

The logo for the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network is a dark blue silhouette of the state of Tennessee. Inside the silhouette, the words "Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network" are written in a white, serif font. The text is arranged in three lines: "Tennessee Suicide" on the top line, "Prevention Network" on the middle line, and a blank space on the bottom line.

Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network

"Saving Lives in Tennessee"

**TSPN Advisory Council Meeting
Clement Room A, Montgomery Bell State Park Inn
Burns, Tennessee
Wednesday, June 4, 2008**

Advisory Council Members and Alternates Present

Stephanie Brooks Barger, M. Div., Crisis Services Manager, Family and Children's Services
Bernard G. Barton, MA, Pastor, Pleasant Hill Church of Christ
Sam Bernard, PhD, Bernard & Associates (Advisory Council Chair)
Carol Burroughs, MSCPS, Henderson County School System (Rural West Regional Chair)
Karyl Chastain Beal, M.Ed., CT, Retired/Community Advocate
Elizabeth Haren, LPC-MHSP, Camelot Schools
Jennifer Harris, MS, Hickman Community Hospital (Advisory Council Secretary)
Anne Henning-Rowan, MS, Jackson-Madison County School System, District 1
Judith Johnson, AAS, CC, Advocate/Consumer
Michael LaBonte, Family Services of the Mid-South
Harold Leonard, MA, LPC-MHSP, Indian Path Pavilion (Northeast Regional Chair)
Cindy P. McCroskey, McCallie Middle School
Sandy N. Smith, M.Ed, Hamilton County Department of Education
Tim Tatum, MA, Bradford Health Services (Southeast Regional Chair)
Ken Tullis, MD, The Psychological Trauma & Wellness Center, Primacy Oaks (Memphis/Shelby County Regional Chair, Strategies/Outcomes/Evaluation/Committee Chair)
Madge Tullis, SPAN-USA (Advisory Council Co-Chair)
Anne Young, MS, CAS, Director, Business Development, Peninsula Behavioral Health (East Tennessee Regional Chair)
Bishop William M. Young, MFT, CPT, Senior Pastor, Healing Center Full Gospel Baptist Church

Intra-State Departmental Representatives Present

Pam Brown, MSSW, Director, KIDS COUNT, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth
Nicole Cobb, Director of School Counseling, Tennessee Department of Education
Gwen Hamer, MA, Office of the Medical Director, Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Developmental Disabilities
Lygia Williams, MA, Office of Special Populations, Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Developmental Disabilities

Guests

Trina Evans-Williams, MPH, Office of Mental Health, Louisiana Department of Health

and Hospitals

Deborah Hardin, Director of Nursing, Tennessee Department of Health

Josh G. Landry, Executive Director, Jacob Crouch Foundation

Ivy Summers, Director of Community Relations, Office of Mental Health, Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals

Advisory Council Members and Alternates Absent

Pam Arnell, MA, Arnell's Counseling Service (South Central Regional Chair)

Jodi Bartlett, Ed.S, MCRT Director, Northern Region, Volunteer Behavioral Health Care Services

Benjamin T. Harrington, Mental Health Association of East Tennessee

Janna F. Herbison, MS, YWCA of Greater Memphis

Linda Moran, Dale Hollow Mental Health Center

Kim Rush, M. Ed., LPC-MHSP, Volunteer Behavioral Health Care System

Dianne Wilgen, Community Activist

Pam Willis, MS, LCSW, Suicide Prevention Coordinator, James H. Quillen VA Medical Center

Joe T. Wood, ADM, SUPV, Director, Lexington City Schools

Patty K. Wright, MS, Lincoln Medical Center

Misty Yarbrough, BBA, BSW, TeenScreen Case Manager, Tennessee Voices for Children

Intra-State Departmental Representatives Absent

Judith Baker, BSBM/EM, Public Health Program Director, CLPPP, SIDS and CFR, Maternal and Child Health, Tennessee Department of Health

Rose Boyd, Public Health Educator, Integrated Core Injury Surveillance, Prevention, and Control Program, Division of Emergency Medical Services, Tennessee Department of Health

Tommy L. Brame, Mental Health Specialist, Department of Children's Services

Laura M. Gatrell, MA, LEAP, Director, Tennessee Lawyers Assistance Program

Mike Herrmann, Director of School Safety and Learning Support Programs, Tennessee Department of Education

Yvette Mack, Director, Adolescent Health & Asthma Programs, Tennessee Department of Health

Angela McKinney-Jones, Alcohol and Drug Services, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities

Jeanine C. Miller, PhD, PE, Director of Mental Health, Tennessee Department of Correction

Kimberly A. Moore, Program Specialist, Adult Protective Services, Tennessee

Thom Roberts, Executive Director, Tennessee Council for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing, Tennessee Department of Human Services

Frank Stevenson, MA, Office of Minority Health, Tennessee Department of Health

Angie Thompson, MA, Executive Director, Mental Health Association of Middle Tennessee

Pam Townsend, Consumer Advocate, Office of Consumer Affairs, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities

Sterling van der Spuy, Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development

TSPN/TLC Staff Present

Vladimir Enlow, Executive Assistant, Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network

Scott Ridgway, MS, Executive Director, Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network

Welcoming Remarks and Introductions

- Introductions began at 1:26 PM, with remarks from Hardin immediately following.

Remarks from Ms. Hardin

- Hardin began by thanking the Network for its “tremendous efforts” in suicide prevention among youth in particular and across the lifespan in general.
- Hardin explained that she had been involved with the TLC Task Force for the past year and was thrilled when she learned that public health nurses would receive suicide prevention training through the program. Previously, there was no training of this kind available for these professionals, and they were frequently unable to address suicidal tendencies in their patients.
- She recalled her own days as a public health nurse in the Columbia area. Many county health departments, especially in rural areas, may only have one public health nurse on call. Often there are few, if any, mental health agencies in the area and employees may not always be aware of the ones that exist. Thus it is helpful to have this training, which provides nurses with resources for referral and strategies for intervention with troubled patients.
- The training provided through TLC has been enthusiastically received by the Department’s public health nurses.
- As an example of the people reached through public health clinics, Hardin described the services these clinics offer. These include primary care services for ages 19-64, well-child examinations for patients from birth to age 21, and family planning services used by many women and teenage girls. The clinic offers many other services, but these are the main ones.
- During the intake process, patients receive a health questionnaire which includes items on mental illness. Many nurses had no choice to disregard flagged items in this section because they lacked counseling strategies and/or points for referral. Newly equipped with this knowledge, the nurses provided very positive feedback which resulted in the amendment of the questionnaire to include items on suicidal ideation, with directives for assessment and referral as necessary.
- Currently there are approximately 900 public health nurses operating in Tennessee. Hardin’s visit this morning to the Columbia office included a notice that due to considerable staff turnover (a common phenomenon in public health offices), another training session would be necessary. She plans to contact TLC Project Coordinator Dustin Keller regarding arrangements for another session. The TLC training served as an impetus for adapting forms and procedures.
- Additionally, TDOH is actively involved in the allocation of funding for suicide prevention, and as such helped coordinate TSPN’s recently received \$30,000 training grant. Hardin anticipates that this program will have a massive statewide impact.
- The training grant not only allocates money to TSPN, but also provides funds for the Jason Foundation. TDOH realizes the important role schools play in suicide prevention and crisis intervention efforts and will be pleased to assist in the upcoming implementation of in-service suicide prevention training for Tennessee public school staff.
- Teenscreen also receives funding for the grant; it is earmarked for the program’s expansion into the previously unreached middle Tennessee area.
- Hardin concluded by recognizing the efforts of Keller and TLC Project Trainer Tiffany Washington and thanking all those who helped to make the training possible. She has often considered how useful this training would have been

