

April 13, 2009

**Update on five main grant programmatic activities**

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

**Staff Gatekeeper Trainings:** Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) – Susan, our overall prevention program project director, and Virginia, the training project manager, have hired a mental health educator to help conduct QPR trainings. On March 27<sup>th</sup>, two people from South Carolina came down and delivered a QPR train-the-trainers training so now we have 10 additional people who have been trained to be QPR trainers. The people who have been trained line up with the key sectors that we have identified in our grant proposal such as persons from the schools, Dept. of Child and Family Services, persons who work with juvenile justice, persons working with sexual minority youths, persons working with elderly grandparents many of whom our raising youths in our target population range, consistent with our goal of improving community linkages. Ray Mallari, our County Case Manager, employed by Child Guidance, the major youth community mental health agency in the county, attended the QPR train the trainers training, introduced himself to all of the trainers and explained his critical role relative to case managing youths who are identified by prevention efforts. All of the QPR trainers have been trained to mention Ray's role when they train any agency or school staff on QPR so that referred youths are not forgotten. On top of all of this, our newly trained QPR trainers have utilized their training rather quickly; we have already had 2 QPR trainings that took place on April 7<sup>th</sup>, delivered by our Boy's Home Trainer, who will be training all of our foster care parents in Duval County. **On the evaluation side**, we printed 1000 evaluation packets; our evaluation materials with consent forms and Macro required items were discussed and distributed as part of the QPR train the trainers training. And our evaluation materials were used at the initial QPR trainings mentioned above. These materials are being sent to USF. USF will be analyzing the initial data, beta testing to make sure there were no problems in completing evaluation materials, and will be testing out a feedback to trainers reporting system that we have been working on developing.

**School Based Prevention:** Signs of Suicide (SOS) and QPR – To start, there were 2 Duval County Public school staff members who were trained in QPR this month. These staff members, working with Kathy Bowles, Supervisor of Health Education for Duval County Public Schools, are now in the process of planning QPR training for Duval county public school teachers and staff. Kathy is also in the process of identifying a list of schools that they are planning to target for SOS training. It is likely that they will be starting first with middle schools rather than high schools as originally planned because health education courses are still be offered in these grades, which will make the trainings easier to implement; Unfortunately with the massive budget cuts being seen in Florida, health education classes in high schools are now in line for the executioner's block. The plan in these middle schools is that identified schools will first receive QPR training and then SOS training once a school has sufficiently trained adults in the school. Kathy, has also been working to develop a four hour training for teachers and school personnel as part of their yearly continuing education certification requirements that will incorporate QPR training and information about mental health and suicide. She will be presenting this training to the School Board in May for approval. If approved, faculty and staff will receive this training before the next school year. **On the evaluation side,** USF is almost done in developing an evaluation measure *and procedural* manual for the evaluation of SOS delivered in high schools... yes, high schools... so, they have recently recontacted our SOS contacts to get the training materials for SOS delivered in middle schools so we can modify our evaluation materials accordingly. On the positive side, we have almost completed the Duval County School IRB forms. Other good news is that the schools have started the baseline administration of YRBS data so we will have baseline, pre-prevention program data, on youth suicide risk and behavior.

**Social Marketing:** Our social marketing senior strategist, after considering the needs of the campaign, redid the budget to better meet the grant needs. This was just approved by SAMHSA. She then just hired a social marketing coordinator with prior marketing experience working for Clear Channel. We have also been gathering ideas about the steps that need to

take place to start a social marketing plan. A social marketing strategic plan is now being developed since we now have our social marketing staff in place. **On the evaluation side,** once the plans are further developed, USF has discussed designing an evaluation for a sample of our target audience to see how the potential social marketing campaign influences them on Theory of Planned Behavior constructs. This empirically supported theory holds that behavior is most likely to change if one changes an individual's attitudes, beliefs about social norms, and perceived capability in changing behavior.

