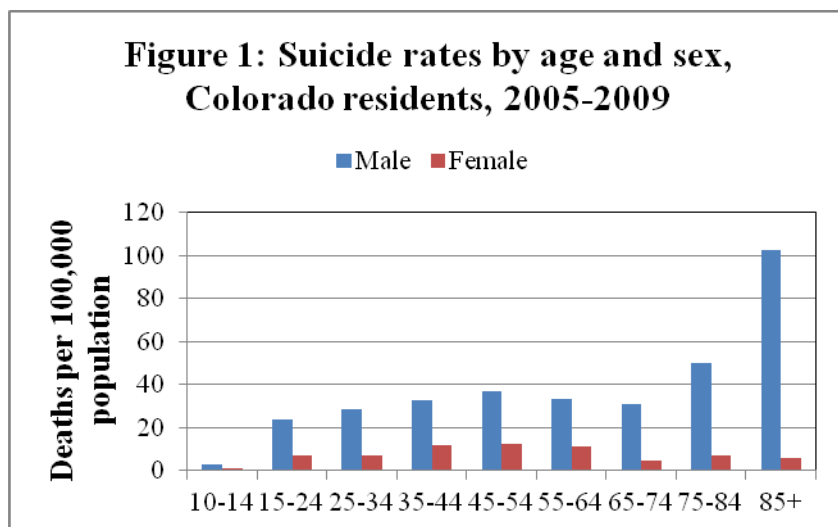
<sup>7</sup> AAS Statement on the Economy and Suicide. Retrieved September 15, 2010, from [http://www.dmh.ca.gov/PEIStatewideProjects/docs/SuicidePrevention/AAS\\_StatementEconomySuicide.pdf](http://www.dmh.ca.gov/PEIStatewideProjects/docs/SuicidePrevention/AAS_StatementEconomySuicide.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Retrieved September 15, 2010 from <http://www.cdph.state.co.us/cohid>

<sup>9</sup> Retrieved September 12, 2010 from <http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/mortrate.html>

<sup>10</sup> Retrieved September 10, 2010 from <http://www.suicidology.org/web/guest/suicide-loss-survivors>

society that continues to stigmatize suicide. Furthermore, research suggests that individuals with a family history of suicide are two-and-a-half times more likely to die by suicide than those without such a history.<sup>11</sup>



In addition, suicidal behavior poses a significant financial burden to the state. Each suicide death in Colorado costs, on average, approximately \$3,738 in direct costs (health care expenses, autopsies and criminal investigations) and \$1,414,842 in indirect costs (estimate of productive years of life lost). In terms of suicide attempts, each hospitalization costs an average of \$10,014 in direct costs and \$11,987 in indirect costs.<sup>12</sup>

### The Impact of the Office of Suicide Prevention in Colorado

Ten years ago, the Office of Suicide Prevention was created in legislation and housed at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Prior to 2000, suicide prevention efforts in Colorado were uncoordinated and fragmented. Only a few community-based programs existed to address the issue. The creation of the office provided these local suicide prevention agencies with technical assistance, including data analysis, training and funding. Partnerships now have been established in every region of Colorado, resulting in coordinated suicide prevention efforts statewide. These efforts include a shared understanding of suicide data, an emphasis on data-driven and evidence-based prevention practices, and implementation of statewide goals and objectives through funding for community-based grantees. (See pages 3 and 4 for implementation efforts and Appendix A for a description of OSP grantees.)

Key initiatives of the Office of Suicide Prevention since 2000 have included the following:

- a continuous and strong partnership with the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado
- partnership and support of the 1.800.273.TALK suicide crisis Lifeline housed in Colorado at the Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center
- development and dissemination of a variety of strategic plans for suicide prevention, including the 2009 *Preventing Suicide in Colorado: Progress Achieved and Goals for the Future* in partnership with The Colorado Trust and Mental Health America of Colorado
- continuous public education and awareness through informational materials and resources distributed throughout the state
- ongoing support for suicide prevention efforts at the local level in communities throughout Colorado through community grant awards.

Each year, the Office of Suicide Prevention expands its statewide partnerships and collaborative efforts by funding local initiatives; partnering with key stakeholders; and networking with new organizations working in

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12387960>

<sup>12</sup> Suicide Prevention Resource Center. *Colorado Suicide Prevention Fact Sheet*. [http://www.sprc.org/stateinformation/PDF/statedatasheets/co\\_datashet.pdf](http://www.sprc.org/stateinformation/PDF/statedatasheets/co_datashet.pdf).

suicide prevention, violence prevention, public health, school safety and other statewide and local prevention initiatives. The office remains poised to continue coordinating and leading efforts statewide, and it is crucial that statewide efforts continue to evolve.

## **Key Initiatives in Fiscal Year 2009-2010**

### **Project Safety Net**

In October 2009, the Office of Suicide Prevention extended *Project Safety Net*, which completed its initial three-year implementation phase in September 2009, to enhance and expand the statewide safety net for adolescents at risk for suicide in Colorado. *Project Safety Net* trains adults who work with adolescents in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems, and adults who work with Hispanic/Latino and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth to recognize and intervene with suicidal youth in these high-risk populations.

Participating counties include Weld, Pueblo, El Paso, Jefferson, Gilpin, Clear Creek, Montrose, Delta, Gunnison, Ouray and Douglas counties, and the 10 counties in northeast Colorado, which are served by Rural Solutions in Sterling. Through *Project Safety Net*, the Office of Suicide Prevention and partnering communities implement strategies and trainings designed to ensure that youth at risk for suicide are identified, assessed and referred to appropriate services. The “Start the Conversation” education and awareness campaign will be expanded over the next two years to include radio and television spots.

