

Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network

"Saving Lives in Tennessee"

Advisory Council Meeting
Community Room, Metro Nashville Hermitage Precinct
3701 James Kay Lane
Hermitage, TN
Wednesday, June 5, 2013
12-2 PM

Minutes

Advisory Council Members Present

Karyl Chastain Beal, M.Ed., Retired/Community Advocate (South Central Regional Chair / Advisory Council Co-Chair / Outreach Committee Chair)
Tim Tatum, MA, LPC-MHSP, Director, Pine Ridge Treatment Center (Southeast Regional Chair / Advisory Council Secretary / Advocacy Committee Chair)
Pam Arnell, MA, Arnell's Counseling Service (Chair, Giles County Suicide Prevention Task Force / Advisory Council Co-Secretary / Advocacy Committee Acting Chair)
Sabrina Anderson, Executive Director, Boys and Girls Clubs of Jackson-Madison County
Nancy L. Badger, Ph.D., Director, Counseling Center, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Jodi Bartlett, Ed.S, LPC-MHSP, MCRT Director, Northern Region, Volunteer Behavioral Health Care System (Upper Cumberland Regional Chair)
Renee Brown, Suicide Prevention Coordinator, Memphis VA Medical Center
Anne Henning-Rowan, MS, Community Advocate (Rural West Regional Chair)
Emily Hill, Community Education Director, BHC-Columbia
Mike LaBonte, Executive Director, Memphis Crisis Center
Harold Leonard, MA, LPC-MHSP, Cognitive Behavioral Specialists of the Tri-Cities (Northeast Regional Chair)
Rita McNabb, Coordinated School Health Director, Cocke County Schools
Tina R. Mitchell, GCDF, Executive Director, CrossBridge, Inc./Compassionate Ministries Pastor, Trevecca Community Church
Stephenie Robb, Executive Director, Behavioral Health Initiatives, Inc.
Waring Porter, Pastor, All Saints Presbyterian Church
Kandi Shearer, Program Supervisor, Youth Villages Specialized Crisis Services
Anna Shugart, LCSW, Director, Emotional Health & Recovery Center, Blount Memorial Hospital (Chair, Blount County Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Alliance)
Anne Stamps, Center Director, Cumberland Mountain Mental Health Center / Dale Hollow Mental Health Center

Intra-State Departmental Group Members Present

John Allen, Director of Behavioral Health Services, Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration
Gwen Hamer, MA, Director, Education and Development, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
Yvette Mack, PhD, MSPH, MCHES, Director, Asthma Management and Adolescent & Young Adult Health Initiatives, Tennessee Department of Health

Lori Paisley, Director of Special Projects, Tennessee Department of Education
Melissa Sparks, MSN, RN, Director, Crisis Services and Suicide Prevention, Division of Mental Health Services, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
Sara Smith, MS, State Coordinator, Office of Coordinated School Health, Tennessee Department of Education
Lucy E. Utt, Supervisor, Community Services, Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability

TSPN/TLC Staff Present

Michele Daniel, BBA, MA, TLC Project Director
Vladimir Enlow, MTS, TSPN Executive Assistant
Scott Ridgway, MS, TSPN Executive Director

Guests

Ashley Dotson, Student Intern, Freed-Hardeman University
Sarah Ferguson, Student Intern, Middle Tennessee State University
Daphane Turner, Student Intern, Union University
Kay Witherspoon, Memphis VA Medical Center

Advisory Council Members Absent

Jennifer Harris, MS, Hickman Community Hospital (Chair, Hickman-Perry Suicide Prevention Task Force/Advisory Council Chair)
Stephanie Barger, M.Div., Vice-President of Strategy and Operations, Monroe Harding (Mid-Cumberland Regional Chair)
Kathy Benedetto, LPC, SPE, LMFT, Vice-President, Tennessee Child and Youth Outpatient Services, Frontier Health
Vickie Bilbrey, Community Education Manager, Oak Point Center, Livingston Regional Hospital
Lisa Daniel, Chief Executive Officer, Memphis Mental Health Institute
Brenda S. Harper, Center Director, Volunteer Behavioral Health Care Services
Cindy Johnson, Regional Director of Marketing, Tennessee Health Management, Inc.
Claudia M. Mays, LCSW, BCD, CM Counseling & Consulting Service
Micky Roberts, Health Director, Blount County Health Department
Kim Rush, Ed.S., LPC-MHSP, Vice-President of Operations, Volunteer Behavioral Health Care System
Linda Phipps Harold, Community Advocate
Sandy Smith, Community Advocate
Angie Thompson, Director of Behavioral Health, Metro Public Health Department (Chair, Davidson County Suicide Prevention Task Force)
Shelia R. Ward, Health Educator, Jackson-Madison County Health Department
Anne Young, MS, CAS, Program Director, Young Adult and Residential Relapse Recovery Program, Cornerstone of Recovery (East Tennessee Regional Chair / Strategies/Outcomes/Evaluations Committee Chair)

