



Suicide Prevention Coalition of Warren and Clinton Counties

c/o Mental Health Recovery Services of
Warren & Clinton Counties
107 Oregonia Road
Lebanon, OH 45036

Phone: 513-695-1695
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June 9, 2010

Dear School Administrator, Counselor or Staff:

In Spring, 2009, the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Warren and Clinton Counties (SPC) conducted a survey of Warren and Clinton County schools to determine the schools' need for suicide prevention programming and a model protocol. The survey results are as follows:

- **The amount of current and need for further suicide prevention programming:**
 - **for staff**
 - Results show that 72% of respondents said "no" or they "didn't know" if staff training was provided on suicide prevention
 - 61% felt this was an unmet need
 - **for students**
 - Results for Intermediate, Middle and High Schools revealed only 34% currently provided this programming
 - 42% felt this was an unmet need
- **Interest in a Model Protocol** for handling students who are expressing suicidal thoughts or behaviors at school
 - 87% of respondents indicated they would like a Model Protocol

We sincerely appreciate the input and have taken this feedback as a "Call to Action." To meet these identified needs, the SPC has developed the following:

- **Training for Staff:** The SPC has partnered with Mental Health & Recovery Centers of Warren County to provide the evidence-based training called "QPR" which stands for *Question, Persuade, and Refer*. This 90 minute training conducted by a mental health professional is geared to school staff and focuses on identification of warning signs, how to appropriately question students who display these signs, and how to refer them to help. This FREE training is available to any Warren or Clinton County school through funding from a variety of sources, including: Mental Health Recovery Services of Warren & Clinton Counties, the Warren County Educational Service Center's Grant for Integration of Mental Health in Schools, Lebanon Optimist Club, and the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation. If your school is interested in scheduling this training, please contact Scott Norris at 1-800-932-3366.
- **Training for Students:** The SPC has explored various evidence-based suicide prevention training programs for students and the following are available to any Warren or Clinton County school:
 - "Red Flags" is program geared to Middle School students and easily blends into a health class curriculum. While the issue of suicide prevention is addressed, the primary messages are in the relation to depression, seeking help when it is necessary for yourself or a peer, and maintaining good mental health. This FREE prevention program is available from Mental Health & Recovery Centers of Warren County and Mental Health & Recovery Centers of Clinton Counties. If your school is interested in scheduling this program, please contact Darcy Lichnerowicz at 937-383-4441.

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- “SOS” or *Signs of Suicide* is a program with two age-appropriate modules – one designed for middle school students and the other for high schoolers. This program can be provided to small groups, such as clubs, or can be integrated into classroom curriculum. The messages are similar to what is conveyed in Red Flags, however the advantage to SOS is consistency of approach which is continued from the middle school on to the high school. This FREE prevention program will be available to any Warren or Clinton County school beginning Fall, 2010. If your school is interested in scheduling this program, please contact Darcy Lichnerowicz at 937-383-4441.
- **Model Protocol:** The most labor-intensive project has been the research and design of a model protocol for schools in dealing with students who are suicidal. Various pre-existing resources are available, however to merge these documents into a suitable one for our community has taken the SPC sub-committee several months to complete. However, we are proud to say it is now available for download from the Mental Health Recovery Services website at www.mhrsonline.org/suicidepreventioncoalition .
 - This document is posted in Microsoft Word format so that each school district may edit and customize as they see fit. This allows for specifications on time frames, staffing, and added procedures as deemed necessary. It is recommended, as with any policy and procedure, to have a legal review prior to implementation.
 - The Appendix of the protocol includes many resource sheets which can be used by school staff as well as provided to parents. For easy access, these resource sheets can also be downloaded individually from the website.
 - Several Suicide and Depression Screening Tools are also posted for use by school staff.
 - Other resources which may be helpful in establishing your own customized protocol are also posted.

Free Training is available to Warren and Clinton County school crisis teams on the development of a suicide prevention protocol. If interested contact, Siri Bendtsen of Warren County ESC at 513-695-2981 (Warren County Schools) or Patti Ahting of Mental Health Recovery Services at 513-695-1695 (Clinton County Schools).

The Suicide Prevention Coalition of Warren and Clinton Counties hopes to be a partner with the schools in reducing youth suicide through these and other strategies. If we can be of any further assistance, or if you would like to become part of the Coalition, please contact Patti Ahting at 513-695-1695.

Sincerely,

Suicide Prevention Coalition of Warren & Clinton Counties