



Tennessee Lives Count / Juvenile Justice (TLC/JJ) Project Abstract

The Tennessee Lives Count, Youth Suicide Prevention Early Intervention Juvenile Justice Project (TLC/JJ) is a statewide early intervention/prevention project to reduce suicides/attempts for youth (ages 10-24). A major focus of this project involves youth that have been remanded to the custody of the Tennessee Department of Children’s Service/Juvenile Justice Division. Youth in Juvenile Justice have much higher rates of suicide; and the attempt rate for these youth is more than three times that of other youth. Suicide is the leading cause of death for youth in residential facilities. TLC/JJ will build on the success of its first grant cycle by addressing youth and the staff who work with these youth in the Juvenile Justice system. TLC/JJ will target JJ staff, community leaders as well as the youth served in this system. This approach is more specific and comprehensive than the first TLC project which provided an enhanced version of QPR to over 18,000 adults in various child serving organizations statewide that work with high risk youth. TLC/JJ includes advanced gatekeeper training utilizing the ASIST model for all staff in the youth development centers (YDC) and residential facilities. Other Juvenile Justice staff such Probation Officers will be invited as well. TLC/JJ also involves Gatekeeper training for community leaders using the two hour Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) model developed during the first grant cycle with the intention of promoting a sense of connectedness for the youth once they return to their communities. The youth in the community residential programs will receive peer suicide awareness training using the Promise for Tomorrow curriculum, developed by the Jason Foundation (Hendersonville, TN). TLC/JJ builds on the governance structure from the first GLS grant and has added more representation from the leadership in Tennessee’s juvenile justice arena. Additionally a needs assessment, interagency and department MOU, policy recommendations, social marketing campaign to reduce stigma, university curricula enhancement, and a plan for sustainability are all components of this project. Project outcomes will result in 650 juvenile justice staff receiving the ASIST gatekeeper training; 3000 community contacts such as Big Brothers, faith based programs, mentors and business leaders will receive a two hour gatekeeper training, an additional 100 university faculty and 1,000 students or student leaders will be trained in QPR. Over 500 youth in community/residential placements will receive suicide peer awareness.

Staff

Nicole Drummond	Administrative Asst.	NDrummond@tspn.org	615-297-1077
Jennifer Lockman	Lead Evaluator	Jennifer.Lockman@centerstoneresearch.org	615-460-4142
Michelle Nevels	Project Trainer	MNevels@tspn.org	615-312-3116
Jason H. Padgett	Project Coordinator	JPadgett@tspn.org	615-587-5939
Daryl Pike	Project Trainer	DPike@tspn.org	615-312-3117
Scott Ridgway	Special Advisor	SRidgway@tspn.org	615-945-5558
Lygia Williams	Principal Investigator	Lygia.Williams@tn.gov	615-253-5078
Heather Wilson	Research Associate	Heather.Wilson@centerstoneresearch.org	615-460-4493

Web Address: <http://www.tspn.org/tlc.htm>

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