Peers Reaching Out: The Critical Role of Students in Campus Suicide Prevention
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• Program Manager, OSU Suicide Prevention Program

suicideprevention.osu.edu
@OSUREACH
Collaboration with University Administration & over 70 campus and community partners

- Counseling & Consultation Service
- Student Wellness Center
- Office of Residence Life
- The Graduate School
- The Office of Military and Veterans Services
Program Structure:

• Stand-alone suicide prevention office
  • 1 full-time program lead
  • 2 GAAs
  • 5 undergraduate staff/interns
  • 1 faculty director
  • 2 student organizations
OSU Suicide Prevention Program Initiatives:

• Gatekeeper trainings for students, staff, and faculty (REACH)
• Online stress and depression screening (AFSP)
• State advocacy (OH Bill 28)
• Smartphone app (RUOK: OSU)
• *Student development initiatives (Today’s focus)*
| People You Turn To | % Always/Very Often
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close friend(s)</td>
<td>84.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family member(s)</td>
<td>79.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student peer(s) at OSU</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic advisor(s)</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor(s) of student organization(s)</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty member(s)</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Life staff</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question: How do we promote mental health and suicide prevention directly to students?

Big Ideas:

• Use peer *education* to provide REACH peer gatekeeper trainings

• Support student *advocacy* efforts to raise campus awareness

• Expand direct *outreach* to at-risk student populations
Peer-Led Suicide Prevention & Mental Health Awareness Initiatives

- Students may recognize struggling friends prior to parents, staff, and instructors
- Peer leaders can de-stigmatize help-seeking behavior among college students (Daddona, 2011)
- Peer educators are “students who have been selected, trained, and designated by a campus authority to offer educational services to their peers” (Newton & Ender, 2010, in Catanzarite & Robinson, 2013)
Peer-Led Suicide Prevention & Mental Health Awareness Initiatives

- Other universities using peers to promote mental health & suicide prevention (Catanzarite & Robinson, 2013; The Campus Suicide Prevention Center of Virginia, 2011):
  - UNC-Greensboro, “Friends Helping Friends”
  - SUNY-Albany, “Middle Earth”
  - Mississippi State University-Meridian, “Student Peer Helper Program”
Initiative #1:  

*Use peer educators to lead suicide prevention trainings*
Peers REACHing Out (“PROs”)

Mission Statement:
Our purpose is to work with The Ohio State University’s Suicide Prevention Program to:

1. Educate our campus peers on suicide prevention through REACH trainings;
2. Increase awareness and understanding of suicide and its prevention at outreach events; and
3. Advocate for suicide prevention and ending the stigma of mental illness.
What is R.E.A.C.H.?

A gatekeeper training program to help the OSU community prevent suicide by teaching faculty, staff, & students how to:

- Recognize warning signs
- Engage with empathy
- Ask directly about suicide
- Communicate hope
- Help suicidal individuals access care & treatment
What is R.E.A.C.H.?

- Developed in 2012 by Dr. Darcy Haag Granello and the OSU Suicide Prevention Program
- **2016-17**
  - We provided over 160+ gatekeeper trainings
  - Over 4,100 students, staff, & faculty trained as campus gatekeepers
  - Peer educators used to train student gatekeepers
Peer Education: Training Steps

1. Students apply to be a part of the “PROs” program
2. Officers lead weekly meetings that focus on learning how to provide the REACH gatekeeper training, safe messaging, public speaking, campus outreach strategies, and key advocacy issues
3. Training provided by OSU Suicide Prevention Program
4. Ongoing mentorship provided by Graduate Associate who is a PhD student in Counselor Education at OSU
AfAm Heritage Fest @OSUAAHF · 17 Nov 2016
#39AAHF is trained on suicide prevention! 1 is too many! If you see something, SAY something. Thank you @OSUREACH! #ReachOut ❤️

Delta Theta Sigma OSU shared OSU Suicide Prevention Program's post.
April 3 at 10:07pm · 🌟

Thank you for taking the time to educate us on the seriousness of mental health and the REACH steps. We all had a valuable take away that we will carry with us. #KBBU #DTS

OSU Suicide Prevention Program
Published by Dyan Paity [I] · April 3 at 9:27pm · 🌟

Thank you to Delta Theta Sigma OSU for taking steps to become more educated about suicide prevention by hosting a REACH training earlier today.

Like Comment Share

OSU Suicide Prevention Program, Mariah Stollar, Mary Wilhelm and 10 others

Write a comment...

Press Enter to post.