*Project Safety Net* focuses on training adult gatekeepers—people who come into contact with individuals who may be at risk for suicide and are in a position to help—so they are able to recognize and intervene with a suicidal person. Gatekeepers connect the suicidal person to the helping resource he/she needs. *Project Safety Net* emphasizes training adults who work with high-risk adolescents in each participating community. In Year One of the project (October 2009 through September 2010), 33 training sessions were completed, and 478 individuals in the participating counties were trained as gatekeepers. Trainees showed improvement from pre-tests to post-tests relative to their intentions to inquire about suicidal feelings. Three- and six-month follow-up surveys with trainees revealed that 49 youth who showed signs of being suicidal were referred for mental health services. Evaluation results also showed that participants would benefit from additional training and information to refresh and refine their skills. This information led the Office of Suicide Prevention and the Colorado State University evaluation team to develop a “booster” training video designed to increase the long-term effectiveness of the training in Colorado. Once completed and evaluated for effectiveness, the short video clips will be made available to trainees through the office’s website, and will be shared with the gatekeeper training developers and other states.

Under *Project Safety Net*, the Office of Suicide Prevention developed a bilingual public awareness campaign targeting all adults in the seven communities/regions funded under this initiative ([www.preventyouthsuicide.com](http://www.preventyouthsuicide.com)). The “Start the Conversation – Suicide Prevention is Your Business” campaign reinforces the role that all community members play in preventing suicide. Included in the campaign are radio spots, posters, bumper stickers, buttons and informational brochures. All materials are available in Spanish and English, including specific contact information for each county. Additionally, the office distributed “Start the Conversation” materials to communities throughout Colorado, including those not participating in *Project Safety Net*, to promote youth suicide awareness and prevention. More than 5,000 “Start the Conversation” materials were distributed across Colorado during the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

### **Community Grants**

Since its inception, a primary initiative of the Office of Suicide Prevention has been an annual community grant program. Between 2001 and 2005, the office awarded an average of 10 grants per year to support suicide prevention efforts in communities throughout Colorado. In 2006, the office implemented a three-year grant award period, and awarded 10 grantees up to \$10,000 per year through June 30, 2009. This move to a three-year grant cycle reflected the office’s commitment to implementing and evaluating research-driven and sustainable strategies that need longer-term funding streams. Grants have been awarded statewide in urban and rural settings. Priority has been given to programs that target populations at high risk for suicide, such as older adults,



working-age men, Hispanic/Latino teens, college students, returning veterans and first responders. Grantee activities have included gatekeeper training programs, education and awareness campaigns, support services for families that have lost a loved one to suicide, and screening services for identifying individuals who are suicidal and in need of life saving services. In the training programs alone, more than 1,000 individuals were trained to respond to suicidal crisis during this three-year grant cycle.

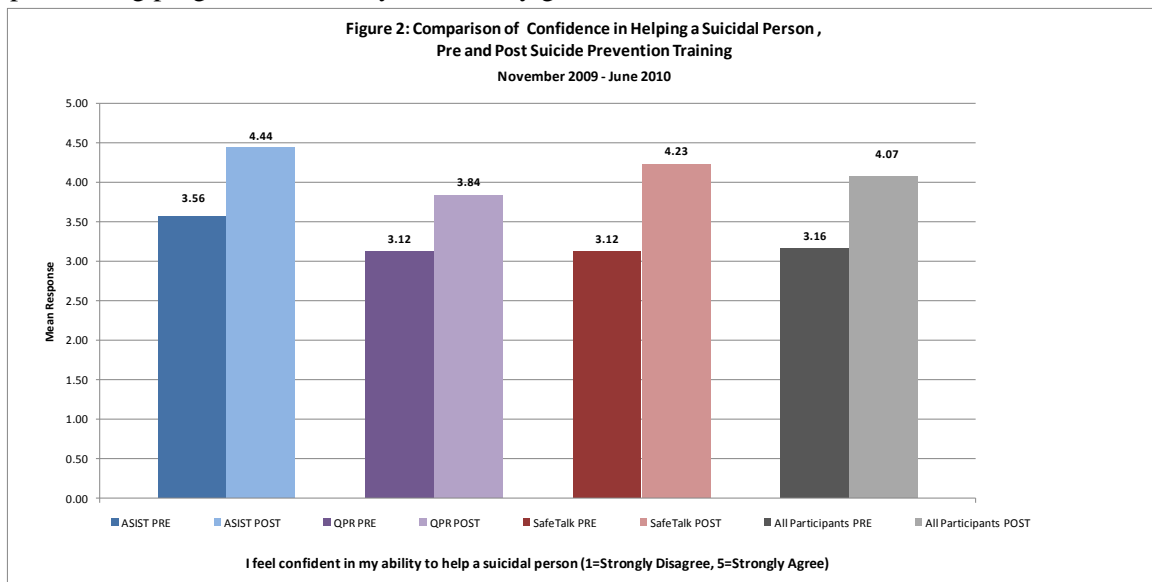
In July 2009, using state general fund dollars, the Office of Suicide Prevention awarded eight new community suicide prevention grants totaling \$85,000 to agencies throughout Colorado to implement and evaluate suicide prevention and intervention training programs. Using data from the Colorado Violent Death Reporting System and the Colorado Health Information Dataset, the office identified the following priority target populations, and/or those who work with these populations, to receive training:

- older adults
- men ages 25 to 54
- Native Americans
- women ages 45 to 64
- first responders
- lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning adolescents ages 18 to 24
- returning veterans

The eight community grants were awarded to the following agencies:  
 Catholic Charities and Community Services of the Archdiocese of Denver  
 Eagle River Youth Coalition  
 Jefferson Center for Mental Health  
 Midwestern Colorado Mental Health Center  
 Rural Solutions  
 San Luis Valley Comprehensive Community Mental Health Center  
 Southern Ute Community Action Programs, Inc.  
 Suicide Prevention Partnership Pikes Peak Region.