Intra-State Departmental Group Members Absent

Dustin Keller, LPC-MHSP (Intra-State Departmental Group Chair), Director, Council on Children's Mental Health, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth
Sumita Banerjee, Customer Services Administrator, Tennessee Department of Human Services
Jackie Berg, Training Specialist and Worker's Compensation Coordinator, Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Wendell Cheek, Deputy Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs
Deborah Hardin, BS, RN, State Public Health Nursing Director, Tennessee Department of Health
Rachel Heitmann, MS, Director, Injury Prevention and Detection, Division of Family Health and Wellness, Tennessee Department of Health
Jacqueline Talley, Treatment Specialist, Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

Sharon Wolfenbarger, Mental Health Program Manager, Tennessee Department of Correction

Welcome and Introductions

- Chastain Beal called the meeting to order at 12:12 PM.
- Introductions proceeded around the room.

Review of Minutes from Previous Meeting

- Members reviewed minutes from the February 13 business meeting. Chastain Beal noted these had been sent out previously via e-mail.
- Leonard motioned to approve the minutes as submitted. LaBonte seconded the motion, which passed without objection.

Regional Reports

Northeast Region

- Leonard reported that a recent drop in attendance at the Tri-Cities Survivors of Suicide support group prompted a survey of current and former members, in order to cater to prospective participants. He provided members present with a summary sheet.
 - Leonard recognized the efforts of Phipps Harold and regional member Dana Cea for developing and circulating the survey.
 - Additional promotions for the meeting have helped increase attendance; there were twelve people present at the last meeting, compared to only two at the prior session.
 - While survey participants were generally satisfied with the open-group format of the sessions, the survey revealed a possible logistics issue. All of the survey participants lived within a 20-mile radius of the group venue. It is possible that some people within the Northeast Region might not even know the group exists.
- Meanwhile, a proposed “School Community Crisis Response” presentation at Northeast State Community College was scrubbed due to low registration figures. It is believed that the original date conflicted with several other conferences and events in the area.
 - Plans are to reschedule the event for September, where it will join the annual Memorial Walk at Warrior’s Path State Park as part of this year’s Suicide Prevention Awareness Month observance.
 - Leonard noted that Lt. Governor Ron Ramsey was in attendance at last year’s event at Warrior’s Path, and attendance increases with every passing year.
- That being said, there has been a definite decrease in attendance at regional meetings. Leonard was acting chair of the Strategies/Outcomes/Evaluations Committee during today’s session, and in his review of the revised Tennessee Strategy for Suicide Prevention (TSSP) he realized that the group will need more involvement from regular members if it is to achieve the goals and outcomes outlined.

East Tennessee Region

- Shugart presented on behalf of regional chair Young, who was on vacation and unable to attend today’s meeting.
- Shugart discussed local progress on the Gun Safety Project (GSP), as well as strategies for reaching three high-priority counties within the region (Claiborne, Grainger, and Union).
 - Members plan to present to the health councils in all three of these counties in the coming months. They will discuss TSPN training options, including standard QPR and the Substance Abuse Outreach Project curriculum.
 - The outreach effort is intended to reduce abnormally suicide rates in these counties, but also aims to expand TSPN’s work beyond the usual targets (i.e., Blount and Knox Counties).

- Clark Flatt, President/CEO of the Jason Foundation, has agreed to participate in a proposed regional conference this September; venues are being scouted for this event.
- Shugart observed that outreach to the 32 GSP targets within Blount County started in May. Thus far, the project has been well-received by owners of gun shops and firing ranges.
- The Blount County Region will not meet in July, although its Executive Committee will convene that month to plan for the new fiscal year.

Upper Cumberland Region

- Bartlett reported that QPR trainings continue across the region. She specifically noted the efforts of Christina Mick on the TTU campus and the innovative approach she is using to educate students. For example, she mentioned a recent student event that featured an Easter egg hunt—the eggs contained messages regarding mental health and suicide prevention.
- Preparations are already underway for the Light of Hope event, and counties within the region have already been assigned for the Suicide Prevention Awareness Month project.
- Finally, Bartlett acknowledged Ridgway’s presentation at the Upper Cumberland Vulnerable Adult Summit held May 17 in Cookeville.