during her own time as a public health nurse. She looked forward to working with TSPN to save lives.

Committee Meetings

- Following Hardin's address, the members dispersed at 1:38 PM to participate in committee meetings.
- Ridgway directed all members unsure of their committee assignments to Enlow. Guests of the Network also sat in on meetings.

Business Meeting

- The meeting convened at 2:36 PM following the adjournment of the committee meetings.
- Prior to the meeting's official start, Tatum distributed copies of the KIDS COUNT 2007 State of the Child Report.
- Ridgway distributed copies of the following items:
 - The series of articles on suicide survivors which ran in the February 17 and 18 editions of the *Chattanooga Times-Free Press*,
 - Copies of the new statewide rate charts incorporating 2006 county rates and numbers as published by TDOH.
 - Printouts of the CBS News report on calls from U.S. Senators for the resignation of VA mental health head Ira Katz as a result of the veteran suicide number cover-up.

Approval of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

- Copies of the minutes from this meeting were distributed and reviewed by the Council.
- M. Tullis motioned to accept the minutes as submitted, Tatum seconded, and the minutes were ratified without objection.

Regional Reports

- Bernard requested that regional chairs or their representatives avoid going into excessive detail due to time constraints and provide basic summaries of regional developments since the February meeting.

Northeast Region

- Leonard reported that the region's main focus was its 10-Tenn Challenge objective. As part of these efforts, the region is planning a "Picnic in the Park" event at the local VA center for July 26. The event will feature games, prizes, and information on mental health and suicide prevention. Several local celebrities and politicians have been invited, but none have committed.
- Leonard also records that five QPR gatekeeper training sessions have been held in the region.

East Tennessee Region

- Young provided details on deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) outreach as part of the regional 10-Tenn Challenge project.
- She commented that her region was in a "wonderful position" for activism here considering the location of the Tennessee School for the Deaf in Knoxville. Haren has personally provided training to all teachers at the school.
- Young has made contact with a DHH drama troupe and received permission from the author of "Red Flags" to adopt the presentation for DHH performers and audience members.

Upper Cumberland Region

- Barton reported on behalf of regional chair Moran. He noted increased attendance at regional meetings, the recent foundation of the Suicide Anonymous group, and the region's continued provision of Emergency Department Resource Toolkits to area emergency rooms.

Southeast Region

- Tatum provided an account of TSPN's recent postvention following a teen suicide in McMinn County. He received word of the incident from Youth Villages, and passed on the information to Bernard and Ridgway so they could organize the effort. He is especially grateful to Bernard for coordinating the debriefing aspect.
- He believes relating this incident is important as it demonstrates that TSPN is more than regional meetings. As a direct result of these efforts, schools and agencies have a readily available resource prior to and following suicide incidents. In this case, Youth Villages staff accessed the TSPN website, noted Tatum's position as regional chair, and opted to contact him to arrange a response.
- In other news, the region is continuing work on its 10-Tenn Challenge objective.

Mid-Cumberland Region

- Reporting on behalf of Yarbrough, Barger reported on the region's continued implementation of its regional 10-Tenn Challenge project—the "Taking It to the Streets" outreach campaign. Regional members are regularly providing training sessions for local agencies and community groups.
- A key component of the campaign is a repeat engagement with the Nashville Sounds, scheduled for July 19.
- Additionally, members have been interviewed on local radio, and the local network has been promoted through radio PSAs.
- Resource directories and other materials are being steadily distributed to area psychiatrists and public officials. Barger recognized Johnson's recent provision of materials to local fire departments.
- Finally, the Mid-Cumberland Region planning to provide local college and university mental health agencies with Network materials.

South Central Region

- Harris, reporting on behalf of Arnell, explained that as part of the regional 10-Tenn Challenge objective, a regional member has been assigned to each county to coordinate training and distribution of materials.
- Elsewhere, regional members continue to lead QPR training sessions and distribute Network literature.
- "Left Behind By Suicide", a suicide survivors' support group serving Hickman County began meeting as of March 9. The region has decided against large-scale publicity for the group until it is further established. Facilitators Rosa Newton and Denise Powers have received mentoring from Chastain Beal and Doug Johnson, facilitators for the support group in Columbia. They also participated in the AFSP support group facilitator training held in Memphis last month, thanks to sponsorship from TSPN and a local funeral home.
- The Hickman County Suicide Prevention Task Force is assembling a draft copy of a regional resource booklet and hopes to present the finished product at the September meeting.

- Harris closed by circulating promotional flyers for “Left Behind By Suicide” among those present.

Rural West Region

- Burroughs announced that all eight of the local colleges and universities published the college suicide piece developed by the central office. The region is interested in submitting the piece to local high schools.
- The risk assessment poster developed as part of the local 10-Tenn Challenge initiative is almost ready for printing, which will be paid for by Lakeside. The posters will be provided to all primary care providers in the region.

Memphis/Shelby County Region

- K. Tullis offered the regional chairs his assistance in developing activity write-ups for the 10-Tenn Challenge report submissions, including a sample of the one prepared by his region.
- As part of its own 10-Tenn Challenge project, regional members have distributed 3,757 resource directories and hope to break the 5,000-mark by September.
- As for outreach to faith-communities, W. Young and Commissioner Virginia Trotter Betts, MSN, RN, JD, FAAN, of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities (TDMHDD) provided remarks at a funding presentation for improvement of health and mental health targeting faith-based communities, held March 10.
 - W. Young provided additional information about this conference, which promoted the recently established Emotional Fitness Centers of Tennessee. He explained that the name of this entity was chosen to be more approachable to the target audience. A partnership of five local churches and four peer advocate liaisons support the center, which provides physical and emotional health screenings and makes referrals as necessary. The Centers have already reported several success stories, such as a woman who presented symptoms of anxiety and, upon testing, was diagnosed with an advanced stage of cancer. Since the end of January, the Centers have examined 270 people.
- In other news, K. Tullis announced that the official title of the regional 10-Tenn anti-stigma initiative is “the CAPS project”.
- He invited the regional chairs to a brief meeting at 5 PM that day, following the business meeting, to discuss guidelines for the 10-Tenn Challenge narrative submission due August 1. (The deadline was originally set for August 15, but has been shifted up to allow for more detailed consideration of the submissions.)
- Finally, M. Tullis confirmed that Betts will indeed speak at the upcoming symposium, as well as Jerry and Elsie Weyrauch. Former U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher has not formally committed, but is expected to do so soon.