A description of these projects and communities served under this grant program are included in Appendix A.

In Year One of the three-year project, 48 training sessions were delivered to 625 individuals in the funded communities. At the completion of training, 94.7 percent of participants felt the training increased their knowledge about suicide prevention. Eighty-three percent of trainees agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident in their ability to help a suicidal person (compared to 40 percent prior to training). Furthermore, 91.7 percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the knowledge gained from the training will help prevent suicide or reduce the problems that might lead to suicide among the population(s) they serve. Figure 2 below shows pre- and post-test scores related to trainee confidence in helping a suicidal youth among the three gatekeeper training programs offered by community grantees.



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

In 1998, the governor-appointed Suicide Prevention Advisory Commission examined the impact of suicide in Colorado and developed the first state plan for suicide prevention and intervention. When the Advisory Commission completed its work, many of the members joined together to form the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado to advise and support the work of the Office of Suicide Prevention. This multidisciplinary group of suicide prevention advocates and professionals has been a partner on a number of initiatives, including 20 town hall meetings held throughout Colorado since 2002 to share suicide prevention information, and to provide technical expertise to the development of community-based prevention programs. A speaker's bureau was formed and trained to provide awareness and education presentations to community groups in Colorado. The coalition also works statewide to support the implementation of policies that improve access to mental health services, the provision of training for teachers and communication about suicidal students on college campuses.

The Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado has expanded its board and general membership by recruiting members in every region of Colorado, and now has excellent representation statewide. In collaboration with the Office of Suicide Prevention, the coalition supports its member agencies through an informative and easily navigated website ([www.suicidepreventioncolorado.org](http://www.suicidepreventioncolorado.org)), a statewide resource directory that identifies all agencies in the state engaged in suicide prevention, and active support for all of the activities of the Office of Suicide Prevention. Because the office supports only two full-time employees, partnership with the coalition's board and membership enhances the office's capacity to improve its services and statewide impact.

## **Public Awareness and the Suicide Lifeline (1.800.273.TALK)**

The *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention* released by the U.S. Surgeon General recommends raising awareness about suicide, reducing the stigma of being a consumer of mental health and substance abuse services, and implementing training for recognition of at-risk behavior.<sup>13</sup> The Office of Suicide Prevention dedicates funding to implementing these recommendations. The stigma of mental illness and substance abuse prevents people from seeking assistance. The office's public awareness efforts focus on informing the public that suicide is preventable and on reducing the stigma of seeking help for mental or emotional distress. More than 12,700 educational materials were distributed to people and organizations from every region of the state in 2009-2010. Materials disseminated included posters and bookmarks in both English and Spanish; suicide prevention resources for families; postvention (support, prevention and intervention after a suicide death occurs) guidelines for schools; and information on warning signs, myths and facts related to suicide, local resources, and older adult suicide. Materials from *Project Safety Net's* "Start the Conversation: Suicide Prevention is Your Business" campaign, including posters, stickers, buttons and brochures in English and Spanish, were also disseminated to project communities and other partners throughout Colorado.

Staff from the Office of Suicide Prevention presented on suicide prevention at the 43<sup>rd</sup> American Association of Suicidology Annual Conference, including presenting a full-day pre-conference session on suicide among men. Staff also presented at the "Bridging the Divide: Suicide Awareness and Prevention Summit," and the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act Grantees Meeting. Two staff proposals also were accepted for presentation at the 138<sup>th</sup> Annual American Public Health Association meeting taking place in Denver in November 2010. In addition, the office responded to numerous media requests by appearing on television newscasts and radio broadcasts. The office also was featured in newspapers and electronic media throughout the year.

All educational resources disseminated by the Office of Suicide Prevention include information about the 1.800.273.TALK Lifeline number. There is evidence that the office and other partners have had an impact on raising awareness about suicide prevention, while decreasing stigma for those seeking help. Since 2000, calls to the suicide prevention Lifeline (1.800.273.TALK), which is operated by the Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center and funded by the Office of Suicide Prevention, have increased dramatically (see table on Page 6), suggesting that awareness of this life-saving resource notably increased.

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<sup>13</sup> *National strategy for suicide prevention: Goals and objectives for action*. Rockville, MD: U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Public Health Services, 2001.

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
# of Calls	318	1,516	2,018	3,287	3,232	3,641	4,667	6,089	7,457	9,683

### **Men’s Campaign**

Men ages 35 to 54 account for the highest number of suicide deaths in Colorado. In an effort to address suicide risk within this population, the Office of Suicide Prevention is partnering with the Carson J Spencer Foundation, Cactus Marketing Communications, and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention to design and implement a statewide online resource and public education campaign. The goal is to reduce the stigma among men associated with seeking help and to provide them with online information and tools to help them identify and implement ways to help themselves. Using masculine language, humor and an overall theme of “tools” designed to empower men to actively combat suicidal ideation and intent, the website will be designed specifically for men and will be unique when compared to the suicide prevention and intervention resources currently available.

