

# ZERO SUICIDE IN TEXAS



July 2015



## The Impact of Minority Suicide

July celebrates Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, which is an opportunity to increase awareness of culturally competent practices in suicide prevention and intervention. Research has shown potential cultural differences regarding beliefs about suicide, mental illness, and help seeking.

Research indicates that there is a higher prevalence of psychological distress and depressive symptoms among the African American community, and black teens are more likely to attempt suicide than white teenagers.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Hispanic teens, particularly females, are at higher risk of suicidal behavior.<sup>2</sup> Native American youth appear to be at greatest risk, with suicide being the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for 15 to 24 year olds.<sup>3</sup>

Despite higher rates of suicidal behavior, adolescent behavioral health needs are frequently unaddressed. The SPRC offers more information about cultural differences in suicidal behaviors [here](#).

When working with individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds, is it important to be mindful about what role family, school, religion, socioeconomic status, spiritual beliefs and other cultural experiences play for youth and their families.

Organizations interested in learning more about cultural and linguistic standards for health care may want to examine this online training from Texas Health Steps – [Advancing Health Equity in Texas through Culturally Responsive Care](#).

## The Semicolon Project



There is a new social movement gaining momentum through social media. Project Semicolon recognizes individuals who could have ended their story or sentence but chose not to. Individuals who are struggling with depression, addiction, self-injury, and suicide use the tattoo of a semicolon somewhere on their body to represent their choice to keep living. They are the author, the sentence in their life, and they have chosen to continue their story. Learn more [here](#).

## Postvention as Prevention

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Ken Norton, Executive Director of NAMI New Hampshire, begins a talk “I am here to talk about postvention as part of suicide prevention planning and postvention is a not so user-friendly term, but what it means is responding or being prepared to respond in a way that’s helpful after a suicide death.” He goes on to cite the importance of having an effective immediate response, but then to also plan for the “ripples” that will begin to affect the broader community and society. The potential impact of a suicide death on a very large number of individuals underscores the need for careful planning and effective systems.

Read more about the importance of suicide postvention [here](#).

Watch Ken Norton talk about postvention in this [Spark Talk](#).

## Upcoming Events



### SafeTALK Training of Trainers

**Wednesday, July 29, 8am-5pm and Thursday, July 30 8am-5pm, Austin, Texas**

This training prepares candidates to deliver half day Suicide Alertness for Everyone (safeTALK). You must have completed a two day ASIST workshop to become a safeTALK trainer. E-mail Erica Shapiro at [Erica.Shapiro@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:Erica.Shapiro@austin.utexas.edu) with the name and contact information of the staff member who will attend.

### Zero Suicide Academy

**Tuesday, August 18 8:30am-4:30pm, Houston Hilton North, Houston, Texas**

The Zero Suicide Academy is for both new and existing Zero Suicide Texas LMHAs. This event will have nationally recognized speakers in the area of suicide prevention as well as invaluable information about implementation of the Zero Suicide Texas safer care center best practices. For existing sites, this academy will go beyond implementation into next steps in creating a suicide safer care community.

E-mail Erica Shapiro at [Erica.Shapiro@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:Erica.Shapiro@austin.utexas.edu) with the name and contact information of the staff member(s) who will attend.

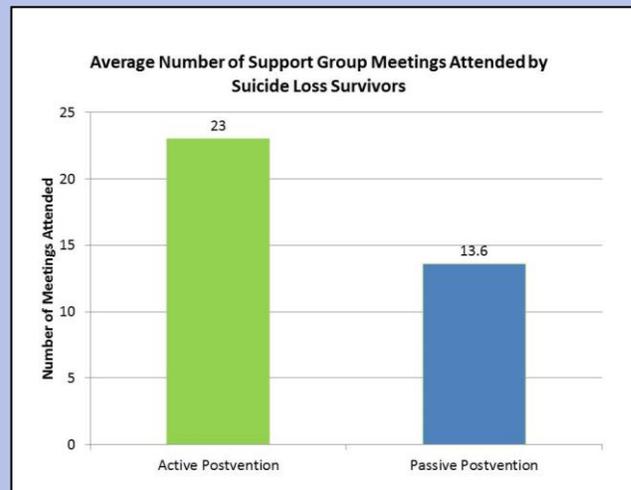
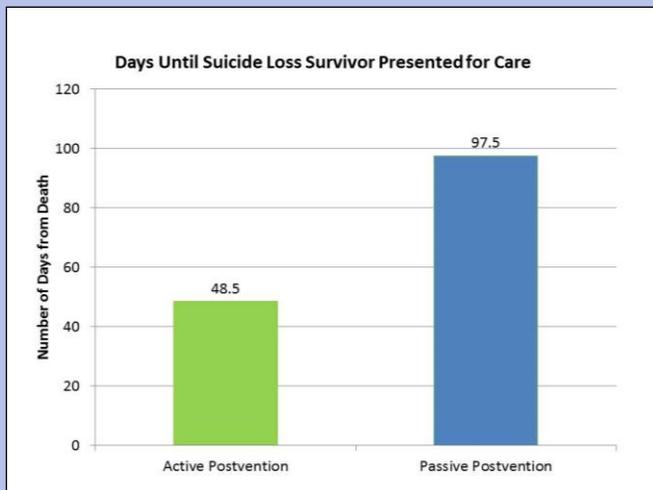
### ASK About Suicide to Save a Life! Training of Trainers

This Gatekeeper training will be offered in Waco, Houston, Austin, and Beaumont. The following dates and locations have been set: August 27, 2015: Austin, Texas; August 31, 2015: Houston, Texas; and September 17, 2015: Fort Worth, Texas.

## What the data tells us



Active postvention strategies aim for suicide loss survivors to have access to information about resources as soon after a death as possible. Here is what the research<sup>4</sup> tells us:



## References

- 1 <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/african-american-mental-health>
- 2 <http://www.sprc.org/sites/sprc.org/files/library/Hispanics%20Sheet%20Aug%2028%202013%20Final.pdf>
- 3 <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/images/Fast%20Facts.pdf>
- 4 <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1521/suli.2008.38.1.30/epdf>