Southeast Region

- Tatum announced that Monica Middlebrooks had left the Advisory Council the same time she left the Hamilton County Sheriff’s Office (HCSO) for a position with the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services in Nashville.
- Middlebrooks had been the driving force behind the CIT training sessions hosted by HCSO, and there was some concern that the program would fall by the wayside in her absence. However, several people who can administer the program have been identified in both HCSO and the Chattanooga Police Department.
- CIT held its annual awards banquet in April, and the most recent CIT training session hosted about 20 officers from three different departments.
- QPR training continues here on a steady basis, with several recent requests from county health councils.
- Tatum was recently named to the Bradley County Anti-Drug Coalition and has been working with a local beer distributor (he did not specify which one as the agreement is not finalized) regarding the placement of mental health and suicide prevention information on a set of coasters to be distributed to local bars and taverns. This activity is in line with statewide efforts to reach middle-aged men, a population group at high risk for suicide.
- Tatum is currently participating in “The Mental Health Hotline”, a 12-week Friday evening radio program, on WGOW-FM.
 - This program has been broadcast in the past and received national recognition for its discussion of mental health issues.
 - In a recent broadcast, Tatum provided information about suicide, including the relationship to substance abuse, the issue of lethal means restriction, and references to TSPN and NSPL. He received seven callers, two of whom had to speak with Tatum off the air to resolve high-priority or confidential matters.
 - In a later program, Tatum was accompanied by the facilitator of the “Suicide Isn’t The End” support group, who provided information about the group and personal testimony.
- Finally, members at UTC have staged several training sessions and included TSPN information in campus health fairs.

Mid-Cumberland Region

- Ridgway gave this region’s report on behalf of regional chair Barger, who was on maternity leave.
- Barger’s partner gave birth to their daughter, Brooks Caroline Barger, last month.

- Ridgway reported record attendance at yesterday's meeting of the Montgomery-Houston-Humphreys-Stewart County Task Force in Clarksville. The Task Force has been working on GSP and provided materials for a recent high school bullying prevention presentation.
- The Suicide and the African-American Faith Communities Mini-Conference, held in Murfreesboro on April 20, had a good turnout. The Rutherford County Suicide Prevention Coalition, which oversees this event on TSPN's behalf, is exploring avenues for outreach to non-African-American houses of worship.
 - Hamer, who helped organize this event, added that several churches had sent delegates to the conference, and since then they had requested information on suicide prevention training and offered invites to upcoming health fairs.
 - The event included an expanded all-day youth track. About 30 young people participated, including 12 delegates from Youth M.O.V.E. Tennessee. (James Martin from Tennessee Voices for Children in the facilitator and contact point for this group.)
 - Ridgway thanked Hamer for providing this information, noting that Coalition Chair Rush is on vacation.
- Ridgway announced that the Mid-Cumberland Region currently hosts more suicide grief support groups than any others, with groups currently operating in Clarksville, Franklin, Murfreesboro, and Nashville, as well as a group developing in the Sumner County area. The region is interested in promoting these meetings through brochures provided to first responders and funeral homes.
 - The central office receives frequent phone calls from people interested in suicide support groups, either for themselves or for others. Ridgway estimates that most of these callers have lost someone to suicide within the last month.
- Ridgway provided details about a May 24 interview he provided to WSMV in Nashville, as part of their news team's investigation into suicide prevention efforts at Fort Campbell. He emphasized the base's outreach efforts to survivors of suicide on the base.
- The region's Older Adult Committee is interested in providing TSPN materials to volunteers of in-home services, such as Meals on Wheels.
- Meanwhile, the region's Substance Abuse Committee is scouting possible venues for Brown to run training sessions. While his contract with TDMHSAS mainly covers training to departmental employees and contractors, the grant also covers training sessions for substance abuse provider agencies.
- Both the Middle-Aged Men and Youth Committees are planning an exhibit at a Nashville Sounds home game this summer. They helped members in the East Tennessee region arrange for a similar exhibit at a Tennessee Smokies game last year; plans are to expand this project to the Chattanooga Lookouts and the Jackson Generals.
- The Middle-Aged Men Committee is also seeking out local breweries regarding the coaster project, similar to what Tatum spoke about earlier.
 - Ridgway turned the floor over to Hamer, who reported on the Rutherford County Suicide Prevention Coalition on behalf of Rush.

South Central Region

- Hill gave the regional report on behalf of Chastain Beal, who was chairing the current meeting.
- Harris, Chair of the Hickman-Perry Suicide Prevention Task Force, was unable to make today's meeting but submitted a report beforehand:
 - Since February, the Task Force provided materials for distribution during an anti-bullying event at Hickman County High School, and also facilitated a training session for 66 students at East Hickman High.
 - Following the death of Mindy McCready, Harris was personally consulted by the host of an afternoon radio show on local county radio station WNKX-FM. The Chair agreed to have her contact information, as well as that of the facilitator of "Left Behind By Suicide", provided as contact points for listeners seeking more information about suicide prevention and area mental health resources.