The Office of Suicide Prevention convened an advisory board comprising both Colorado and national suicide prevention experts to guide the development of campaign materials and website content, and to ensure the program achieves optimum success. The social marketing campaign will use compelling messages and humor to direct men and their loved ones to the website. The website and social marketing campaign will launch in 2011.

### **New Partnerships and Initiatives Developed in Fiscal Year 2009-2010**

#### **School Safety and Suicide Prevention**

In June 2010, the director of the Office of Suicide Prevention was appointed by the executive director of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to serve on the Advisory Board of the Colorado School Safety Resource Center at the Colorado Department of Public Safety. Senate Bill 08-001, signed by Governor Bill Ritter in 2008, created the resource center, which is charged to collaboratively assist local schools and communities to create safe and positive school environments for Colorado students. Suicide prevention is emphasized in the legislation as a critical component of school safety, and the resource center has made it a priority in its first two years of work.

In May 2010, the Office of Suicide Prevention partnered with the Colorado School Safety Resource Center and the Colorado Department of Education to plan and host a half-day symposium in Denver on suicide prevention, intervention and postvention in schools. One hundred and fifty school staff members (counselors, school psychologists, safety teams and administrators) from across the state attended the symposium, and feedback was excellent. Topics and panel presentations included suicide risk and data, risk assessment tools for schools, suicide prevention programs, and postvention guidelines for schools and communities. Attendees left with a packet of tools to help them develop stronger suicide prevention protocols in their schools. Attendee feedback strongly suggested that more time was needed for discussion, networking and attendee questions.

Because of the enthusiastic response to the May 2010 symposium, a second full-day symposium was held in October 2010 in Highlands Ranch. The symposium covered the same topics that were presented in May, and included time for discussion and questions among the 250 members of school personnel in attendance. Like the May symposium, the October event had a waiting list due to space limitations. Because of the success and demand for the information presented, the Office of Suicide Prevention, Colorado School Safety Resource Center and Colorado Department of Education are exploring opportunities to host a third symposium in southern Colorado and/or on the Western Slope in 2011.

#### **Emergency Medical Technician Training for Trainers**

In the fall of 2009, the Office of Suicide Prevention and the Unintentional Injury Program at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment partnered with the State Emergency Medical and Trauma Advisory Council to develop a suicide prevention and intervention training program for emergency medical technicians. The researchers who developed the Question, Persuade, Refer training agreed to modify their first

responder training to be specific for emergency medical technicians in Colorado. The training has four components:

- 1) recognizing the risk factors and warning signs for suicide
- 2) teaching skills for most effectively responding to a suicide death or attempt
- 3) recognizing how to look out for and intervene with peers struggling with suicidal thoughts
- 4) focusing on taking care of oneself, knowing how to ask for help, and recognizing the impact that secondary trauma can have.

In May 2010, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Question, Persuade, Refer Institute hosted training-of-trainer sessions in Montrose and Denver, which were attended by 40 emergency medical technicians and instructors from across Colorado. At the conclusion of the training, attendees became certified to teach the Question, Persuade, Refer suicide prevention curriculum to other emergency medical technicians and first responders in their community. After some minor revisions to the curriculum, the 40 trainers will begin training individuals in their community at the start of 2011.

### **University of Colorado Depression Center**

The University of Colorado Depression Center seeks to improve the lives of people with depression and bipolar disorder through clinical excellence, innovative research, community programs and education. Suicide prevention is one of the Depression Center's key community programs, and, in 2009, Depression Center staff members joined the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado. Their strong clinical and research work provide additional support to the suicide prevention community in Colorado. In 2010, the Office of Suicide Prevention partnered with the Depression Center to compile talking points and shared press releases regarding the release of the 2009 suicide data in Colorado. The talking points were disseminated to suicide prevention partners statewide, engendering a coordinated response to media and public inquiries about the data. The shared press release, coupled with the suicide death of Denver Bronco Kenny McKinley, generated a significant amount of media coverage for the Office of Suicide Prevention and partner agencies statewide.

### **Safe2Tell**

In July 2009, Office of Suicide Prevention staff joined the Advisory Board of Safe2Tell, an organization started shortly after the 1999 Columbine High School shootings, designed to help students, parents and the school community anonymously report any threatening behavior that may endanger students or communities. Safe2Tell's tip-line (877.542.SAFE) is used by schools throughout Colorado, and calls related to suicide are among the most common received. As a result, Safe2Tell and the Office of Suicide Prevention have partnered to promote the importance of suicide prevention and intervention in Colorado schools, and to encourage students, school personnel and parents to take suicide threats seriously and tell someone if a student is suicidal.

### **Conclusion**

The Office of Suicide Prevention is poised to continue leading statewide suicide prevention efforts in Colorado, and is committed to expanding partnerships, implementing innovative and data-driven initiatives, and decreasing the burden of suicide. Key initiatives over the next five years will include the following:

- continuation of the youth-focused *Project Safety Net* and the community grants program
- implementation and evaluation of the marketing campaign targeting working-age men in Colorado
- partnership with the Colorado Violent Death Reporting System staff to collect and analyze suicide death data
- partnership with the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado to expand statewide partnerships at the community and regional level
- integration of suicide prevention with other public health programs to address the risks shared across health issues

Given the resources available, the Office of Suicide Prevention effectively develops and implements innovative and cost-effective initiatives throughout Colorado to help reduce the burden of suicide. Given the current

recession and higher unemployment rates, an older adult population that will increase dramatically over the next 10 years, and high suicide rates among veterans and active military personnel, it is more important than ever that the state of Colorado provide strong suicide prevention and intervention services. The Office of Suicide Prevention leads these efforts, and it is vital that those who need help for suicidal crisis are supported by a system that recognizes their needs.