Committee Reports

Advocacy Committee

- Committee chair Tatum reported that the committee made numerous changes to the wording of the Suicide Prevention Awareness Month resolution. The final version will be resubmitted to the committee for final approval.

Strategies, Outcomes, and Evaluations Committee

- K. Tullis reported that at the last Advisory Council meeting, the committee had reviewed the Tennessee Strategy for Suicide Prevention through Strategy 6. Today the committee completed review of the document and presented the following recommendations:
 - Regarding Strategy 7: the Network already has the development and promotion of effective clinical and professional practices well in hand, and should focus on promoting suicide risk screening to primary care physicians.
 - Strategy 7b should be extended to advocate promotion of attendance at regional meetings.
 - Strategy 7c should include training on the issue of mental health stigma.
 - Strategy 8 as a whole should be expanded to cover parenting issues.
 - Strategy 8b should reference efforts to provide information on mental health resources through the website and resource directories.
 - Strategy 9 should reflect current efforts at media monitoring through press clippings.
 - As per Strategy 10, the committee has resolved that three Tennessee colleges and hospitals will be subjected to evaluations of their suicide prevention protocols by 2009.
 - In accordance with Strategy 11, the committee recommends renewed efforts to obtain real-time statistics on suicide and suicide attempts and to persuade the General Assembly to arrange for Tennessee's participation in the National Violent Death Review Survey.
- These recommendations will be provided to the central office for further action next week. K. Tullis thanked the members of the committee for their efforts in developing these recommendations.

Special Activities Committee

- Committee chair M. Tullis circulated copies of the symposium registration brochure to those present, recommending that each member recruit three or four registrants. Personal appeals will be vital to generating attendance levels.
- The registration form was attached to a Constant Contact announcement promoting the latest edition of the *TSPN Call to Action*.
- Brown recommended retransmission of the files in PDF format, as forwarding the ConCon message to colleagues reduced the formatting to garbled links. The central office will retransmit the materials at the next possible opportunity.
- People from outside the state of Tennessee are welcome to attend. The current visitors from Louisiana are planning to attend, and people from as far away as California are expressing interest. M. Tullis sees this development as a testament to how much has been accomplished in the last ten years.
- The central office reports that in the last three weeks, TSPN has received over \$13,000 in sponsorship commitments, which will allow for no extra charges related to meals. While TSPN is hardly a for-profit venture, the Network has done well in regards to soliciting sponsorships, especially in light of the latest budget cuts and current economic conditions.
- The Network's attendance goal is 600 people.
- Those present received copies of the current sponsorship list and were informed that several state departments were still considering contributing to the event.

- Brown announced that she could have the symposium materials transmitted over her organizational listserve, thus reaching people across the state free of charge.
- Any and all potential sponsorship leads should be submitted to the central office within the next two weeks so Enlow and Ridgway can develop letters of interest.
- Psychiatric Solutions has committed to funding the symposium at the Co-Host level—in other words, they will contribute \$5,000.
- Harris reports that St. Thomas Health Services may be interested in being a Co-Host provided it is the only health provider who provides funding at this level and receives this recognition.
- Ridgway reports that a letter of interest was submitted to King Pharmaceuticals by way of member Lynn Sorrell, who has professional ties to its vice-president. While the letter arrived after King's funding deadline for this year, the company expressed interest in funding future TSPN activities.
- Ridgway noted that the different sponsorship levels and their benefits are defined on the sponsorship form. The exhibit and promotion form is designed for people and agencies who wish to contribute at less than the \$500 level. Wright has informed him that the geriatric psychology unit at Lincoln County Hospital is interested in an exhibit to promote its services.
- M. Tullis noted that the registration form allows for donations in honor and/or memorial of a loved one.
- TSPN has received bids from two printers who are willing to process the programs at half price in exchange for listing as sponsors.
- The event flyer will be updated as new sponsors are added.
- Registrations will be taken until the day of the symposium, but sponsors must get on board before August 1 to guarantee inclusion of their printed materials in the symposium packet.
- The hotel is charging a special conference rate of \$107 a night plus tax and is waiving fees for up to three extra occupants. There should be hotel space for everyone who wants one, provided people are willing to "double up". TSPN has booked 75 rooms and will have to soak the cost of any unoccupied rooms. However, the Network expects to meet this target even with room-sharing.
- In response to a query from Harris, Ridgway stated that any door prizes donated will be given throughout the conference as opposed to all at once at a designated time.
- All exhibitors will be allowed to sell items at their tables.
- M. Tullis expressed her thanks on behalf of the committee for the efforts of regional members. She also thanked Enlow and Ridgway for their work developing the symposium agenda, and recognized Enlow and Keller's graphical work on the brochure.

Pioneer Award

- M. Tullis explained that many people contributed to the development of the statewide suicide prevention movement and TSPN during its early years (roughly 1998-2001), but have since moved on and were never recognized for their contributions. The Pioneer Awards are a means for both honoring them and "bringing them back into the fold".
- Each region is responsible for developing a list of formerly active foundational members. As examples, M. Tullis referenced the efforts of Kitty Mize, Kitty Saunders, Sherry Shaw, and Larry Thompson in developing the group in the Nashville area.
- Recipients will receive certificates, possibly small personalized awards.

- M. Tullis emphasized that the registration fee *will not* be waived for winners of the Pioneer Award.
- Individual regions may recommend as many winners as they believe necessary.
- M. Tullis reviewed the exclusion criteria developed during previous meetings of the Event Committee:
- Winners of the award may not be current members of the Advisory Council or intra-state departmental group.
- Past winners of Regional Suicide Prevention Awards are also disqualified.
- In response to queries from several members, Ridgway and M. Tullis explained that winners of the Pioneer Award should be informed and their registration for the symposium secured. Only nominees present at the symposium will receive the award.
- Nominations for the Pioneer Awards, along with nominee contact information, should be submitted to the central office no later than August 1.
- Ridgway added that as the Network was developed sooner in other regions than others, some regional variation in numbers of nominees is expected. The Memphis/Shelby County and Mid-Cumberland regions will probably submit the most names because the movement's earliest activities occurred in Memphis and Nashville. K. Tullis observed that Memphis/Shelby County Region had drafted a list of 33 nominees. Leonard would later announce that six names had been suggested by Northeast regional members.
- Members uncertain about whether a possible nominee qualifies should consult the central office or regional chairs.
- In response to a question from Johnson, Ridgway explained that a formal write-up for each nominee is not necessary.
- Ridgway suggested retaining the services of Candace Cunningham within the Office of the Governor, who routinely assists the Network with Advisory Council appointments and Regional Suicide Prevention Award certificates.
- In regards to a physical award, Ridgway noted that a shop in Opry Mills offers customized acrylic paperweights at roughly \$3.99 each. These could be personalized with the logo or the collage on the front cover of the registration brochure.