You Retweeted
Molly P @MollyPee · 7 Sep 2016
Participated in @OSUREACH training today! Highly recommend to all at OSU ❤️
#suicidepreventionawarenessmonth
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

SUICIDE PREVENTION

REACH 5K

Friday, April 21, 2017 | 6-9pm

Fred Beekman Park Jogging Path
2200 Carmack Rd., Columbus OH 43210

go.osu.edu/reach5k
Initiative #2: 
Raise awareness & promote mental health advocacy
Buckeye Campaign Against Suicide
RUOK? Day

An event that introduces students to campus & community mental health resources in a fun, stigma-free environment

• 2016-17: 1,200 attendees
OUAB presents in collaboration with NAMI
GETTING REAL WITH
Kevin Breel

RUOK? DAY
Right after RUOK? Day!
3.2.17
Archie Griffin Grand Ballroom
7–9 pm

#RUOKDAY2017
#ERASETHETIGMA
#OUABreakTheStigma

BCAS @BCASOSU • Feb 23
Only 7 days left peeps. Let’s get REALy excited for Kevin Breeel! @OUAB @NAMIOhioState @ohiounion ruokday2017 #OUABreakingTheStigma pic.twitter.com/bdRspyisK
Additional Outreach Events

my story isn't over
BUCKEYE CAMPAIGN AGAINST SUICIDE

COME GET A TEMPORARY ; TATTOO

"An author could've chosen to end their sentence but chose not to. The author is you and the sentence is your life."

Semicolon Project
Oval & Union Patio
1:30pm-4:30pm
Come out to the either the Oval or the patio on the west side of The Union to grab a temporary semicolon tattoo!
http://www.projectsemicolon.org
BCASOSU@GMAIL.COM
#semicolonprojectosu
7pm Dec. 1
South Oval
Hot Cocoa

Survivor's Luminary

Buckeye Campaign Against Suicide
Initiative #3: 
*Outreach to at-risk populations*
OSUSuicidePrevention @OSUREACH · 4 Nov 2016
There's still time to come post a buckeye leaf and share positive messages for men on campus!
At Ease [ət, ət] [eɪz]

- Free from worry, awkwardness, or problems; loosen.
- In a relaxed position in military ranks.

The phrase is often used as a command for troops standing at attention to relax.

Hosted by The Suicide Prevention Program & The Office of Military & Veteran Services.

A student veteran success series focused on mental health & reduction of stigma.
International and domestic students interact at a cross-cultural cooking and discussion event.
REACH Student Spotlight: Dinushi Kulasekere discusses the impact of art and media on mental health awareness.
facebook.com/notes/osu-suic...
Assessment of Student Initiatives

- Across groups/initiatives, 65 students actively involved in suicide prevention efforts on a weekly basis
- Benefits to our program:
  - Constant stream of energy and vitality
  - Access to parts of campus otherwise blocked
  - Fresh perspectives on how to promote mental health
  - Increased exposure for suicide prevention program
  - Expanded volunteer pool for gatekeeper trainings
**PERFORMANCE METRIC #3**

*Student Leadership Development & Outreach*

### Table 3: Buckeye Campaign Against Suicide: RUOK? Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>RUOK? Day Signature Event Attendance</th>
<th>% Change from 2013-14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>109%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>175%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>210%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OSU Suicide Prevention Program

### Table 4: Peers REACHing Out: REACH Trainings by Peer Educators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% of REACH trainings delivered by peer educators</th>
<th>Approx. number of students involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>GROUP FORMED</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>PILOT YEAR</td>
<td>10 to 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>20 to 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>25 to 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OSU Suicide Prevention Program
What was your motivation for attending RUOK? Day? (n = 385)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Connection with suicide</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in getting involved with suicide prevention/mental health promotion</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in learning more about suicide prevention</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliated with an organization who participated</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To support friends involved with the event</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pizza</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The sum of responses may exceed the overall n because participants could select more than one option.
After attending RUOK? Day, I feel knowledgeable about how to get involved with suicide prevention/mental health awareness on campus? (n = 387)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please rate the extent of your agreement with the following statements: I now feel comfortable discussing suicide with family and friends. (n = 386)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly Disagree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Next Steps:

• Comparison of gatekeeper training outcomes based on presenter type (peer trainer vs. OSU staff trainer)
• Data collection scheduled for AY 2017-18
How do students benefit from their involvement with the OSU Suicide Prevention Program? (Predragovich, 2015)

• Knowledge and education about how to help peers
• Strong sense of community
• Guidance and mentorship from advisors
• Awareness of making a difference in the campus community
• Being valued for their efforts
• Support from and connection with other like-minded students
• Experience being strategic – planning outreach, targeting certain groups
For more information:

- Contact Dr. Matthew Fullen, Program Manager, at fullen.33@osu.edu
- Visit suicideprevention@osu.edu
References


• The Campus Suicide Prevention Center of Virginia. (2011). Peer Involvement in Campus-Based Suicide Prevention: Key Considerations.