By identifying and addressing strategic priorities, the Office of Suicide Prevention made strides in 2009-2010 to enhance community capacity for suicide prevention and to increase public awareness. Unfortunately, the 2009 suicide data indicate that suicide remains a costly and significant public health problem in Colorado. The burden of suicide in Colorado demands that prevention and intervention efforts are maintained and expanded, and the Office of Suicide Prevention is committed to initiating and sustaining innovative prevention programs, collaborating with partners statewide and advancing the science of suicide prevention in Colorado.

## APPENDIX A

### Office of Suicide Prevention Grantee Programs and Initiatives

#### Community Grants: July 2009 – June 2012

The OSP awarded community grants to eight agencies totaling \$85,000 per year. Grants were awarded throughout Colorado. The following agencies were funded from July 2009 through June 2012.

#### **Statewide**

- *Parents Surviving Suicide of Metropolitan Denver* – This group is purchasing and disseminating books and other reference materials on suicide prevention and the aftermath of suicide, and disseminating them to libraries statewide.

#### **Denver-Metro**

- *Jefferson Center for Mental Health* – This agency is providing Safe TALK gatekeeper training to adults who work with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning adolescents ages 18 to 24 in Jefferson, Gilpin and Clear Creek Counties. The training also includes a section on sexuality and gender-identity issues for participants to better understand the adolescents they are serving.

#### **Denver, Weld, and Larimer Counties**

- *Catholic Charities and Community Services* – This agency is providing Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) gatekeeper training to older adults and to those that work with older adults.

#### **Eagle County**

- *Eagle River Youth Coalition* – This agency is providing QPR and Safe TALK gatekeeper training to first responders and community members throughout the Eagle River Valley.

#### **Montrose, Delta, Gunnison and Hinsdale Counties**

- *Midwestern Colorado Mental Health Center* – This agency is providing QPR gatekeeper training to older adults and those that work with older adults, first responders, and veterans and their families in Delta, Gunnison, and Hinsdale Counties.

#### **Northeast Colorado**

- *Rural Solutions* – This agency is providing QPR gatekeeper training to older adults and to those that work with older adults in Logan, Morgan, Cheyenne, Kit Carson, Lincoln, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, and Yuma Counties.

#### **San Luis Valley**

- *San Luis Valley Comprehensive Community Mental Health Center* – This agency is providing Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and Safe TALK training to older adults and those that work with older adults, first responders, and men ages 35 to 54 throughout the San Luis Valley.

#### **La Plata County**

- *Southern Ute Community Action Programs, Inc.* – This agency is providing ASIST and Safe TALK gatekeeper training to community members throughout La Plata County, with an emphasis on their Native American Population and older adults.

#### **El Paso and Teller Counties**

- *Suicide Prevention Partnership Pikes Peak Region* – This agency is providing QPR gatekeeper training to returning veterans and their families, and to older adults and those that work with older adults.

## **National Suicide Lifeline (1.800.273.TALK)**

- ***Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center*** – The OSP provides funding to support the capacity of the call center, which answers all Colorado-based calls to 1.800.273.TALK, which is the national 24 hour suicide crisis hotline in the United States. Funding supports call center staff, and the Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center provides the OSP with data about calls and callers to the hotline.

## **Project Safety Net: October 2009 – September 2012**

As described in the narrative of this report, the OSP received \$1.5 million from SAMHSA to implement youth suicide prevention initiatives throughout Colorado. The OSP is funding the following agencies to implement Project Safety Net:

- ***Dynamic Family Design, Inc.*** – Weld County
- ***Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center*** – Pueblo County
- ***Suicide Prevention Partnership Pikes Peak Region*** – El Paso County
- ***Jefferson Center for Mental Health*** – Jefferson, Gilpin, and Clear Creek Counties
- ***Douglas County School District*** – Douglas County
- ***Midwestern Colorado Mental Health Center*** – Montrose and Delta Counties
- ***Rural Solutions*** - Logan, Morgan, Cheyenne, Kit Carson, Lincoln, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, and Yuma Counties
- ***Colorado State University*** – Local evaluation team

## APPENDIX B

### Suicide Prevention Programs in Colorado

#### Adams County

##### **Project CASE**

24150 East 156<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Brighton, CO 80603

projectcase@aol.com

[www.projectcase.org](http://www.projectcase.org)

Contact: Nancy Miller Page

Project CASE is a nonprofit organization devoted to understanding depression and to using ASIST skills to save the lives of those at risk of suicide. In the event that a life is lost, Project CASE will devote resources to those who are left behind by creating a safe and supportive environment for their grief. Project CASE is dedicated to fighting the destructive result of depression and suicide through education, ASIST training, caregivers training, and the Project CASE Support Group.

#### Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero and Prowers Counties

##### **Project HOPE**

Southeast Mental Health Center

3500 1st Street South

Lamar, CO 81052

719-336-7501

711 Barnes

La Junta, CO 81050

(719) 384-5446

<http://www.semhs.org/>

Contact: Lisa Chavez

Project HOPE is focused on education and awareness, gatekeeper training, screenings and appropriate referrals. The focus is on young people, adults and service providers in Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero and Prowers counties.

