



REGIONAL
Suicide Prevention
in Schools
LEADERSHIP TEAM

A Collaboration Among
Putnam County Department of Social Services
Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health
Putnam & Westchester Suicide Prevention Taskforces
Putnam | Northern Westchester BOCES



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History

In 2016, our team formed from a collective concern about a series of recent suicides among young people in our region. We shared a common goal of wanting to do whatever we could to ensure the suicide safety of children in our schools and communities. We viewed these tragic losses as the impetus for working together in a new and different way and recognized that together we could share our expertise and pool our resources to enrich, enhance and expand our efforts.

A special thanks to Pat Breux from the Suicide Prevention Center of New York State for her guidance, assistance and support forming our team.

Purpose

To provide a user friendly, coordinated means for schools and communities to access expertise, guidance, support and resources to create an environment of suicide safety in schools.



Our Team

- Is a collaboration among:
 - Putnam County Department of Social Services
 - Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health
 - Putnam and Westchester Suicide Prevention Taskforces
 - Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES
 - Mental health consultants and experts



We Serve

- Schools and communities in Putnam and Northern Westchester counties
 - As an arm of the Putnam/Northern Westchester Regional Crisis Team
 - As an affiliate of the Putnam/Northern Westchester Administrators Regional Crisis Team



Members

Dr. Lynn Allen

Putnam | Northern Westchester BOCES, Assistant Superintendent

Marla Behler

Child Advocacy Center of Putnam County, Program Coordinator

Dr. Barbara Bernstein

The Mental Health Association of Westchester, Executive Director

Neil Boyle

North Salem Central School District, Coordinator of Pupil Personnel Services

Dr. Patricia Bragdon

Katonah-Lewisboro Central School District, School Social Worker

Shannon Capodilupo

open door family medical center, senior director of behavioral health

Megan Castellano

Mental Health Association in Putnam County, Inc., Executive Director

Diana Cusumano

The JED Foundation, Campus Advisor

Joseph DeMarzo

Department of Social Services, Mental Health and the Youth Bureau in Putnam County, Deputy Commissioner

Dr. Alec Miller

cognitive and Behavioral consultants, LLP, Co-Founder and Clinical Director

Michael Orth

Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health, Deputy Commissioner

Michael Piazza

Department of Social Services, Mental Health and the Youth Bureau in Putnam County Commissioner

Adam VanDerStuyf

North Salem Central School District, Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Pat White

Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health, Program Administrator Children's Mental Health Services

Special Consultant

Pat Breux

Suicide Prevention Center New York, Coordinator of School and Youth Initiatives

Goals

1. Seek opportunities to educate school communities regarding suicide prevention in schools.
2. Serve as a collaborative leadership team that can be activated to provide person-centered suicide prevention, intervention and response support to schools and the community.
3. Create a vetted list of resources, sequenced trainings and best practices in suicide prevention in schools.



Creating Suicide Safer Schools

CSSS Webtool

Web-based toolkit for suicide prevention planning.

Suicide Safety for Teachers

Awareness training for teachers and staff

Creating Suicide Safety in School

Comprehensive prevention framework for school planning

Intervening with students at risk

Assess, intervene, safety plan, & follow up

Sources of Strength or Name of Program

Universal intervention influencing social norms



Lifelines Postvention

Crisis Team readiness to support recovery after suicide death.

- **Goal 1**: Seek opportunities to educate school communities regarding suicide prevention in schools.
 - Presentations to administrative teams, faculty, staff, students as well as parent and community groups
 - Participation on school district or building crisis, social/emotional or other similar committees
 - Participate in school-community events such as awareness/information fairs, special walks and/or other events featuring presentations, booths/tables with print materials, poster sessions, etc.
 - Other opportunities identified by school districts



"The team was well received in our district and shared a great deal of information with us that we found valuable."

Dr. Valerie Henning-Piedmonte
Superintendent of Schools, Brewster Central School District

- **Goal 2**: Serve as a collaborative leadership team that can be activated to provide person-centered suicide prevention, intervention and response support to schools and the community.
- A school district representative can contact a team member to request assistance after the suicide death of a school community member who will:
 - Collect factual information about the situation and help determine what services are needed from the team
 - Contact other team members as needed
 - Facilitate onsite assistance (consultations, presentations, etc.)
- When reporting, members:
 - Understand that they are responding only to the stated needs of the school district
 - Are aware of the importance of supporting the school district without being intrusive or over reactive
 - Are cognizant that the school district's administrators and staff members know how best to meet the needs of their school communities

- **Goal 3**: Create a vetted list of resources, sequenced trainings and best practices in suicide prevention in schools.
 - The team meets monthly to:
 - Network
 - Share resources
 - Debrief recent school or community situations related to suicide
 - Follow up on school district requests and needs
 - Receive information on programs and resources

Team Statistics



- Since 2016, the team has provided several suicide prevention presentations
- Received the 2016 ***Excellence in Suicide Prevention Award*** from Suicide Prevention Center of New York State
- Received the 2016 Mental Health Association of Putnam ***Distinguished Honoree*** recognition



"The presentation and subsequent discussion was very helpful and informative. It's reassuring to have these partnerships as resources for such an important matter."

Dr. Anthony Showah

Student Support Specialist, Haldane Central school district

*For more information or to activate the **Regional Suicide Prevention in Schools Leadership Team**, please contact:*

Dr. Lynn Allen

Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES

Assistant Superintendent

lallen@pnwboces.org

914-248-2310

