

**MINUTES: 3/1/2021 SUICIDE PREVENTION TASK FORCE**

**7:30 - 8:30 am**

**Zoom and In Person in the Public Health conference room**

**Co-Chairs: Aaron Preece and Matthew Daniels**

**Present:**

**KC Lehr, Sheriff, Sublette County Sheriff's Office**

**Stan Cannon, Deputy County Attorney**

**Aaron Preece, Counselor, High Country**

**Matthew Daniels, Business Owner,**

**Randy Belton, business Owner, Veteran, Priest Associate, St. Andrew's Church**

**Mardy Sleight, Community and church member**

**Hannah McKinney, Counselor, Pinedale High School**

**Angie Murphy, School Psychologist and Special Services Director, Sub1.**

**Melinda Bobo, Priest, St. Andrew's Church**

**Bill Lehr, Marbleton Senior Center**

**Trisha Scott, Coalition Coordinator**

**Notes:**

Sheriff Lehr attended the meeting to report data the Sheriff's Office has collected on suicide in Sublette County over the past 10 years, including information on the method used, gender, age, and alcohol involvement. 23 out of the 29 suicides that occurred in the past 10 years involved alcohol. 76% involved firearms. Sheriff Lehr reported that "firearms are the "common denominator". The question was posed: How do we educate that firearms are the leading cause of suicide death without challenging the 2nd Amendment right to bear arms. The Sheriff cautioned that alcohol involved in suicide is underreported due to alcohol leaving the body after death and then undetected. He showed childsafe gun locks and proposed partnering with the coalition at booths at local events to promote gun locks. When someone has to find the key to unlock a gun it buys extra time for someone considering suicide, which can prevent the suicide. He proposed that coalition QPR trainers attend this fall's Life Are You ready event to provide one of the info stations. He will work with QPR Gatekeeper trainers to offer 1 hour QPR training to upcoming SCSO/BOCES Concealed Weapons/Firearm Safety courses at BOCES.

Stan Cannon reported concerns for "copycat effect" AKA suicide contagion, after the recent suicide. What can we do to reach out to the kids most impacted? Angie Murphy reported that the schools strive to be sure that every student has an adult on the school campus they feel safe with and they can talk to. Coalition members noted that 150 Sub1 students are trained QPR Gatekeepers and know the warning signs of suicide.

Randy Belton said it is important to "increase our footprint" in the community with more personal conversations about suicide and mental health between task force members and the community.

Angie brought up that there is a gap in wrap-around services for youth that aren't involved with DFS but who do "fall through the cracks". Bill Lehr suggested using the School Resource Officers. Angie requested we talk more about wrap-around services at the April task force meeting.

Mardy Sleight added that the quest to be perfect is a risk factor for youth suicide and that we can do more to send the message that no-one is perfect, using local adults and leaders to give the message. Sheriff Lehr recommended sharing a PSA with the SCSO facebook page.

Report on MH funds: Melinda reported that the pot of money that is available to adults with non-covid related MH stresses is "the smallest pot" we have, and will be quickly depleted. We need a plan to fundraise to keep that specific fund viable.

Agreements made:

- The Sheriff will collaborate with QPR trainers to offer 1 hour QPR at BOCES concealed weapon/firearm safety training.
- The coalition and the Sheriff's Office will collaborate on booths at public events to hand out gun locks and MH resource info; coalition members will attend the Fall 2021 Life Are You ready event and provide MH info and resources for Sublette high school students..
- The coalition will work with Angie Murphy to brainstorm wrap-around services for kids at risk at the April 5 task force meeting.
- Melinda and Trisha will meet Tuesday March 2 at 10 am to finalize details on the MH fund flyer including details for how the public can donate to the fund.

Adjourn formal meeting 8:45 am.