- The Task Force staged a very popular exhibit at a health fair at Linden Middle School on May 16.
- The Task Force is planning to observe its 10th Anniversary during its annual memorial walk, set for September 28.
- In other news, Chastain Beal added that she had hosted a total of 48 people at two separate Grief After Suicide retreats. Guests came from as far away as Australia, Ireland, and South Africa.
- Regina Peery's "Cowboy Up" group has provided 270 members across the South Central region with TSPN materials this year.
- Speaking as chair of the Quilt Committee, Chastain Beal reported that seven quilt panels have been submitted to Toni Webb and two more are in process.
- Two regional members, Bri and Ellen Stowers with Contact Lifeline of Tullahoma, are currently undergoing the QPR instructor certification process.
- Finally, Chastain Beal mentioned that the regional meeting will begin meeting on the first Wednesday of each month effective as of the August session.
- Arnell provided an update on the Giles County Suicide Prevention Task Force:
 - She reported that since the last meeting, she had personally led trainings sessions for 96 Columbia State Community College students and 36 members of Giles County Fire Rescue.
 - The latter session was prompted by the suicide death of the daughter of the former fire chief, who was well-known and well-liked by many current members of the squad. Arnell provided the training as a follow-up to a debriefing session. Since then, the current chief has mandated suicide prevention training for all members of the squad, which is ongoing.
 - On a related note, Arnell has been invited to lead two training sessions for the LaVergne Fire Department.
 - The Task Force will host a 5K suicide prevention walk at the Pulaski Recreation Center on either September 14 or the 21st.
 - Arnell closed by noting that there have been seven recorded suicide deaths in Giles County since January.

Rural West Region

- Henning-Rowan discussed exhibits at health fairs staged by Delta Sigma Theta, Jumpstart Jackson, and Jackson Church of Christ.
- The region hosted a mentoring session for fourth- and fifth-grade girls at Isaac Lane Elementary School. It was prompted by an exhibit at a health fair there were some students mentioned experiencing suicidal thoughts. Ridgway offered to provide I.C. Hope plushes for future sessions at the school, and to put school administrators in touch with Robb.
- Henning-Rowan introduced Turner, a Union University intern assisting with assorted regional projects.
- The region recently partnered with BlueCare (formerly the Volunteer State Health Plan) for work on future projects; Henning-Rowan acknowledged the role BlueCare employee Kelly Dorsey played in this alliance. BlueCare sent a delegation of key employees to the Suicide Prevention Symposium.
- The "School Community Crisis Response" presentation originally planned for April at Union University has been rescheduled for October.
- The regional Suicide Prevention Awareness Month event will probably take place at UT-Martin, but a date has not been finalized.
- Division of labor regarding the Suicide Prevention Awareness Month proclamation project will be handled at this month's regional meeting.
- The region has partnered with the suicide prevention education group Team Mica, exhibiting at its kickoff event in Bolivar this spring. The exhibit led to an invitation to lead a QPR session for Hardeman County Schools sometime before the school year starts.

- Regional members assisted with a postvention at a high school in Henderson in January and a follow-up town hall meeting in February (facilitated by Ridgway).
- Members are drawing up plans for regional participation in GSP.
- A training session for Coordinated School Health officers within the Jackson-Madison County School System is in the works; it may be held at Isaac Lane.

Memphis/Shelby County Region

- R. Brown reports that staff members at the Memphis VA Medical Center have volunteers to distribute gun locks at various locations within the Memphis area.
- Just a few minutes ago, R. Brown received a text from a contact at Harley-Davidson regarding an upcoming Freedom Heroes-Gold Star Mothers motorcycle run, the proceeds for which would go to local suicide prevention projects.
- R. Brown and LaBonte are members of the Planning Committee for next week's the Sixth National Suicide and the Black Church Conference. LaBonte is one of the scheduled presenters.
- R. Brown recently hosted a site visit from the VA's Office of Mental Health, who pronounced the Suicide Prevention Program at the Memphis VA one of the best in the country.
 - This is largely because of its intensive weekly follow-up efforts, which may involve letters, phone calls, and home visits to make sure that patients and their families are following their prescribed safety plans.
 - Program staff also issue patients and their caregivers quick-reference wallet cards listing VA and other contact information. These cards have also been provided to Naval Air Station Memphis.
- LaBonte mentioned a particularly successful workshop he hosted at Olivet Baptist Church: "Suicide: A Permanent Solution to a Temporary Program". LaBonte acknowledged Witherspoon for arranging for the presentation.
- LaBonte provided copies of the TSPN brochure "Saving African-American Lives in Tennessee" at a presentation of the same name at Greater Imani Church and Christian Center.