Intra-State Departmental Group Report

- Williams briefed those present on this group's 10-Tenn Challenge activities:
 - The group has secured an agreement from Carol Boone, state director of the Employee's Assistance Program (EAP), to publish a series of quarter-page articles on suicide prevention in the next four monthly editions of the EAP newsletter. Each article will feature a reference to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL) and TSPN. Brown, Hamer, Ridgway, and Williams assembled and researched each of the articles.
 - This publication typically reaches 46,000 state employees, and factoring in employees of contract agencies such as TSPN, readership could be as much as 100,000.
 - Additionally, Williams attempted to arrange for the provision of 46,000 NSPL magnets for ultimate provision to state employees. This aspect of the 10-Tenn Challenge evolved out of an experience Roberts had with a suicidal caller.
 - Since 46,000 items was more than NSPL could process in one order, Williams settled for 5,000 earmarked for delivery to employees of

TDMHDD, TDOH, and the Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS). Other departments will be targeted later.

- Ideally, the instructions on the magnets will provide state employees with the ability to identify and refer suicidal and/or troubled individuals.
- Also as part of the 10-Tenn Challenge, QPR training sessions are being scheduled for state employees on a quarterly basis. Roughly 45 people have signed up for the one scheduled for June 30, set to take place at the TennCare building.

Other Business

“Love Never Dies” Memorial Quilt

- Chastain Beal reports that enough panels have been submitted to create a second memorial quilt and possibly a third. However, she also acknowledges not receiving many panels from TSPN members. To date, no member of the Advisory Council or ex-officio group has submitted a quilt square. For purposes of representation, she encouraged all those present to consider submitting a panel.
- The theoretical deadline for submission of a quilt square is June 9, but this will probably be extended as additional panels arrive. She recommends submitting them by mid-June at the very latest to allow for turnaround; the quilts are being assembled by a Parents of Suicides/Friends and Families of Suicides contact in Washington state.
- The panel can be submitted free of cost, and that packets with development and submission instructions are available on the TSPN website.
- Ridgway thanked Chastain Beal for her continued efforts as coordinator of the project.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- Within the next three weeks, the Federal Communications Commission is due to decide whether to return control of the National Hopeline Network (1-800-SUICIDE), currently being answered by NSPL, to the Kristin Brooks Hope Center (KBHC).
- Ridgway provided a brief history of the Hopeline’s recent troubles: after six years of operation, KBHC ran short of funding and was unable to guarantee the continued functioning of the hotline. Realizing the critical role the hotline played in public safety, the FCC engineered an emergency takeover with plans to reevaluate KBHC’s ability to operate it after one year.
- Currently eight centers in Tennessee answer NSPL, with 98% percent of calls from Tennessee area codes answered in-state. Additionally, Peninsula Behavioral Services is planning to begin pick-up in the Knoxville area (Ridgway recognized the efforts of A. Young, formerly of this agency, in arranging this), and Volunteer Behavioral Health Care Services has received authorization to pickup calls in Chattanooga and Cookeville.
- Ridgway currently serves on NSPL’s Steering Committee; his term expires this fall and he has opted not to renew. He has recommended that the Committee should include more crisis center operators and employees; currently only half the members have links to such agencies. He encourages all Tennessee crisis center staff to submit nominations for their staff; he is willing to provide written recommendations.
- Johnson stated that TSPN has greatly benefited from Ridgway’s position on and advocacy on behalf of NSPL.

TSPN Website

- A planned run-through of the website during the course of the meeting was forestalled by equipment compatibility issues.
- Ridgway reminded those present that regional meeting dates, Advisory Council contact information, and most TSPN documents are available through the website, and that the website should be consulted for these items before requesting them from the central office.
- Enlow referenced earlier concerns regarding the inclusion of symposium materials with the newsletter announcement. He also acknowledged concerns with readership rates for Constant Contact messages; too many members are not reading messages because they automatically assume that they are regional meeting announcements. He is planning to research available Constant Contact message templates and designs to find ones that may increase readership and opening of messages.

10-Tenn Challenge

- K. Tullis announced that tomorrow morning, he would give a presentation on the history of TSPN which would include discussion of the original 10-Tenn Challenge.
- He reported being “absolutely delighted with the energy” demonstrated by regional members in working on their respective projects.
- He provided details regarding anticipated contents of the project write-ups. As an example, his region’s report traces the history of the Memphis/Shelby County’s faith-based outreach and anti-stigma efforts since its foundation and how it laid the groundwork for the current project.

Fort Campbell Suicide Prevention Matrix

- Ridgway reports that this task force has made significant progress in the last six months. Although a change in meeting time has precluded regular attendance by Network representatives, the group provides Ridgway with regular reports—including notice of the base’s plans to hire a suicide prevention coordinator.
- Currently over half Fort Campbell’s forces are on deployment to Iraq. Officers still stateside are preparing screening mechanisms for PTSD and other mental health issues so they will be ready for implementation once the soldiers return.
- Bruce Emery, Assistant Commissioner of TDMHDD is coordinating a statewide task force on the subject of veteran mental health and suicide prevention.
- Williams reported being very impressed by the officers’ commitment to suicide prevention and interest in updating prevention protocols.
- Ridgway noted that 10 confirmed suicides and 4 possible suicides have been recorded in the Fort Campbell area in recent months. Each meeting of the Matrix involves debriefing and intensive study of two suicide incidents.
- Hamer recalled recommending development of family mental health care packages that include lists of area resources.
- Top officials at Fort Campbell are planning extensive mental health screenings for service personnel upon their return from overseas.
- Chastain Beal pointed out that scheduled symposium speaker Carol Graham, whose husband is a brigadier general stationed at Fort Carson, has lost one son to suicide and another in Iraq. She became involved with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), a support organization for families of fallen soldiers.

- Barton recommended focusing on two areas of rising concern: chaplains and family services offices. Ridgway noted that the Fort Campbell group had been organized by a chaplain.
- Ridgway recognized the Hickman County Suicide Prevention Task Force for its work with the local National Guard unit. He noted the different factors affecting active-duty enlisted officers, National Guard unit members, and veterans. Tennessee has one of the highest percentages of National Guard members, and this group is often overlooked by military mental health campaigns. Additionally, veterans who have been discharged from service experience an added difficulty: ineligibility for certain benefits and services.
- Ridgway noted the efforts of Military OneSource, which provides information about numerous little-known services for military personnel and their families.

