

Help & Hope for YOUth Alliance

Advocacy and Policy Task Force Report

Meeting Date: January 7, 2020, noon

Location: Casa de los Ninos

Task Force Leadership and Membership:

Interim Chair: Cindy Godwin

Attendees: Judy Keagy, Dustin Williams, Sheri Bauman, Mark Person, Mildred Manuel and two Pascua Yaqui staff members, Raquel Goodrich, Anthony Cicchino, Ed Nossem, Andrea Altamirano, Natalie Luna Rose, Arcy Cornidez

Overall Task Force Goals & Objectives

- Develop fact sheets and resources to inform community about policy issues in youth mental health, include social media and vaping information
- Advocate for policy adoption to decrease stigma and increase help seeking activity
- Engage provider community in increasing and coordinating access to care

Intermediate Task Force Objectives for January 2020 – March 2020

- Gather research and information to develop a document outlining current youth mental health issues in Arizona, other states' mandates for mental health education in schools and our recommendations for legislation and policy in Arizona
- Work with MEC Youth Advisory Council and Help & Hope for YOUth Youth Task Force to develop the youth advocacy voice to champion legislative and policy changes
- Monitor legislation being introduced and review for support by Help & Hope for YOUth
- Begin meeting with State Senators and Representatives to discuss the need for mental health education in schools, and the need for additional funding for counselors and social workers
- Inventory what mental health programs are being used in what schools, and what behavioral health providers are serving those schools

Meeting Agenda:

- Introductions
- Update from State Standards subcommittee
 - Health standards revision status
 - Subcommittee activities
- Legislative update/issues

- Role of Advocacy & Policy Task Force

Current Overall Task Force Goals & Objectives

- Develop fact sheets and resources to inform community about policy issues in youth mental health
- Advocate for policy adoption to decrease stigma and increase help seeking activity
- Engage provider community in increasing and coordinating access to care
- Short-term objectives and assignments
- Next meeting date and time

Highlights of Discussion:

- Revisions to the Arizona Department of Education Health Standards have been postponed indefinitely. Keri Schoeff of ADE recommended continuing to promote mental health education at the school and district level—current standards are broad enough to cover this. She also recommended meeting with state legislators about the need for mental health education.
- The State Standards Subcommittee is pursuing several courses of action:
 - Judy Keagy and Michelle Crow are meeting with Todd Jaeger, Superintendent of Amphi
 - Sheri Bauman has arranged for us to speak with school counselors at their meeting on February 19
 - Judy Keagy is connecting us with the Children’s Action Alliance and Arizona Education Association to coordinate advocacy efforts
 - Raquel Goodrich has researched where Ending the Silence and Text Talk Act fulfill current state standards, and who is responsible for health programs in several districts.
- Ed Nossem reported on the MEC Teen Town Hall:
 - Out of a total of 280 students participating, 150 chose mental health as their first choice of dialogue circle; suicide prevention and substance abuse topics were also among top choices
 - The topics the students plan to discuss with state legislators include Mental Health, Teen Suicide and Substance Abuse
 - Joshua Ashton who is active with March for Our Lives is now working at MEC three days a week
- Anthony Cicchino will be leading the new Help & Hope for YOUth Youth Task Force which is now being formed. This group will help inform Alliance members about what would most help young people, and direct advocacy efforts.
- Dustin Williams remarked about the power of having youth be their own advocates. He also talked about the momentum for additional funding for school counselors. The

state received grant applications totalling \$100 million for the \$20 million available; 400 of the schools that applied did not receive any funding.

- Raquel Goodrich has compiled responses from 20,000 students who have participated in Text Talk Act to develop themes that we can use to talk to state legislators about what matters to kids
- Arcy Cornidez, who serves on the State's School Safety Task Force which was created in response to the legislation proposed by Rep. Hernandez on behalf of March for Our Lives, said the task force will be making recommendations for updates to the state standards, and is working with CASEL to develop social-emotional learning standards.
- We need to find legislators with the power to take on proposing youth mental health education legislation. Specific legislators to meet with include:
 - Heather Carter
 - Victoria Steele
 - Kate Brophy McGee
 - Dave Bradley
 - Others to be identified; MEC researching
- Plan to speak at the legislature and Board of Education meetings.
- Track who is proposing what relevant legislation this session. Dustin Williams will share his list of proposed education bills.
- The Pima County Health Department has data on suicides and fatal overdoses; Mark Person will share highlights. Pima County also is providing health education to bridge the gap between parents and kids.
- We need to develop a list of what mental health education programs are being provided in what schools.
- Mildred Manuel talked about working with youth on the reservation to develop messaging—they do not use the word suicide, instead talk about kindness.
- There was discussion about the goals and objectives of the Advocacy & Policy Task Force. Consensus was the current goals are still appropriate, but we need to address social media and vaping in our work. Sheri Bauman is working on a grant proposal about how to use social media positively. Lynn Hall referred to a white paper on the impact of social media on mental health. We need to include reference to social media in our recommendations for updating the health standards.
- Mark Person suggested referring to how changes were made related to opioid prescribing—including interviewing those responsible for carrying out the changes.

Assignments prior to next meeting:

- Share research and information
 - Ed Nossem: Summary of Teen Town Hall Participants and Dialog Circles, full report of Teen Town Hall, topics for visit to state legislature
 - Raquel Goodrich: Theme data from 20,000 TTA participants, analysis of where Ending the Silence and TTA fit into State Health Standards, research on who in districts is responsible for mental health education, information on other states' efforts

- Arcy Cornidez: Recommendations from School Safety Task Force on SEL and other standards
- Dustin Williams: list of education bills being introduced in 2020 legislative session
- Mark Person: Health Department data on suicides and fatal overdoses among youth 10-24
- Mildred Manuel: suicide prevention messaging being developed by youth
- Lynn Hall: White paper on impact of social media on mental health
- Judy Keagy: State policy agendas of Arizona Education Association and Children's Action Alliance
- Continue work of Standards Subcommittee
- Raquel Goodrich, Anthony Cicchino and Mark Person will create a subcommittee specifically to draft language to include in Health Standards
- Begin to develop spreadsheet of what mental health programs and what providers are in middle and high schools in four counties
- Draft Help & Hope for YOUTH policy backgrounder and recommendations

Recommendations to the Alliance:

- Develop youth task force to inform and direct our work

Relevant articles from Raquel Goodrich:

Mental health education in other states:

<https://www.educationdive.com/news/more-states-requiring-mental-health-education/561250/>

Interactive map depicting what states have done for mental health education:

<https://www.today.com/health/today-analysis-more-states-requiring-mental-health-education-law-t162822>

Members are invited to attend the School-Based Behavioral Health Services Coalition meeting, Wednesday, January 29, 8:30-10:00 a.m. at Casa de los Ninos. Register at <https://helphopeforyouth.org/school-based-behavioral-health-coalition-meeting-registration/>.

Next Meeting: February 4, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Location: Casa de los Ninos