Tennessee Lives Count Project

- Daniel directed guests to the TLC outcomes chart in the meeting packet, which outlines progress on targets thus far in the fiscal year.
- The goal for community QPR trainings was 1,500 trainees; the running total is 2,260.
- While the LGBT component got off to a difficult start, training requests eventually picked up. The number of trainees for this program is 227, just surpassing the project goal of 200. An upcoming conference in Memphis will add to this number.
- 224 ER staff members have received the TLC ER training, exceeding the program goal of 200. However, project staff are interested in expanding this project to more rural hospitals with fewer resources.
- During its previous grant cycle, TLC provided AMSR training for 100 clinicians over the course of three sessions (as part of the TLC-JJ no-cost extension). The current grant calls for the same number of clinicians. This September staff facilitated three such sessions in one week; the 106 people reached during these sessions fulfilled the project goals for the grant.
- TLC will provide an ASIST training for Youth Villages staff in Memphis on July 22-23. While Youth Villages staff are the primary targets, anyone interested in participating is welcome to attend.
- Daniel observed that implementation of THESPN has proven far more challenging than the other aspects of the grant.
- She explained that project goals called for recruiting and training QPR instructors on 50 college campuses, each of whom would provide the training to 250 students, faculty, or community members.
- So far, 16 of the targeted colleges and universities have submitted letters of agreement. Several of these instructors are already conducting trainings sessions, most notably the ones at Carson-

Newman and Tennessee Tech University. Some of the instructors are still working through the QPR self-study project.

- Five other campuses have expressed interest, but need guidance on how to adapt the project to their campus.
- In all, 21 schools are involved in the project, but this number is short of the original target. Any assistance regional members could provide in engaging colleges and universities in THESPN would be greatly appreciated.
- As for the postvention education segment of the grant, staff at 179 different schools have been reached, well exceeding the project goal of 35 schools. Many of these have been facilitated by Ridgway at conferences and workshops across the state. Daniel noted that TLC received numerous training requests following the Suicide Prevention Symposium.
- Meanwhile, TLC has participated in postvention sessions have been facilitated at 13 different schools during the fiscal year.
- Phone consultations related to postventions have been running lower than anticipated since Daniel and Ridgway have started providing postvention education sessions at workshops and conferences. Quite simply, more people know about the program, so any phone calls that come in are more likely to be service requests rather than general inquiries.
- 934 youth have been reached by general awareness trainings—these 30-minute sessions involve either JFI’s “Promise for Tomorrow” curriculum or “Talk, Listen, Connect”, an original curriculum developed by TLC and TSPN.
- Daniel noted that TLC has several conference and health fair exhibits lined up. She noted that these tend to level off in the summer but increase in the fall with the start of the school year.
- Badger recalled discussing the AMSR training with a UTC psychology student who said that the curriculum as presented by TLC was the best training session on suicide prevention she had ever experienced.

Remarks from Melissa Sparks, RN, MSN, Director of Crisis Services and Suicide Prevention, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

- Chastain Beal introduced Sparks and congratulated her on her new position within the Department. Sparks is now responsible for overseeing TSPN’s contract with TDMHSAS.
- Sparks explained that she has been a state employee for over 20 years, mostly connected with administration, forensics, and hospital services within the various incarnations of TDMHSAS. She became involved with crisis services about four years ago.
- At the time, suicide prevention was not a part of the Department’s crisis services office, but with the reorganization of TDMHSAS, the decision was made to shift suicide prevention to this office as of April 15. This allows for the complete integration of suicide prevention into the crisis responses system, and it also permits the state’s crisis team to further promote suicide prevention services.
- Lygia Williams continues to be part of the team of the Office of Crisis Services and Suicide Prevention. Though she has been assigned to additional duties in need of her skill set, she remains the Suicide Prevention expert for the team and will continue to be involved in suicide prevention activities.
- Sparks mentioned that she has recently hired two new staff members, specifically Vickie Carter and Laura Martin, to assist her with her new duties, and the position of assistant director within the division will be filled soon.
- Currently the office is working on the selection of a standard training curriculum for law enforcement in coordination with their annual POST requirements. The office is also seeking to integrate intellectual disabilities and autism into the Department’s suicide prevention plan. While these objects are not yet completed, the office has made substantial progress during the last six months and hopes to make further progress before the close of the fiscal year.
 - Upon the development of both the curriculum and the ID-autism plan, drafts of the related documents will be sent to appropriate parties, including TSPN.