Tennessee Lives Count (TLC) Project

- TLC target reports were provided to all those present.
- Williams provided an update on the project, noting Keller's attendance at the Mental Health America (MHA) conference in Washington. Keller will be on hand to receive an award for the PSA which ran on WSMV earlier this year.
- Over 15,000 people have received training through the program, although several target numbers have not and probably will not be met.
- The PSA continues to air on WSMV and was even referenced during a meeting of the Fort Campbell group as an example of outreach.
- On behalf of the project, TDOE agreed to provide TLC-branded mousepads to every computer lab in all public Tennessee middle and high schools, reaching approximately half a million young people.
- Leaders of departments and agencies who signed onto the TLC memorandum of understanding (MOU) received framed copies of the document, along with commemorative plaques and coins, during a special reception.
- A report on TLC's efforts was submitted to the *Journal for Professional Psychiatry* and returned for revision.
- Williams expects to receive confirmation regarding the status of the grant renewal in either August or September. Trainings for this point and beyond are being scheduled in anticipation of approval.
- Brown acknowledged Williams's critical role in negotiations with Boone regarding the forthcoming EAP articles.

New Business

Advisory Council Membership

- Ridgway reports that Carl Moore has submitted a letter of resignation from the Advisory Council and will receive a letter thanking him for his service.
- Ridgway then raised the issue of Dianne Wilgen, a Council member representing the East Tennessee region who has missed several consecutive meetings in the last year and as such has failed to meet Council attendance requirements. He added that no one has reported hearing from her for some time, and as such recommends drafting a letter informing her of her dismissal.
- Chastain Beal recommended notifying her first, but Ridgway noted that previous efforts to contact Wilgen have not succeeded. In the two previous instances in which the Council resolved instances of member inactivity, the members in question were sent brief letters informing them of the larger Council's decision and thanking them for their service.

- Ridgway recommended putting the issue of Wilgen's removal from the Council to a vote. K. Tullis motioned for said vote with Barton seconding.
- M. Tullis cited Advisory Council by-laws which stipulate that Council members must attend 80% of regional and Advisory Council meetings.
- Young reported numerous attempts to contact her and secure her continued involvement in the region. As it is, she has not seen Wilgen in person once during the last 12 months.
- In regards to an inquiry from Barger, Wilgen's term is set to expire in September 2009. Ridgway will solicit a replacement from the East Tennessee region and provide him/her with the necessary paperwork.
- A formal vote was held; there were no objections.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director on Break

- On June 7, Ridgway will depart for Ireland for a two-week vacation. He will return to the office on June 24. During this time, he will be inaccessible by phone and will have limited e-mail access.
- Efforts have been made to provide regional chairs with meeting materials. Enlow will be available to handle additional tasks and requests during business hours.

Site Move

- Effective July 1, the TSPN central office will move to MHAMT headquarters, located at 2416 21st Avenue South in Nashville. Currently, TSPN rents office space from the Tennessee Conference on Social Welfare, but this space will be lost as TCSW itself relocates to new offices.
- MHAMT has worked with both Bernard and Williams in their respective capacities as Advisory Council chair and TDMHDD contract representative to ensure availability and suitability of office space.

Recognition of Guests

- Ridgway thanked Evans-Williams, Landry, and Summers for their interest in the Network and stated that he looked forward to seeing them at the upcoming symposium.
- He recalled having met them at this year's American Association of Suicidology conference in New Orleans; they attended the presentation he gave there. The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals is attempting to build a public-private coalition patterned after TSPN. The Department is also actively promoting youth suicide prevention education legislation similar to the Jason Flatt Act of 2007.

Adjournment

- The next meeting of the Advisory Council will convene at 3 PM on Thursday, September 18, at the Millennium Maxwell House Nashville, right before the awards banquet.
- Bernard announced a ten-minute break before to his scheduled educational presentation.
- The meeting adjourned at 4:18 PM.

Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network

"Saving Lives in Tennessee"

**TSPN Advisory Council Supplementary Meeting
Clement Room A, Montgomery Bell State Park Inn
Burns, Tennessee
Thursday, June 5, 2008**

Proceedings

- In addition to the members and guests who attended the business meeting, the group welcomed Clark Flatt, President/CEO of the Jason Foundation.
- Following a presentation from K. Tullis on the history of the suicide prevention movement in Tennessee and the foundation of TSPN, members discussed several recent developments related to Network projects and operations. This discussion began at 10:02 AM.

AFSP "Out of the Darkness" Walk

- Several regions have reported that the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) has sent out a round of e-mails attempting to engage people in starting "Out of the Darkness" walks to benefit their group. Members have expressed concern that TSPN provided members' addresses to the group.
- Ridgway stated that this was not the case--that the contents of TSPN's e-mail lists are on a need-to-know basis and are not circulated to other agencies. Although the Network has supported and promoted past AFSP walks, TSPN is not a part of AFSP, does not collaborate with AFSP in the planning of these projects, and moreover receives no money from these activities—all proceeds from AFSP activities go to the national organization.
- The current discussion arises from a recent incident in Chattanooga, where a member was solicited by AFSP and attempted to establish a committee to promote a regional walk. In short, AFSP was attempting to use the Southeast Region's contacts and organization to promote the event, but had not made it clear to this member that the regional group would not receive any proceeds. She was apparently under the impression that the walk would be a benefit for the Southeast Region.
- M. Tullis believes some dialogue is necessary with AFSP's board. She considers it highly unlikely that AFSP operatives would be unaware of an existing state-supported suicide prevention group, especially one as nationally regarded as TSPN. AFSP should have contacted TSPN and asked for assistance, as it would make for an excellent working relationship.
- Flatt notes that the "Out of the Darkness" walks were started primarily as an awareness and outreach tool, but since its focus has shifted to fundraising. This would not be a problem if it were not that these activities are taking possible funds out of the community. These are funds that regional and state suicide prevention groups could be using for their own activities. He reports

