



**ENGAGEMENT
AND EXTENSION**
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

SUICIDE POSTVENTION SUPPORT PLAN DEVELOPMENT FOR THE OFFICE OF EXTENSION

WESTERN REGION

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Introduction

- 5TH COLORADO RANKS 5TH IN THE NATION FOR SUICIDE RATES.
- 3 1/2[×] THE SUICIDE RATE AMONG FARMERS IS 3 1/2 TIMES HIGHER THAN AMONG THE GENERAL POPULATION.

BARRIERS TO RESOURCES AND SOCIAL SERVICES, NEEDING TO TRAVEL GREATER DISTANCES TO ACCESS CARE, HIGHER LEVELS OF POVERTY, AND AN AGING POPULATION COMPOUND THE RISKS OF TRAUMA AND SUICIDE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES.

What is a Postvention

THE TERM "POSTVENTION" DESCRIBES THE COLLECTION OF ACTIVITIES THAT PROVIDE SUPPORT AFTER A DEATH BY SUICIDE HAS OCCURRED AND HELP REDUCE THE RISK OF FURTHER DEATHS BY SUICIDE. HOWEVER, THE TOOLKIT WILL OFFER EXTENSION GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORTING RURAL COMMUNITIES THROUGH A WIDER ARRAY OF TRAUMATIC INCIDENCES AND THUS REFERS TO HUMAN TRAUMA COMMUNITY SUPPORT.

Why Focus on Extension?

Extension is a trusted, neutral organization and a long-standing presence in almost every county in the state. Through these deep ties to their rural communities, Extension already serves as a resource and support in many different situations.