- Workgroups within the Department are currently reviewing additional youth resources for crisis response, including the prospect of CSUs designed especially for children and youth, and how to integrate these into the system while considering current funding constraints.
 - Sparks observed that if the Department were to develop a mechanism for walk-in triage of troubled children and youth, it would allow for immediate referrals without involving a costly ER visit.
- Additionally, Sparks believes that implementing a web-access crisis tracking system would assist the state's suicide prevention efforts. By capturing client-level data and providing details about each case, division and Department employees will be able to see how many of the cases involved suicidal thoughts, how many involved attempts, what recommendations were made, etc. The data could even be broken down by counties.
- Sparks was stunned to discover that Tennessee does not currently have a minimum standard of care for crisis services. When the state's health plan was administered by Magellan and by various HMOs, such standards were in place. But since Magellan got out of the state's health care system, these requirements have fallen by the wayside.
 - Sparks admits she would like to focus on redeveloping and redeploying these standards, but in the first few months of her new position she has been too busy "putting out fires" to give this subject her full attention.
- Sparks supports the adoption of a universal crisis assessment tool, such as C-SSRS, for use by all Department employees and contractors in order to improve consistency in treatment and ultimately outcomes.
- She also supports the statewide telehealth implementation. A pilot program involving Volunteer Behavioral Health—accessible via laptops—is helping mental health workers connect with law enforcement officers to discuss cases involving emotionally disturbed individuals, so that they can be transported to mental health facilities instead of lock-up. The program has cut the turnover rate to 22%, and while it has required a few tweaks, it has been generally successful.
- One departmental workgroup has been reviewing options for humane transportation of mentally disturbed individuals. This group includes members of law enforcement and emergency room staff as well as members of the Tennessee Hospital Association. The workgroup is seeing alternatives for involuntary transport of people with mental health issues that do not involve transporting them in police vehicles—a stigma that occasionally prevents people from involving the police.
- Sparks closed by observing that TDMHSAS is in the middle of a gradual but definite culture change, and that she has "big dreams" for both her office and the Department. She appreciates being included in TSPN's efforts and thanked the Network for inviting her to today's meeting.

Committee Reports

Advocacy Committee

- Tatum reported that the Committee reviewed the Suicide Prevention Awareness Month proclamation, and saw that the only thing needing editing was the year.
- The Committee was also reviewed recommended outcomes for Strategies 8-13 of the revised Tennessee Strategy for Suicide Prevention (TSSP). They came up with a few changes in wording which Tatum will submit to Enlow via e-mail.

Strategies, Outcomes, and Evaluation Committee

- This Committee was also charged with review of outcomes related to TSSP, specifically Strategies 1-7.
- Leonard remarked that the Committee had started on this project during the last Advisory Council meeting in February, but did not finish.
- The Committee observed that the central office had qualified most of the strategies with goals that were both quantitative and viable, and Committee members were satisfied with most of these. They did have a few minor comments and amendments, however.

- The main issue that surfaced was that some of the goals were appropriate for regional groups and others were best suited to implementation at the state or Grand Regional level. Each of the outcomes was a proper response, but the entirety of the document seems overwhelming—Leonard believes this is especially true for the Northeast Region, which he represents. Hence, the Committee tried to flag which strategy outcomes should be revised to reflect action by the statewide Network or expansion to Grand Regions.

Outreach Committee

- Chastain Beal designated Shugart to report on Committee proceedings.
- The Committee was charged with review of outcomes from the Suicide Prevention Symposium.
 - While the Committee was pleased to see that evaluations from the event were highly positive, they did offer some recommendations for future symposia.
 - Specifically, they wanted to find a way to make sure guests stayed until the end of the event—members had noted several walkouts during the afternoon segment.
 - Suggestions included holding on to attendance certificates until the end of the event rather than giving them out at the start.
- The Committee reviewed the use policy for the “Love Never Dies” memorial quilts.
 - They advised amendment of the policy to state that quilt requests could be submitted one week in advance instead of one month.
 - Additionally, they decided that the quilts should not be used at fundraising events unless the proceeds are designated for TSPN.
- Committee members reviewed plans for this year’s Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event. They recommended having author and researcher Thomas Joiner (recently interviewed for a high-profile *Newsweek* article) as keynote speaker. The Network may need to charge a registration fee or seek out additional sponsorship opportunities to offset his speaking fee.
 - Members noted that if we do retain Joiner as a speaker, we need to give him a prominent place on the agenda to justify his appearance—in other words, more than the quarter- or half-hour allotted to speakers in the past.
 - Additionally, the survivor panel for the event needs to include a broader spectrum of relationships; previous panels have consisted entirely of parents who have lost children.