- that several state-supported agencies and private groups have taken issue with AFSP's lack of full disclosure.
- M. Tullis notes that as several pharmaceutical companies routinely sponsor the walks, they have become one of AFSP's main fundraisers. This equates to large sums of money that are not going into the local agencies.
 - Smith inquired as to whether this person was actually told that the money would go to TSPN, or just assumed such.
 - At this point, Tatum disclosed the identity of the person in question, requesting confidentiality from members present. The person approached by AFSP was Aimee Venable, a new member. Highly motivated by two recent family suicides, she approached the Network with ideas for activities. She provided a testimonial as part of the suicide survivor series which ran in the *Chattanooga Times-Free Press*.
 - Following the incident, Tatum arranged a meeting with AFSP representative Mike Clumm, whom Venable invited to a regional meeting. When pressed, Clumm explained that all proceeds from the "Out of the Darkness" walks feed into the national organization, where they are used to subsidize suicide prevention research. Money is only disbursed to local agencies where the walks occur if it is approved by a committee. When asked what, if any, percentage of the funds from the Memphis walk filtered back to local agencies, Clumm was unable to provide a figure.
 - While Tatum hesitates to do anything to sap Venable's interest, he is uncertain how to handle this current situation.
 - Smith pointed out that any such solution should convey that TSPN is not interested in money, but in healing.
 - Flatt suggests drawing up internal regulations specifying which activities TSPN will and will not do. While there is nothing with individual organizations and foundations organizing fundraisers, there is no need for them to butt heads with state-supported coalitions. He recommended developing an arrangement like the one the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals struck with AFSP after a similar situation their state, an agreement in which AFSP promises to work with a state-appointed entity and earmark some of the money for local action.
 - Tatum pointed out that by the time he fully understood the situation, the restaurant chain Krystal had already pledged \$10,000 to AFSP. This is money that could have gone to the Southeast Region.
 - Evans-Williams provided details regarding her department's experiences with AFSP. Last year, an AFSP walk was organized by grass-roots activists lead by local survivor Cynthia Oman. Her department supported and promoted the event, generating massive media attention. In the end, the walk raised \$20,000. The department made sure that as they did half the work associated with the event, they received half the money raised. The other half went to AFSP. The next AFSP walk in Louisiana is planned for July; delegates for the department will attend planning meetings to get specifics before the state formally partners with them.
 - Flatt suggested drafting regulations earmarking 80% of the funds raised from such ventures for statewide suicide prevention efforts.
 - M. Tullis recommended a 20% rate, consistent with the standard administrative overhead associated with federal monitoring grants.
 - Tatum noted that as part of preparations for the Walk, AFSP was able to secure an agreement with Krystal. He wondered why TSPN and the Jason Foundation could not do the same, especially considering that these agencies do more for local communities.

- Ridgway stipulated that walks organized by TSPN, such as the one planned for Centennial Park in Nashville and the annual memorial walk at Warriors Path State Park, are not fundraising ventures.
- M. Tullis noted that the Memphis/Shelby Region has served as the go-between for AFSP and local hospitals.
- Chastain Beal disclosed that she is a member of AFSP's National Survivors Council, although her first loyalty is to TSPN. Her personal experience with event coordinators is that grass-roots volunteers involved with these projects are typically very enthusiastic until it hits them that all the effort they expended and all the money they raised is solely for the benefit of AFSP, not any local suicide prevention activities. Such activists often do not often get involved with AFSP again, preferring to act independently. While there is no predicting Venable's response to these developments, she notes that her experience is becoming an increasing trend.
- Ridgway noted that members of the Mid-Cumberland Region had informed him that AFSP is trying to organize an "Out of the Darkness" walk in Nashville.
- Flatt recommended developing a set rate for contributions to the Network by private agencies in exchange for their promotion of and cooperation with their fundraising activities. He emphasized the Jason Foundation would naturally be subject to such an agreement as much as any other agency. The other organization would have to accept these terms before TSPN lends its assistance.
- Ridgway wondered if Venable had signed any binding contracts compelling the cooperation of the Southeast Region or TSPN at large. Tatum has not been able to confirm this point.
- In response to a query from Chastain Beal, Tatum provided additional details regarding AFSP's local earmark policies: the money would be held in an account while the committee mentioned earlier decides whether the regional funding request represents a valid investment on their part.
- Ridgway speculates that the recent support group facilitators' training AFSP orchestrated in Memphis is an attempt at appeasement. Even here, participants had to pay for the training. Furthermore, TSPN promoted the training through e-mail and on its website and ultimately connected them with five trainees.
- K. Tullis observed that while the "Out of the Darkness" walks are a powerful marketing tool and a popular survivor outlet, no one seems to understand what's going on in the backgrounds.
- Speaking as a survivor, Chastain Beal explains that the concept of raising funds for research motivates those with recent losses, and the physical activity involved appeals to high-energy people, and is a natural outlet for these newly motivated individuals.
- K. Tullis observed that TSPN has never organized such activities itself, and that if there is a legitimate demand, the Network could consult with survivors regarding this and other types of activities.
- Johnson remarked that many people think TSPN has a much larger budget than it really does; Ridgway replied that since TSPN shies away from discussing finances, people assume there isn't a need.
- Flatt reiterated the need for a set fee and also supported the idea of consulting with survivors, noting their importance to grass-roots efforts.
- K. Tullis remarked that TSPN has generally not competed with the Jason Foundation for local resources owing to different fundraising strategies. He

- also remarked that he frequently feels TSPN has nothing to offer recent survivors to channel their energies.
- Tatum emphasized that AFSP is a well-established and highly regarded agency which has conducted much valuable research on mental health and suicide prevention. He also pointed out that when it comes to competition for local resources, TSPN bears the burden of responsibility: "We can't complain when someone beats us to the punch."
 - In response to a query from Hamer, Flatt believes that AFSP would be willing to renegotiate any contract Venable may have signed. Tatum plans to investigate as to the existence of such a contract and its particulars; he suspects some stipulations may be non-negotiable.
 - Haren asked how far back Venable had been in communications with AFSP; Tatum was uncertain.
 - Ridgway wondered if AFSP would agree to earmark the money for research projects taking place, related to, or benefiting the state of Tennessee.
 - Barton reiterated the point that AFSP should have approached TSPN regarding the walk in the pre-planning stage.
 - At 10:45 AM, Bernard announced a 15-minute break. Upon reconvening at 11:00 AM, he asked if anyone had a motion related to the previous discussion. Chastain Beal put forth a motion to form a committee to research development of a set contribution rate for private mental health and suicide prevention agencies soliciting TSPN's assistance in organizing and/or promoting their activities.
 - In response to a query from Smith, Tatum clarified that he is uncertain whether the theoretical contract Venable signed committed the region to assisting AFSP, but noted that Venable was under the impression that the money would go to the local group.
 - Smith expressed concern that since Venable appears to draw strength from grief energy, the negative experience with AFSP may cause her to "crash and burn".
 - K. Tullis stated that the set rate issue needs to be thoroughly examined; no decision should be made immediately... "lest money, property, or prestige divert you from your primary purpose" (?). Besides, TSPN's administrative oversight relationship with MHAMT may preclude them from implementing a set rate anyway. He reiterated the need for a committee.
 - A. Young recommended submitting the issue to the Executive Committee, but Bernard suggested that the discussion should also involve other members.
 - K. Tullis nominated Chastain Beal and M. Tullis to the proposed committee, noting their previous experience with AFSP. A. Young recommended Hamer, and Chastain Beal recommended Hamer as committee chair.
 - Smith submitted a motion, seconded by K. Tullis, to appoint Chastain Beal, Hamer, K. Tullis, A. Young, and one other intra-state departmental group to a new committee devoted to the set rate issue with Hamer as committee chair. But this motion was tabled after Bernard and Ridgway noted that committee chairs must be members of the formal Advisory Council—a state employee chairing a committee might present a conflict of interest.
 - Chastain Beal stated that her AFSP links may also present a conflict and that she should not serve as chair, and M. Tullis's involvement with the symposium would preclude her from this office. Hence A. Young was recommended.
 - The motion was restated with the committee having the same membership, only with A. Young as chair.