#### **High Plains Community Health Center**

201 Kendall Drive

Lamar, CO 81052

(719) 336-0261

Contact: Jay Brooke

High Plains Community Health Center implements aggressive case management to ensure coordination of services between patients presenting to their primary care providers with symptoms of depression and their in-house mental health clinician.

#### Denver County

##### **The Carson J Spencer Foundation**

P.O. Box 351418

Westminster, CO 80035

Sally@CarsonJSpencer.org

[www.carsonjspencer.org](http://www.carsonjspencer.org)

Contact: Dr. Sally Spencer-Thomas

The Carson J Spencer Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to early intervention and effective treatment for people with bipolar disorder and suicidal ideation. The Carson J Spencer Foundation is especially interested in organizations working directly to increase awareness of bipolar disorder and suicide, and increase early intervention and treatment efficacy for bipolar disorder.



### **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

The Shaka Franklin Foundation for Youth focuses on the self-destructive behavior of young people ages 12 to 21 years. The Foundation also informs and educates young people and adults about the dangers and myths that surround suicide, depression and grief.

### **Voz y Corazon**

Mental Health Center of Denver  
4141 East Dickenson Place  
Denver, CO 80222  
(303) 504-6500

Contact: Lydia Prado

Voz y Corazon is a project focused on education, awareness, gatekeeper training and the continued involvement of project participants, especially improving young adolescent girls' abilities to provide suicide prevention messages and activities to others.

### **Douglas County**

#### **Douglas County Suicide Prevention Coalition**

(303) 387-0087

[Leslie.Clemensen@dcsdk12.org](mailto:Leslie.Clemensen@dcsdk12.org)

Contact: Leslie Clemensen

The Douglas County Suicide Prevention Coalition has been meeting on a monthly basis since spring 2007. The coalition consists of representatives from Sky Ridge Medical Center, Douglas County School District, Douglas County Sheriff's office, Castle Rock Police Department, Castle Rock Police Department Victim Assistance, area mental health agencies, and the Kiwanis Club of Castle Pines. Close to 200 school personnel and community members have been trained in the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, and a school-based suicide prevention program is being planned for Douglas County middle and high school students.

### **Eagle County**

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

PO Box 4613  
Edwards, Colorado 81632  
(970) 926-3250

[eryc@centurytel.net](mailto:eryc@centurytel.net)

[www.eagleyouth.org](http://www.eagleyouth.org)

Contact: Christina Gair

The Eagle River Youth Coalition is a not-for-profit organization addressing suicidal behavior in youth of the Vail Valley by providing suicide intervention skills training to local community members and suicide awareness presentations via wellness events and parent forums. The coalition also works to build awareness among medical providers regarding appropriate screening for patients.

### **El Paso and Teller Counties**

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

2860 S. Circle, Suite 102  
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80906  
(719) 573-7447

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

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

<http://www.sppppr.org>

Contact: Janet Karnes

The Suicide Prevention Partnership of the Pikes Peak Region is a nonprofit organization, addressing suicide by bringing together law enforcement, mental and public health, the military, government, business, the religious community, educators and local citizens. The Partnership educates the general public through a speakers' bureau, a resource library including videos, pamphlets, books and current statistics; consults on crisis response team development; provides support resources for survivors of suicide; and presents workshops and awareness training. The Suicide Prevention Education and Advocacy Coalition is a Colorado Trust Initiative focused on the general population, teens, and seniors of El Paso and Teller counties.

### **Another Life Foundation**

Colorado Springs, CO 80910

(719) 216-7238

anotherlifefoundation@hotmail.com

[www.anotherlifefoundation.org](http://www.anotherlifefoundation.org)

Contact: Stephanie Green

Another Life Foundation is the nation's only consumer-run organization dedicated to helping individuals battling with suicidal behaviors. Their mission is to promote wellness, empowerment, and support to save lives and reduce suicidal behaviors by education, training, mentoring, and linking people with a variety of resources.

### **Garfield, Pitkin and Eagle Counties**

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

187 10<sup>th</sup> Street

Carbondale, Colorado 81623

(970) 309-3506

<http://www.kdnk.org/youthradio.cfm>

Contact: Felicia Trevor Gallo

The Andy Zanca Youth Empowerment Program is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the empowerment of youth through media and the arts. The program funds a youth radio group called Identity Crisis Youth Radio, which includes a weekly, half-hour talk radio program produced by youth, ages 10 to 18. The professionals working with these youth have backgrounds in counseling, education, journalism and technology.

### **Jefferson, Gilpin, and Clear Creek Counties**

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

5265 Vance St.

Arvada, Colorado 80002

(303) 425-0300

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

[www.jcmh.org](http://www.jcmh.org) or [www.endteensuicide.org](http://www.endteensuicide.org)

Contact: Mindy Klowden

The Jefferson Center helped start many grassroots suicide prevention efforts, including the Columbine/Chatfield Coalition for Youth. Center staff members lead debriefings for school staff, students and families following a teen suicide and provide suicide prevention presentations to schools, businesses and community groups and on local cable access channels, and distribute educational booklets and handouts on suicide prevention. The Tri-County Trust Project: Suicide Prevention is a Colorado Trust Initiative focused on education and awareness of youth in middle and high schools in Jefferson, Gilpin and Clear Creek counties. The Jefferson Center also has an initiative funded by the Office of Suicide Prevention targeting gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth in Jefferson, Gilpin and Clear Creek counties.