Intra-State Departmental Group

- Sparks provided the Group’s report on behalf of Keller, who was unable to attend today’s function.
- Group members reviewed completed and outstanding action items. Sparks consider the greatest achievement to be the sharing of information between departmental EAPs and her office to improve communications between systems.

Other Business

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- Ridgway pointed out the NSPL call volume spreadsheet in the meeting packet.
- The Helen Ross McNabb Center signed the agreement to answer NSPL calls three weeks ago, and after the fulfillment of some additional requirements, it will be ready to pick up the line. Once activated, Helen Ross McNabb will take calls in the part of Tennessee previously covered by Peninsula.
- Ridgway stated that the Network’s ultimate goal is to zero out “leakage”: the rollover of calls to centers in other states. This is a common problem among NSPL call centers in other states, but Tennessee has been recognized for having a very low level of leakage.
- Sparks added that last fiscal year, Tennessee’s 12 crisis centers answered over 115,000 calls across the state. (She noted that not all of these show up on the spreadsheet because some of them go to the state’s crisis hotline or other local numbers.)

- It is not completely necessary for every call center to be connected to the Lifeline. In some cases, Tennessee's regionalized mechanism makes it easier to transfer calls to directly to mental health centers—a call placed to Ridgeview may be rolled over to Cherokee, a call that comes in at BHL may be transferred to Pathways, etc.

National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention

- Ridgway observed that the Action Alliance has introduced the option of conference calls to its task force meetings, with the understanding that members who cannot make it to Washington, D.C., in person for the meetings will call in. Ridgway likes this option since traveling to D.C. typically takes him out of the office for three days—time that he simply cannot take away from the central office.
- At this juncture, Tennessee is the only state that has revised its state plan to reflect the revised National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (NSSP). The outcomes that certain committees reviewed this morning will be incorporated into an evaluation piece for the TSSP—this will make Tennessee the first state to develop an evaluation for its revised state plan.
- Ridgway recalls that the last evaluation of the TSSP took place several years ago.
- He observes that many states developed suicide prevention plans or responses to the NSSP after it was first released, but never updated their documents or developed an evaluation. The Action Alliance is actively promoting this to ensure effective implementation of the NSSP on the state level.
- While the outcomes document developed for this meeting was intended for use by the Advisory Council and central office, it may be shared with regional members.
- Ridgway admitted that at first glance, the sheer number of strategies and evaluations can seem overwhelming. But many of these strategies are things the Network has already been doing at some level.
- Ridgway acknowledged the role Williams had played in helping him and Enlow adapt the TSSP to the revised NSSP ahead of the Advisory Council meeting in February. He also appreciates the work of the Committees for their review of and recommendations for the document.

Tennessee License Plate Project

- Ridgway reports that as far as he knows, Governor Haslam has not yet signed the omnibus bill authorizing the creation of a suicide prevention license plate. He has until July 1 to sign said bill.¹
- It is Ridgway's intent to start collecting the required 1,000 signatures as soon the bill passes.
- If the plate becomes a reality, it will be the first one of its kind in the country.
- TSPN plans to work with the Jason Foundation to promote a design-contest soliciting mock-ups for the plate by high school students. One winner will be selected from each TSPN region, and one of their designs will be chosen for the plate.
- It is TSPN's intent to promote this project as far as possible through its media contacts.
- Ridgway acknowledged the efforts of Teresa Culbreath, who pursued this project for several years and provided TSPN with the connections necessary to bring the subject up for consideration by the General Assembly.

New Business

Executive Director's Report

- Copies of the June newsletter are included in each meeting packet. The Suicide Prevention Symposium was covered in depth in this edition, with photos from the event and recognition of all event sponsors.
- Feedback regarding all aspects of the Symposium, up to and including the event program, have been overwhelmingly positive. Guests were especially impressed with the variety of materials

¹ A subsequent check of the General Assembly's website revealed that Governor Haslam had signed the bill on May 31, but the Network had not been notified.

provided by UnitedHealthcare; these were courtesy of Kübra Snow, TSPN's liaison within the agency.