- The committee's primary order of business will involve researching other non-profits' regulations regarding contributions in exchange for promotions. Bernard stated that the committee will report back to the Council in September, but it need not have final recommendations by that time.
- Bernard and Hamer invited Tatum and Smith to serve on the committee respectively; they accepted.
- M. Tullis offered her consultant services to the committee as necessary.
- A formal vote on the motion led to its passage with no objections.

Strategy Review and Brainstorming

- K. Tullis recapped last year's strategy review, which included discussion of populations recommended for targeting (listed on the handouts passed out for review). He asked if anyone wanted to add other targets.
- Strahan cited earlier conversation regarding veterans in recommending outreach to National Guard members and discharged service personal.
- Johnson noted the Network's prior difficulties in GLBT outreach and TLC's inability to meet GLBT-related training targets.
- Williams discussed a QPR training session she and Keller ran for the Metro Nashville Police Department's hostage negotiation unit. QPR has since been incorporated into the unit's training protocol.
- Ridgway mentioned prior attempts to create a page on the website promoting the Tennessee Lawyers' Assistance Program (TLAP), which is lead by Gatrell. The agency provides resources, counseling, and intervention for members of the Tennessee Bar Association. Members present were asked to submit contact information for lawyers or law offices that might be interested in training. TSPN may be able to receive a grant for such a project. He acknowledged the great strides made by TLAP in organizing a mental health services network.
- Johnson related recent experiences with a 14-year-old acquaintance with military ambitions who is currently attending a junior military camp. She reports recruiters are already aggressively pursuing him. He has expressed suicidal intent in years past and is openly worried about the spiritual ramifications of taking a human life. Ridgway recommended referring him to local church leaders or possibly a chaplain.
- Barton recommended researching spousal support for survivors and family resource groups. Harris backed this up, citing the role of the Family Services Office in counseling Army families.
- Harris also recommended further outreach among funeral directors; SPRC's recently published guide for this profession demonstrates the viability and urgency of this target.
- In regards to PSAs, Landry reported great success back in Louisiana with movie theatre commercials. The commercials mostly aired during daytime matinees frequently by seniors. Local movie theatres, both corporate and independently owned ones, were receptive to the idea. Johnson suggested this would be a good idea for next summer.
 - Ridgway mentioned having approached the Regal Cinema in Knoxville, but they were not interested unless TSPN paid a prohibitive sum. However, he is confident that the idea is workable if the Network avoids large chains like Carmike and Regal and focuses on independent theaters. Harris specifically mentioned some of the family-owned drive-ins still in operation.
 - Brown explained that most theatre commercials produced by a group of three or four national corporations that provide the spots to national

- chains. Her sister happens to highly placed within one such company, so she may be able to pitch this idea on our behalf.
 - Ridgway noted that the TLC PSA could be edited for use in this strategy.
- Williams suggested outreach among the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.
- In regards to a question from Henning-Rowan, Bernard explained that men were included as a target group because of the higher frequency of fatal suicide attempts relative to women.
- K. Tullis recommended special outreach to women with bipolar disorder, as they are considered a high-risk diagnostic category—a point supported by Bernard.
- Barton reflected on increasing local reports of suicidal mothers who kill their children as well as themselves.
- Smith reported an increase in local high school dropout rates. Generally speaking, these students struggle with reading throughout their school careers, drop out in frustration, and end up with low-paying dead-end jobs—a development implicated in a number of local social ills including suicide. Many of these people have developmental disabilities or ADHD, which can be just as incapacitating and economically problematic as physical disabilities but don't qualify for benefits.
- Bernard noted that local jails and prisons are congested due to increasingly invoked zero-tolerance policies. Legislators need to be informed that zero tolerance policies have dangerous long-term consequences. Smith added to this by relating the story of an area student nearly expelled for bringing a BB gun to school; she had made vague threats in passing against another student. Only the fact that she was developmentally disabled kept her from being expelled.
- Williams recommended outreach to home schooling associations and adult education programs.
- Leonard wanted the list amended to include gun owners and bullying victims.

Means Matter

- Ridgway provided members with copies of "Means Matter: Suicide, Guns, and Public Health", published as part of a campaign organized by the Harvard Injury Control Research Center. The campaign works to raise awareness of the role firearm access plays in suicide. Ridgway received the materials yesterday, along with a Powerpoint presentation screened by Bernard for the benefit of the group.

Strategy Brainstorming

- Bernard recalled actions pursued during the February meeting's brainstorming session; these involved discussion of updates to the Tennessee Strategies for Suicide Prevention in order to reach target groups and distributing of forms for recording activity on the strategies (still available). He emphasized the need for planning beyond the 10-Tenn Challenge and the next 10 years of TSPN.
- He plans to post the results of the current session on the PAR Foundation website.
- K. Tullis requested a straw vote on the strategy on which the Network had made the most progress since its foundation. Results:
 - Strategy 1: 3 votes
 - Strategy 2: 9 votes
 - Strategy 3: 2 votes