### **Larimer County**

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

315 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street

Loveland, Colorado 80537

(970) 635-9301

<http://www.suicideresourcecenter.org/>

Contact: Lori Daigle

The Suicide Resource Center coordinates and develops suicide education, prevention, intervention and postvention in communities in Larimer County. Many of the center's programs are educational including a speakers' bureau, a school-based suicide prevention program called "Raising Awareness of Personal Power," which educates teens to help them identify suicide warning signs and access community services, and a Youth Yellow Pages, a pocket-sized resource directory for Larimer County teenagers. The Suicide Resource Center also provides support to those individuals who have suffered a loss due to suicide through a monthly drop-in grief support group for adults and teens. The Center also provides a support group for individuals with depression or bipolar disorder and their loved ones, because mental health issues are closely linked to suicide.

### **Logan, Sedgwick, Morgan, Washington, Yuma, Lincoln, Kit Carson, Phillips Counties**

#### **Rural Solutions**

P.O. Box 503

115 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Ave.

Sterling, CO 80751

(970) 526-3616

mail@rural-solutions.org

<http://www.rural-solutions.org/>

Contact: Maranda Miller

Rural Solutions is a coalition of community service providers, community grassroots organizations, mental health providers, social services departments, domestic violence agencies, handicapped services, public health, Area Agency on Aging, and elected officials. Rural Solutions has an Office of Suicide Prevention funded project targeting older adults in northeast Colorado. The LifeSource Project is a Colorado Trust Initiative focused on educating Northeast Colorado on the availability of resources so that individuals can make positive decisions concerning healthy living that resolve issues of suicide. The focus is on suicide prevention and treatment resources awareness, improved gatekeeper skills, increased referrals for treatment and improved prevention services.

### **Mesa County**

#### **Mesa County Suicide Prevention Coalition**

#### **Western Colorado Suicide Prevention Foundation**

P.O. Box 4329

Grand Junction, Colorado 81502

(970) 683-6626

<http://www.suicidepreventionfoundation.org/index.html>

Sheila.Linwood@mesacounty.us

Contact: Sheila Linwood

The Mesa County Suicide Prevention Coalition is comprised of professionals and survivors of suicide working together to address suicide in Mesa County. This group has trained community gatekeepers in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, is active in awareness and educational presentations, and has active partnerships and collaborations with local medical facilities, school districts, social services, youth serving organizations and senior citizens organizations. The Office of Suicide Prevention funds an initiative exploring ways to effectively address suicide prevention among construction workers and workers in the oil and gas industries, which is a demographic with high suicide rates in Mesa County. The Colorado Trust funds the Link for Life project, which emphasizes public awareness, education and training.

### **Moffat and Routt Counties**

#### **REPS (Reaching Everyone Preventing Suicide)**

Steamboat Mental Health Center

407 South Lincoln Ave.

PO Box 774706

Steamboat Springs, CO 80477  
(970) 879-2141

<http://www.justasknow.org/reps.html>

[rautrey@cwrnhc.org](mailto:rautrey@cwrnhc.org)

Contact: Ronna Autrey

Reaching Everyone Preventing Suicide is a broad-based community group dedicated to the prevention of suicide and suicide attempts in Moffat and Routt Counties. The group's main purpose is to create a suicide-free community through educating the community on suicide and suicide prevention and offering help to those in need. Reaching Everyone Prevention Suicide makes presentations to the community and is housed at the Steamboat Mental Health Center. Reaching Everyone Preventing Suicide is a Colorado Trust Initiative focused on education, awareness and risk assessments.

### **Montezuma and Delores Counties**

#### **The Pinon Project Family Resource Center**

#### **Montelores Suicide Prevention Coalition**

300 N. Elm

P.O. Box 1510

Cortez, CO 81321

(970) 564-1195

[pinon@frontier.net](mailto:pinon@frontier.net)

[www.thepinonproject.org](http://www.thepinonproject.org)

Contact: Diana Buza

The Montelores Suicide Prevention Coalition seeks to create a community that provides the appropriate supports and protections that can improve an individual's ability to deal with life's difficult circumstances through awareness, education, screening and postvention. The coalition targets residents of Montezuma and Delores counties including Native Americans and senior citizens. The Office of Suicide Prevention funds an initiative targeting Native Americans and suicide prevention gatekeeper training. The Montelores Suicide Prevention Initiative is a Colorado Trust Initiative.

### **Montrose, Delta, Ouray, San Miguel, Gunnison and Hinsdale Counties**

#### **Midwestern Colorado Mental Health Center**

P.O. Box 1208

Montrose, CO 81402

(970) 252-3200

[www.midwestmhc.org](http://www.midwestmhc.org)

Contacts: Carol Jean Garner

The Midwestern Colorado Mental Health Center educates the public to recognize suicidal behavior and know what resources are available; provides screenings and referral programs; offers support programs to schools, senior centers, primary care physicians and others; and offers postvention support groups. The Office of Suicide Prevention funds an initiative targeting men through suicide prevention education, screening, support groups and training. The coalition targets youth, middle-aged men and the elderly. The Midwestern Colorado Mental Health Center is a Colorado Trust Initiative.