- The event had four commissioners and one deputy commissioner present, and Ridgway was able to speak with all of them regarding future plans. On a related note, John Dreyzehner, Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Health, noticed an exhibit by Your Heart on Art and made contact to arrange one of her Art4Healing sessions of the Department's management team.
- Banerjee has informed Ridgway what Raquel Hatter, Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS), would like to have Lifeline posters for every TDHS office in the state, to be placed in each office's front lobby. She is also interested in obtaining copies of TSPN's senior brochure and setting up training sessions for department employees.
- TSPN has also provided copies of the Survivors of Suicide handbook developed by the American Association of Suicidology to contacts within the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration.
- Ridgway stated that it is vital for TSPN to maintain links to state departments and agencies to provide them with suicide prevention information. In this regard the symposium was a great success. The state department delegates at this event represented 20 percent of the Governor's Cabinet—a powerful testament to the state's support of TSPN.
- Ridgway encouraged members to thank representative of symposium sponsors in their respective areas.
- Ridgway reminded Advisory Council members to fill out the Conflict of Interest form in the meeting packet and turn it back in before leaving today. These forms must be presented to TDMHSAS.
 - Members should also review the Roles and Structures document and sign off on it as well.
- Ridgway drew member's attention to an NBC News report reprinted in the packets. It discusses a recent study which found that as many as one in five children at high risk for suicide live in homes where they have access to guns.
- The deadline for submissions to the current "Love Never Dies" memorial quilt is this Friday.
 - Chastain Beal explained that even though the quilt is not due for presentation until September, much preparation is required ahead of time. Toni Webb, the volunteer who designs the quilt squares, needs the panels well in advance of the debut date so she can create them. Meanwhile, Chastain Beal has to purchase the fabric and provide both it and the designs to the volunteer who assembles the panels at least six weeks before the date.
 - Any panels submitted later than Friday will be kept in reserve for a future quilt which will presumably debut in 2014.
 - Ridgway encouraged meeting guests who have lost someone to suicide to consider participation in the project.
- In regards to the Gun Safety Project, the TSPN central office has ordered 5,000 copies of the project brochure; these will be distributed at regional meetings along with the associated paperwork.
- The Substance Abuse Outreach Project has been full-funded for another year. The training is in great demand, with G. Brown running sessions for 2,000 people this fiscal year in Middle Tennessee alone.
- Ridgway recapped a two-hour interview he provided for WSMV out of Nashville as part of their news team's investigation of suicide prevention efforts at Fort Campbell. He worked closely with the news team's managing editor on this project, submitting answers to a detailed questionnaire ahead of the interview. It is scheduled to air during WSMV news broadcasts on June 27-28.
 - Additionally, this month the *Leaf-Chronicle* out of Clarksville ran a five-day series on this subject earlier this month; the series has been picked up by national wire services.
 - Ridgway worked with Varney and the base's public information officer to help WSMV develop a de-sensationalized report on the problem. He noted the original interview questions asked specific questions about certain suicide incidents on the base; Ridgway

refused to comment on these but provided information about some of the factors involved in these deaths.

- He acknowledged that Fort Campbell has come a long way when it comes to suicide on base. As of today there have been only two suicide deaths on the base—there were 14 the year before last.
- Training in the ASIST protocol continues at the base, with the objective of reaching 3,000 base personnel.
- The central office fielded several inquiries from the media following the death of Mindy McCready, as did regional members. The incident provided TSPN with the opportunity to teach members of the media how to discuss suicide with their readers and listeners. Many members of the media are not deliberately trying to glamorize suicide; they simply are not aware of the effect their coverage can have on the general public.
- The central office is currently developing certificates and name tags for the Sixth National Suicide and the Black Church Conference, scheduled for next week in Memphis. Ridgway referenced the hard work of the Planning Committee thus far.
 - Hamer, a member of the Planning Committee for the Suicide and the Black Church Conference, announced that limited seating is still available for this event, and that she would appreciate having members of TSPN's Advisory Council present. She has asked Enlow to arrange for a statewide announcement with details about last-minute registration. Enlow has also received a preliminary registration database for use in developing certificates and name tags.
- Beginning next week, TSPN will begin closing out the current fiscal year, developing the associated reports and budgets.
- On that note, Ridgway would like to meet with each regional Advisory Council one hour ahead of each July meeting to discuss plans for the coming year. Usually this planning is done during the Advisory Council retreat, which was recast as a regular business meeting for budget purposes.
- Ridgway thanked Mitchell for offering to oversee preparations for this year's Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event, set for September 11 at Trevecca Community Church. Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital will sponsor the event luncheon, as it has done in past years.

Other Business

- Chastain Beal thanked the interns present at this meeting for their assistance with set-up and registration.
- Sparks added that the Mental Health Disaster Planning handbooks (some of which are available at today's meeting) feature excellent information for both emergencies and ongoing concerns. Bartlett mentioned that all the crisis directors in the state have been provided with the contact information for at least one Advisory Council member, with instructions to call Sparks if they have trouble reaching anyone.
- Chastain Beal encouraged guests to take TSPN materials available on the back table.
- Finally, she welcomed those members and guests who were attending a TSPN meeting for the first time.

Adjournment

- The next meeting of the Advisory Council will be held on Wednesday, September 11, at Trevecca Community Church, immediately following the Suicide Prevention Awareness Day observance and the associated luncheon.
- With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:50 PM.