

# WORKSHOPS

2008-2009



- ★ Trainers: 124
- ★ Organizers: 179
- ★ Workshops: 277
- ★ Locations: 49
- ★ Participants: 4,795
- ★ Learning Hours: 55,622



# Annual Report 2009



# Centre for Suicide Prevention





## RIVER OF LIFE

Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Workshop

*"What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night, it is the breath of a buffalo in wintertime, it is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset." (Chief Crowfoot, Blackfoot)*

Over the past twelve months, the Centre for Suicide Prevention has been working with an Advisory Committee of Elders and Aboriginal community members to respond to youth suicide within the Aboriginal communities.

- Among the general Canadian population, 12 out of every 100,000 persons died by suicide.
- Among First Nations, it is twice as high—24 persons out of every 100,000 died by suicide.
- Among the Inuit, it is ten times higher—135 persons out of every 100,000 died by suicide.

To this end, the Centre for Suicide Prevention has embarked on a journey to develop a one-day workshop on Aboriginal Youth Suicide. The 'companions' in this journey have been Elders and Aboriginal community members who were passionate to the cause and shared their wisdom, personal experience and best practices in guiding the development of the workshop. Two pilot workshops were held in 2008-09.

River of Life is a one-day workshop designed to provide information and interventions for caregivers working with Aboriginal youth at risk of suicide aged 15 to 24. We thank the Elders who took this journey with us, especially Casey Eagle Speaker for sharing his stories and kernels of wisdom. We thank the Aboriginal Community members for supporting this work and sharing their experiences resulting in practical strategies. We also thank the Calgary Foundation for their generous financial support.



## TATTERED TEDDIES

*An Interactive Handbook about the Awareness and Prevention of Suicide in Children*

Quebec City and the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention's Annual Meeting were the city and site of the book launch for *Tattered Teddies: An Interactive Handbook about the Awareness and Prevention of Suicide in Children*. The Handbook is intended to support the training of teachers, child care workers, health professionals, foster parents, parents and caregivers. As people become more aware of how the seeds of suicide are planted in childhood, there is a growing urgency for schools and agencies that work

with children to look at policies and protocols on how to respond to this growing concern. Authored by CSP staff members Laurel Bridges and Rani Murji, the Handbook addresses how to recognize a child at risk; communicate with the child about death and suicide; understand protective and risk factors; institute early prevention and intervene in crisis situations. The Tattered Teddies Handbook is now available for purchase. It is also available in public libraries across Alberta.

## WORKSHOPS

The Centre for Suicide Prevention continues to offer the following workshops:

- **Tattered Teddies: Suicide in Children Workshop**  
This half-day workshop offers practical approaches for those working with children who are 12 years old or younger and who may be at risk of suicide. In its inaugural year there were 9 Tattered Teddies Workshops given in Alberta.
- **Youth Suicide Workshop**  
Suicide is the second leading cause of death among youth in Canada. This workshop provides information and fosters the development of intervention skills for those in direct contact with youth aged 12 to 24. There were 13 Youth Suicide Workshops in 2008-09.
- **Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)**  
More than 4,000 Canadians die by suicide each year. The ASIST is an internationally recognized workshop that has undergone vigorous risk management assessment. Developed by LivingWorks Education the ASIST is recognized by the Canadian Accreditation Council of Human Services (CACOHS). There were 3,571 individuals who took an ASIST Workshop this past year.
- **ASIST Tune Up: Recertification**  
This workshop is only for participants who have taken the two-day ASIST Training within the past three years. Taking this half-day refresher course renews the ASIST certification for a further two years. There were 47 ASIST Tune Up Workshops in 2008-09.
- **safeTALK: suicide alertness for everyone**  
This 4 hour workshop focuses on recognizing, connecting with, and assisting the person at risk to get help. In 2008-09 there were 17 safeTALK Workshops held across Alberta.

We thank Alberta Health Services - Alberta Mental Health Board for their partial funding support of the Centre's library and workshop delivery.

## Our Alberta Trainers

CSP has 124 Trainers across Alberta trained and certified to teach workshops. CSP also has Trainers who can deliver the Tattered Teddies workshop and the Youth Suicide Workshop in Winnipeg and Ireland.

The Centre for Suicide Prevention has stringent training guidelines for individuals wishing to become Trainers. Trainers accepted within the program are required to attend two to five days of in-class training, followed by a mentorship program, and the requirement to deliver a minimum of three workshops before they are considered to be fully trained Trainers. All Trainers are required to go through a re-certification process every two years. This year Training for Trainer sessions were held in Edmonton, Red Deer, and Calgary.

## Information Services

The 2008-2009 fiscal year was productive for the library and information services with sustained Alberta usage, the continued growth of the collection, and ongoing and new opportunities for community collaboration and agency promotion.

Requests continued to originate from within Alberta, Canada, and internationally. Over 42,000 items were distributed as an integral part of CSP's information services.

1,025 new records were added to the computerized database, representing an increase of 2.6% from 2007-2008. At fiscal year end, there were 38,998 items in the collection. Just as in the previous year, a number of books were added to the lending library.

Community collaboration and support continue to be an important part of the library and information service. Staff served on external committees as well as promoting the activities and distributing the resources of groups such as Canada Post, the Reason to Live project, and the Distress Centre. New opportunities for collaboration were generated when staff joined the Mental Illness Awareness Week committee. Staff also promoted the Centre for Suicide Prevention through display booths at conferences and by supplying our resources for other agencies to distribute at events they were hosting or attending.

This year saw the re-launch of *What's New in SIEC's Library*. This e-publication lets readers know of the latest journal issues received, new books and articles added to the collection, and resources available from other agencies and the Internet. *What's New* has been distributed monthly since August 2008.

## Executive Director's Message

Recently I received a call from a reporter asking if children really are capable of thinking of suicide. Not only are children capable of *thinking* about suicide, but those who do think about it are at far greater risk to *attempt* suicide in their teens and young adult years.

In today's society we need to address how the ideas and possibilities of suicide are planted at such an early age. It is unlikely that the creators of the Alberta government Order in Council that funded the beginning of this organization 28 years ago foresaw a day when six or eight-year olds would try to hang themselves. Unthinkable? I wish I could say otherwise.

This past year our gifted and capable Trainers reached out to 49 communities around the province, providing nearly 56,000 hours of evidence-based instruction. Our SIEC Library staff continued to provide information not only to Albertans but also to a global community. Together the Trainers, Organizers, Staff and Board of our Centre stand committed to strengthening people's knowledge and skills in the prevention of suicide.

Together with our funders, we can take one more step towards our vision of a society, indeed a world, devoid of suicide.

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## Program Advisors

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## Executive Director

Diane Yackel, B.Sc.N., M.A., F.T.

## Staff

Laurel Bridges	Rani Murji
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