**Case Management/Crisis Services:** Ray, our county case manager, attended the QPR train the trainers session and explained his role as the County Case Manager. He is ready to go as hopefully the prevention program starts resulting in the identification and referral of youths. **On the evaluation side,** USF has just received IRB approval for our consent process and interview of individuals who end up being identified and referred. In addition, Ray is going back through Child Guidance mobile crisis team records to find us crisis response baseline data. He has informed us that there are a lot of records so we will be sending him one of our staff to assist him. United Way 211 Crisis line services are also gathering base line data for us.

**Parent Involvement:** Virginia, the program manager on the grant, has been working with Susan to develop a strategic plan for this aim. This is a work in progress as there is less out there to guide this effort than our other aims. This month we had our first two QPR trainings with foster parents (7 were trained on Tuesday, and another training was this past weekend. Susan, our program director, met with parents who had expressed interest in helping us develop a parent involvement or advisory committee. Note that only 2 out of 5 parents who said they were coming actually showed up.) With the parents that attended, they had a brainstorming session to talk about how to increase parent involvement in Duval County suicide prevention efforts. Krista, the Co-PI on the grant, has also provided Susan with resources that may help to enhance her efforts in establishing a parent involvement group in Duval county. On the topic of parent involvement, we have encountered a challenge. Parents in town have become "aware"

that other grants pay parents for their participation. We do not have money budgeted for this and we really don't see where it could come from something else. Mental Health America is thinking of non-monetary incentives to try to encourage parents to help. **On the evaluation side**, USF is planning to get the evaluation packets from the QPR parent training in the upcoming week so we can analyze this first batch of data. We are also documenting all parent involvement activities as they occur.

### **FUTURE PLANS:**

**Staff Gatekeeper Trainings:** Now that the QPR trainers have been trained, they are all working on scheduling trainings with various agencies. Susan and Virginia plan to pull this group of trainers together quarterly to see how the trainings are going and hear lessons learned, etc. **On the evaluation side**, Virginia, having formed good relationship with all of the trained QPR trainers, plans to contact them all soon to check that they have proper understanding of evaluation procedures. Further, we are planning on analyzing data and reporting feedback to all the trainers as the evaluation materials continue to roll in. USF is also planning on doing several observations of training to evaluate implementation with each QPR trainer. We also will be gearing up on the evaluation end for our 3 month follow up interviews for those who received QPR training, to see what kind of knowledge they retained and how the training impacted their attitudes and behavior. We are working on having our evaluation materials available in whatever format is easiest for participants: on-line, by phone, or by mail.

**School Based Prevention:** As mentioned earlier, Kathy plans to try to get the 4 hours of continuing education approved by the school board in May. She is also working on finalizing a list of schools that will be the primary targets to receive QPR and SOS training. We are working with Kathy to plan when school based efforts will occur next year. **On the evaluation side**, the USF high school SOS evaluation measure should be done soon but they also are planning on developing a middle school version. USF also plans to finish and submit their Duval County Public Schools IRB form.

**Social Marketing:** Our social marketing team is now working on developing a strategic plan of what steps will be accomplished by what time. **On the evaluation side,** USF is actively seeking out baseline data for our various suicide prevention efforts including the social marketing campaign.

**Case Management Services:** Hopefully, Ray will start to receive contacts about identified and referred kids soon as he is ready to go. He is also planning on attending additional QPR trainings as they are scheduled to introduce himself as the key person trainees should contact when they identify a youth at risk. **On the evaluation side,** USF is ready to start tracking and interviewing identified and referred youths. We have several trained individuals (many bilingual) to conduct baseline and follow-up interviews with youths on symptoms and suicidality and the referral process and we are training other interviewers.

**Parent Involvement:** Besides many additional QPR trainings to foster care parents, grandparents, etc. as mentioned earlier, Susan and Virginia are working on developing a strategic plan for this aim. In addition, Susan will be contacting agencies who she thinks have some parental involvement activities already in place, and will try to link our activities to theirs.