Analysis

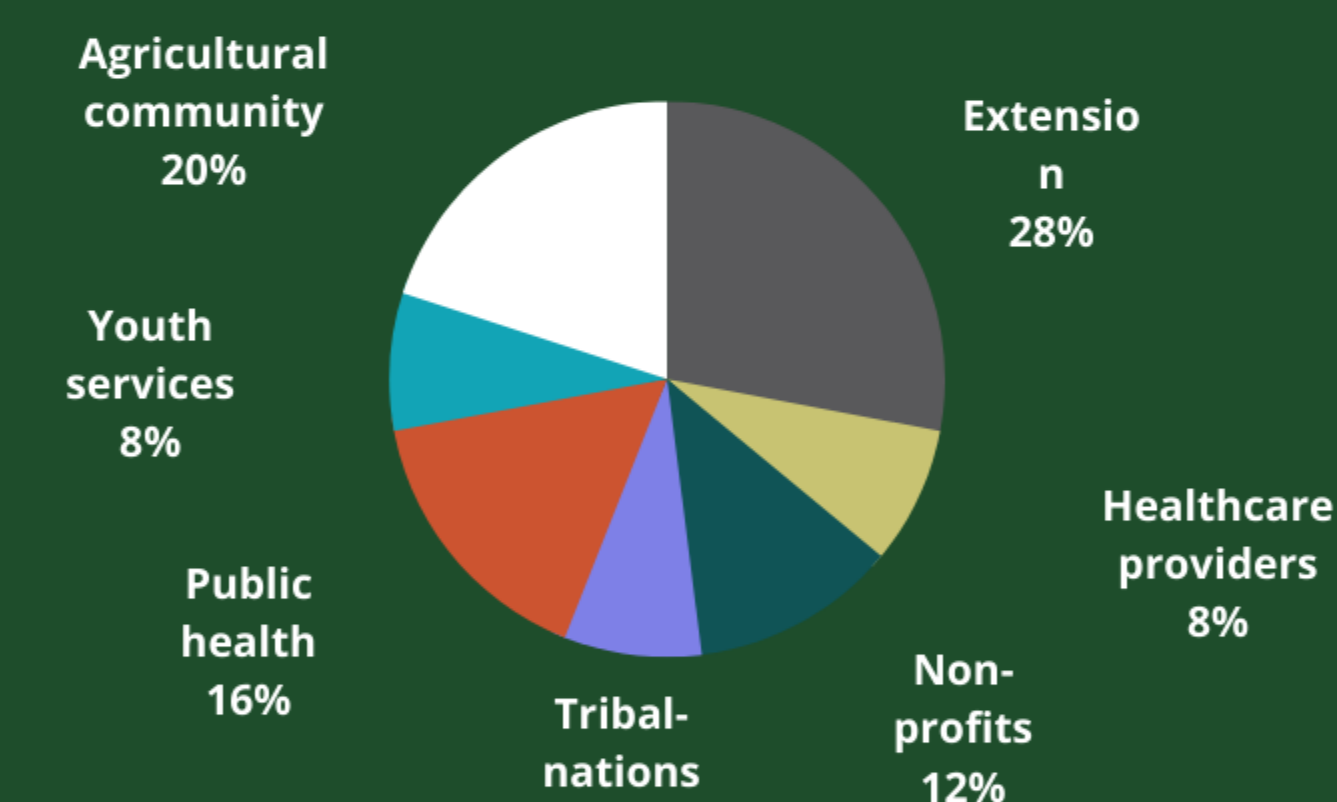
Listening Session - San Juan Basin

THE GOAL OF THIS LISTENING SESSION WAS TO BRING TOGETHER COMMUNITY PARTNERS, AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS, AND EXTENSION TO BUILD KNOWLEDGE AND TRUST IN COMMUNITY RESOURCES, ASSESS GAPS, AND CO-CREATE AN EXTENSION-FOCUSED COMMUNITY SUPPORT PLAN AROUND HUMAN TRAUMA AND SUICIDE.

MAIN TAKEAWAYS: COMMUNITY NEEDS

- LONG-TERM SUPPORT FOR THOSE STRUGGLING WITH TRAUMA OR SUICIDE LOSS.
- IMPROVING CULTURAL COMPETENCE, SUCH AS CULTURALLY SPECIFIC TRAINING FOR ENGAGING WITH TRIBAL NATIONS AROUND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH.
- BEST PRACTICES IN COMMUNICATION AROUND THESE DIFFICULT SITUATIONS BOTH WITHIN EXTENSION AND WITH THE LARGER COMMUNITY.

COMMUNITY SECTORS PRESENT AT THE LISTENING SESSION.



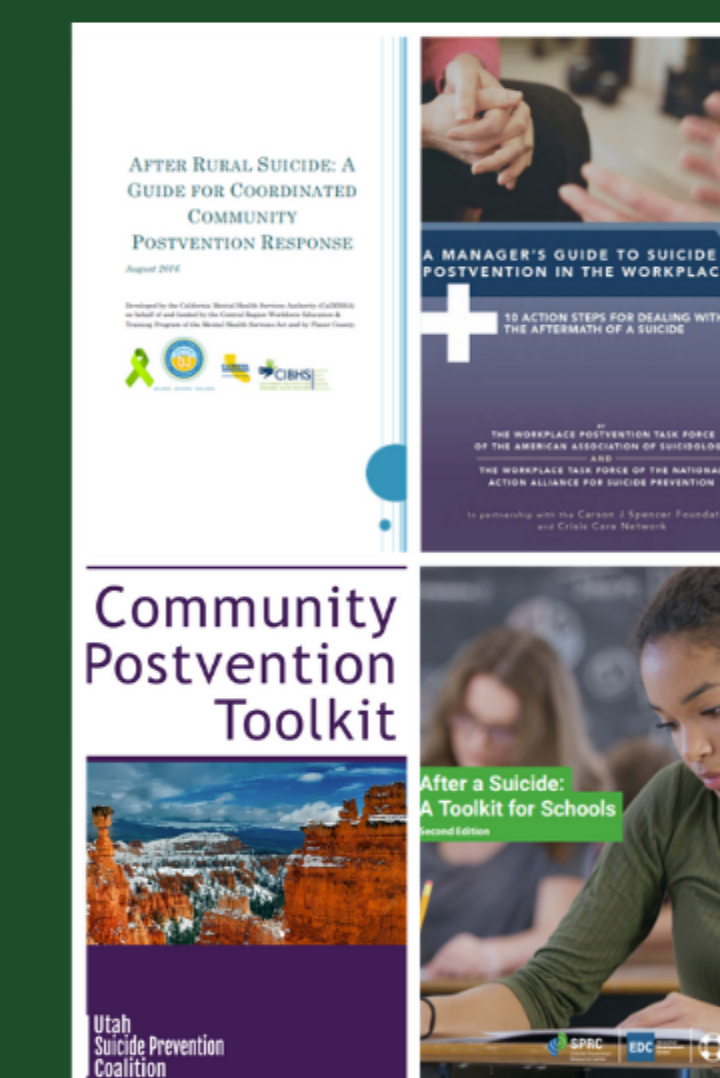
Peer-Reviewed Research

25 WE REVIEWED 25 PUBLISHED TOOLKITS AND PEER-REVIEWED PAPERS SURROUNDING THE BEST PRACTICES FOR CREATING A SUICIDE POSTVENTION PLAN.