### **Pueblo County**

#### **Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center**

1925 East Orman Ave., Suite G25

Pueblo, Colorado 81004

(719) 564-6642

Help Line: (719) 544-1133

Teen Line: (719) 564-5566

Statewide: 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)

<http://pspc.squarespace.com/>

Contact: Eleanor Hamm

Established in March 1968, the Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center provides comprehensive suicide prevention, intervention and postvention services. This organization is the only center in Colorado certified by the American Association of Suicidology and responds to all calls to the 1-800-SUICIDE and 1-800-273-TALK national hotlines. The Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center performs community education; provides a 24-hour help line; and provides grief and trauma support for family and friends who have lost someone to suicide. The Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center prints a Youth Yellow Pages 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. 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. 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.

### **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

<http://www.slvmmc.org>

Contact: Clarissa Woodworth

The Suicide, Substance Abuse and Violence Education Coalitions, coordinated by the San Luis Valley Comprehensive Mental Health Center, developed a suicide education and awareness program in 2002 to strengthen suicide prevention knowledge; research best practice programs; develop a community- and school-based training curriculum; create a brochure and resource card to share information about warning signs for suicidal behavior; and educate the community about how to get help. The San Luis Valley Comprehensive Mental Health Center trains community gatekeepers in the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training model.

### **Weld County**

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

at North Range Behavioral Health

1260 H. Street

Greeley, CO 80631

(970) 313-1089

[kristen.jernigan@northrange.org](mailto:kristen.jernigan@northrange.org)

[www.endsuicide.org](http://www.endsuicide.org)

Contact: Kristen Jernigan

The Suicide Education and Support Services of Weld County became the lead Weld County suicide prevention entity in March 1999. It is a private, nonprofit organization whose membership includes faith community leaders, mental health professionals and survivors. Suicide Education and Support Services has trained and helped support teams of volunteer victim's advocates who respond in the aftermath of suicide. Suicide Education and Support Services has trained Weld county schools in SAFE:TEEN and 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. Suicide Education and Support Services also has co-sponsored seminars for medical professionals, works with law enforcement personnel to better document suicide attempts and has worked with the county coroner to analyze suicide data. The Colorado Trust funds the Hispanic Youth Suicide Prevention Project focused on raising the awareness of Hispanic youth, empowering youth gatekeepers, facilitating the connection between youth and the mental health services system, and coordinating data collection between agencies that interact with suicidal youth.

### **Dynamic Family Design, LLC**

[kpw@dynamicfamilydesign.com](mailto:kpw@dynamicfamilydesign.com)

Contact: Keith P. Wawrzyniak

Dynamic Family Design, LLC coordinates and conducts suicide prevention and intervention training throughout Weld County, specifically targeting adults who work with at risk youth in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Training also targets adults who work with Hispanic/Latino youth and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth. Dynamic Family Design, LLC is also working to become an affiliate program of the Second Wind Fund, which provides counseling services to youth at risk of suicide that are uninsured or under-insured.

### **Statewide Programs**

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

P.O. Box 440311

Aurora, Colorado 80044

(720) 352-7505

[info@suicidepreventioncolorado.org](mailto:info@suicidepreventioncolorado.org)

[www.suicidepreventioncolorado.org](http://www.suicidepreventioncolorado.org)

Contact: Andrea Weyand

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.

#### **Colorado Division of Behavioral Health**

Department of Human Services

3824 W. Princeton Circle

Denver, Colorado 80236

(303) 866-7400

<http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/dmh>

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.

#### **HEARTBEAT: Survivors After Suicide**

Meeting Place:

East Methodist Church

1505 E. Monument

Colorado Springs, CO 80909-4552

(719) 596-2575

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

<http://heartbeatsurvivorsaftersuicide.org/index.shtml>

Contact: LaRita Archibald

Heartbeat was formed to support individuals who have experienced a loss through suicide. The group was organized to support survivors as they grieve their loss, and to offer the comfort of empathetic understanding

and acceptance. Heartbeat is facilitated through the efforts of volunteers who have all experienced the loss of someone close to them through suicide. Heartbeat also offers an eight-week course for teen suicide survivors.

### **Parents Surviving Suicide**

Meeting Place:

Bethany Lutheran Church

Activity Room

4500 E. Hampden Ave.

Denver, Colorado 80113

[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 group of parents meets on the third Tuesday of each month for the purpose of supporting each other.

### **Second Wind Fund**

12567 W. Cedar Ave., Suite 102

Lakewood, Colorado 80228

(303) 988-2645

[jlamontagne@thesecondwindfund.org](mailto:jlamontagne@thesecondwindfund.org)

[www.thesecondwindfund.org](http://www.thesecondwindfund.org)

Contact: Jeff Lamontagne

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 is held annually to raise money for students who need therapy for suicide-related issues and cannot pay for therapy because of a lack of insurance and financial hardship. Protocols are in place and licensed mental health practitioners are recruited to provide services to these students. The Second Wind Fund is now accessible to every youth 19 and under in the Denver metro area, and through affiliates in Boulder, Douglas, El Paso, Mesa, and Teller counties.

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

5859 S. University Blvd.

Greenwood Village, Colorado 80121

(303) 770-1859

<http://www.spinheartbeat.com>

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.

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

Light for Life Foundation International

P.O. Box 644

Westminster, Colorado 80036-0644

(303) 429-3530

[ask4help@yellowribbon.org](mailto:ask4help@yellowribbon.org)

[www.yellowribbon.org](http://www.yellowribbon.org)

Contact: Dale and Dar Emme

The Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program works to 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 for schools, organizations and the public. The program works to teach suicide prevention, life skills, warning signs, risk factors and coping strategies. 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; and develops crisis plans and intervention protocols.