- Strategy 4: 1 vote
 - All others: no votes
- Ridgway pointed out several of the recommendations from the “Means Matter” booklet and stated that the Network is not doing enough to address access to lethal means. During the Network’s foundation, there was considerably controversy over (and occasionally outright objection to) proposed TSPN plans on this issue; it was misinterpreted as advocating tightened gun control. However, he believes the “Means Matter” campaign and the examples of state activities described in the booklet offer ways for TSPN to confront this neglected issue.
 - Additional “Means Matter” booklets (up to 50 per person) are available from Harvard, along with a DVD.
 - Bernard recommended uploading or linking to some of these materials on the TSPN website.
 - Ridgway recommended presenting the idea at upcoming regional meetings.
 - Johnson’s participation in the Citizen’s Police Academy in Smyrna familiarized her with the gun locks the Smyrna Police Department distributes, as well as its policy of consulting with a psychiatrist before releasing guns seized in arrests back to the owners.
 - Ridgway observed that while state legislators opposed TSPN action on firearms issues, local governments will probably offer less opposition. Williams suggested that city councils will present less of a challenge than the General Assembly.
 - K. Tullis observed that local hospitals have known about the problem of lethal access for years, but have shied away from drafting official policies due to liability concerns.
 - Haren pointed out that the “Means Matters” campaign’s emphasis on safe storage and temporary removal in crisis situations make it more palatable than if it simply promoted gun control. Bernard added that even simple steps like removing the ammo clip from a fire arm can do much to reduce the risk of impulse suicides.
 - As K. Tullis observed, it has long been known that firearms stored inside the house are far more often used on occupants than intruders.
- On another note, Bernard presented a graphic of a Nevada license plate promoting International Suicide Prevention, a national non-profit that pays for suicide scene clean-ups and offers pre-screening, awareness programs, prevention methods, and emergency post-suicide family support.
- In order to guarantee inclusion of a plate design, the Tennessee Department of Transportation requires 2000 requests for the plate and charges registrants a fee of \$50. Bernard notes that the Jason Foundation is one of several charities which receive proceeds from Tennessee Titans plates.

Crisis Intervention Center at Family and Children’s Services

- Ridgway announced that as of July 1, the Crisis Intervention Center (CIC) operating out of Family and Children’s Services (FCS) in Nashville will be at reduced functionality due to budget cuts. He turned the floor over to Barger for a full report.
- FCS typically receives several federal and non-profit grants which subsidize its various programs. Several of these grants benefit CIC and FCS jointly. However, several of these funding sources have experienced large cuts which have trickled down to FCS.

- The local United Way, a regular contributor, is down a million dollars in revenue from the previous year and as such has drastically cut its regular donation.
- The 2-1-1 service, operating under a deficit, has cut service from 24 hours a day to 12.
- United Way was no longer able to provide round-the-clock after-hours maintenance for CIC and as such could no longer fulfill its service contract. CIC lost \$57,000 as a result.
- Finally, the state budget for FY 2009 ordained across-the-board cuts for social services funding. All told, FCS will suffer a budget shortfall of \$280,000.¹
- Several FCS services, like its sliding-scale counseling program, have been eliminated entirely, and others are severely limited in their operations.
- As a cost-saving measure, CIC will only be operational ten hours a day from 2 PM to midnight. 211, which will also answer crisis calls, will only operate from 7 AM to 7 PM. This solution was proposed by FCS's new program director, prompting Barger's resignation in protest.
- Barger notes that CIC's afternoon shift will deprive it of many potential volunteers, many of whom are retirees who prefer to volunteer in the mornings.
- While lean budgets are nothing new for CIC and FCS, Barger stated that the current situation is unlike anything she has seen in her five years with FCS. Additional donations are desperately needed to ensure these institutions' continued existence. The services they provide are critical; CIC fields an average of 35,000 crisis calls a year, and about five percent come from immediately suicidal and/or homicidal persons.
- Ridgway noted that following announcements of similar cuts for the Crisis Center in Memphis years ago, the community rallied to the center's cause, and thanks to the involvement of local politicians, advocates, and volunteers, United Way provided enough funding to ensure continued round-the-clock operations. It may be possible to stage a similar intervention here.
- In response to queries from K. Tullis, Barger further delineated the recent cuts:
 - Four of the programs under the FCS umbrella lost all funding. These included the Families First and adoption training programs. Meanwhile, the trauma intervention program funded by SAMHSA ceased operations in all locales except the Gulf Coast.
 - CIC was routinely funded through runoff revenue from other FCS programs.
 - In the end, the new FCS CEO decided too much money had been lost to support the continued full functioning of the agency.
- Barger considers current developments especially upsetting considering that CIC routinely exceeded its United Way outcome demands.
- Brown added that TCCY's adoption programs funded by the Center for Mental Health Services (CMS) also took hits.
- Ridgway reports that CIC answers the Hopeline, but not the Lifeline; the latter connects to Centerstone. There has been an ongoing conflict between CIC and Centerstone over its handling of the Lifeline—CIC believes the Lifeline should be treated as a warm line and picked up by Centerstone; Centerstone's triage team subjects each call to an immediate lethality assessment and transfers any critical calls to CIC.

¹ Redaction: during the September 18 Advisory Council meeting, Barger announced that this figure was incorrect but was not able to provide the actual figure.

- Barger added that whereas CIC currently employs 22 Hopeline and 211 operators, all cross-trained to answer each line, only seven staff members will be on call after July 1. For the record, CIC has recorded an increasing amount of crisis call overflow to 211.
- She noted that in its forty years of operations, CIC has expanded from a mere hotline to include a mobile crisis unit and employee assistance training program consulted by large corporations. This makes the recent downsizing of the center all the more upsetting
- Barger also notes that CIC had recently accepted a contract from a 24-hour national gambling addiction hotline, but has had to turn this back over to the national call center because the contract requires call centers to operate 24 hours a day.
- K. Tullis noted that Strategy 1a of the Tennessee Strategy for Suicide Prevention calls for TSPN to “encourage adequate staffing and funding of local crisis centers across Tennessee”.
- Haren believes media coverage of CIC’s problems may be able to help. If the general public realizes such an important service is endangered, they may be willing to help.
- Brown, meanwhile, believed the subject should be raised at the upcoming legislator’s conference.
- Ridgway recommends drafting an appeal letter to the General Assembly, signed off on by Bernard and Harris.
 - Bernard recommends including the number of suicides per county and warning of possible increases.
 - Haren adds that the letter should emphasize the severity of losing a vital community service.
 - Barger suggests including the point that CIC frequently fields calls from homicidal individuals who must be talked out of violence towards others.
 - K. Tullis points out that the letter should invoke Strategy 1a.
 - Johnson believes CIC’s limited operations will have repercussions in law enforcement—in the Citizen’s Police Academy, she learned that the crisis lines are the numbers police officers use the most.
- Bernard recommended continuing the discussion beyond the retreat considering the urgency of the issue.

Closing Remarks

- Bernard closed out the meeting by raising two issues for consideration by the Advisory Council:
- He reported several encounters with survivors who believed TSPN had nothing to offer them because they assumed, from the name, that the Network only offered prevention resources.
- He has also received a report from a retired Air Force chaplain that there have been six suicide deaths among chaplains on overseas deployment—the people who should theoretically be in the best position to prevent suicides. These reports illustrate the increasing urgency of the Network’s mission.
- Bernard closed by thanking those present for “the lives you have touched now, in the past, and in the future”.
- If your name tag or name plate needs correction, you may make changes on the tag/plate itself and the central office will have these changed out for the September meeting.
- For those members who need to leave immediately and cannot stay for lunch, the park inn has offered to pack to-go lunches.

- There being no further items for discussion, the Advisory Council retreat adjourned at 12:22 PM.