WE PULLED THE MOST IMPORTANT AND RELEVANT INFORMATION FROM EACH TOOLKIT TO FILL IN THE GAPS WE EXTRAPOLATED FROM THE LISTENING SESSION THEMES. WE FOUND INFORMATION ON BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNICATION AROUND SUICIDE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE.

HOWEVER, WITHIN THESE TOOLS, WE ALSO ENCOUNTERED GAPS IN INFORMATION REGARDING LONG-TERM GRIEF SUPPORT AND CULTURAL COMPETENCY IN SUICIDE POSTVENTION PLANNING. BECAUSE THESE WERE IMPORTANT GAPS BROUGHT UP IN THE LISTENING SESSION, WE DOVE INTO THE PEER-REVIEWED RESEARCH TO ADDRESS THEM. KNOWING OUR TOOLKIT WOULD ADDRESS THESE GAPS, WHERE PREVIOUS TOOLKITS HAD NOT, REITERATED THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS PROJECT.

THE FRONT COVERS OF A FEW TOOLKITS WE ANALYZED AND ADAPTED.



Methodology



- ANALYZED QUALITATIVE DATA (TRANSCRIPTS FROM PUBLIC LISTENING SESSIONS) FOR THEMES.
- RESEARCHED AND COMPILED 25 EXISTING SUICIDE POSTVENTION TOOLKITS COVERING A WIDE VARIETY OF COMMUNITIES (E.G., SCHOOLS, RURAL COMMUNITIES, THE WORKPLACE, AND FIRST RESPONDERS) AND PEER-REVIEWED RESEARCH.

THESE FINDINGS WERE USED TO DETERMINE BEST PRACTICES AROUND POSTVENTION SUPPORTS TO DEVELOP A SERIES OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A HUMAN TRAUMA AND SUICIDE POSTVENTION TOOLKIT AND A COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN CHECKLIST ADAPTED SPECIFICALLY FOR EXTENSION'S ROLE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES.

Real World Application

THIS SUMMER INTERNSHIP WAS INCREDIBLY VALUABLE FOR A PREVENTION SCIENCE STUDENT IN TWO WAYS.

FIRST, IT PROVIDED EXPOSURE TO THE PROCESS OF COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH FROM START TO FINISH.

SECONDLY, IT GRANTED THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRACTICE TRANSFERABLE SKILLS WITHIN REAL-WORLD SETTINGS (E.G., ANALYZING THE FINDINGS IN THE LISTENING SESSIONS FROM TWO COMMUNITIES IN COLORADO AND RESEARCHING BEST PRACTICES IN THE FIELD) AND CONNECT THE TWO TOGETHER TO FORM AN ACTIONABLE COMMUNITY PROGRAM.

I GREATLY APPRECIATE THE PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS I MADE WITHIN EXTENSION AND THE SUPPORT THEY OFFERED THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER. I LOOK FORWARD TO PURSUING WORK WITHIN COMMUNITY PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH POST-GRADUATION.



Next Steps

THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS SUMMER INTERNSHIP WILL BE USED TO CREATE A HUMAN TRAUMA AND SUICIDE POSTVENTION TOOLKIT TAILORED TO EXTENSION'S ROLE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES. THIS TOOLKIT WILL THEN BE USED IN A PILOT PROGRAM THIS FALL. THE PROGRAM AIMS TO BRING TOGETHER EXTENSION AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES TO CREATE A SUICIDE POSTVENTION SUPPORT PLAN FOR THE SAN JUAN VALLEY THAT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED AND EVALUATED FOR CSU OFFICE OF EXTENSION.

References

Colorado Suicide Statistics, Rate and Prevention. (n.d.). CAMS-Care. <https://cams-care.com/state-statistics/colorado/#:~:text=Suicide%20Rates%20in%20Colorado,death%20for%20ages%2010-24>

Miller, C. D. M., & Rudolphi, J. M. (2022). Characteristics of suicide among farmers and ranchers: Using the CDC NVDRS 2003–2018. American Journal of Industrial Medicine, 65(8), 675–689. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajim.23399>

