P R E P a R E
Prevent | Reaffirm | Evaluate | Provide and Respond | Examine

School Crisis Prevention and Intervention Training Curriculum
Crisis Prevention & Preparedness: The Comprehensive School Crisis Team

NASP

PREPaRE Crisis Prevention and Intervention Training: Development and Preliminary Evaluation

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Abstract

This poster describes the development and initial evaluation of the PREPaRE crisis prevention and intervention training curriculum for school-based mental health professionals. Preliminary findings revealed statistically significant increases in participants' attitudes and knowledge from pre-tests to post-tests. In addition, participants reported high satisfaction with both PREPaRE workshops.

Introduction

Schools play a critical role in preventing and responding to crises. School-based mental health professionals should be prepared to advocate for the psychological well-being of children by striving to prevent crises from occurring and providing supportive intervention following those events that cannot be prevented. PREPaRE was developed following a survey of National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Delegate representatives and state school psychology association leaders indicating a need for, and support of, a formal crisis training curriculum (Brock, 2003). Subsequently, a core group of six crisis NASP members reviewed the empirical and theoretical literature, defined the core principles and skills, and developed the curriculum. Over 100 practitioners and researchers contributed to the curriculum development and review process.

Assumptions of the Curriculum

- The skill sets of school-based professionals are best utilized when they are embedded within a multidisciplinary team that engages in crisis prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery;
- School crisis management is relatively unique and as such requires its own conceptual model; and
- By virtue of their professional training and job functions, school-based mental health professionals are best prepared to address the psychological issues associated with school crises.

PREPaRE emphasizes that, as members of a school crisis team, school mental health providers must be involved in a set of hierarchical and sequential activities:

P Prevent and prepare for psychological trauma

R Reaffirm physical health and perceptions of security and safety

E Evaluate psychological trauma risk

P Provide interventions

a and

R Respond to psychological needs

E Examine the effectiveness of crisis prevention and intervention

Core Workshops

Prevention and Preparedness: The Comprehensive School Crisis Team (Workshop 1; Reeves, Nickerson, & Jimerson, 2006). This one-day workshop provides participants with an understanding of the comprehensive school crisis team and their roles on these teams. Systems issues relevant to crisis prevention and preparedness are highlighted, including the importance of preventing and responding to crises within the structure of a comprehensive, multidisciplinary school crisis team using the Incident Command System. Creating safe and responsive school environments to prevent crises is also reviewed. Finally, the workshop discusses preparing for crises through developing, exercising, and evaluating plans.

Crisis Intervention and Recovery: The Roles of School-Based Mental Health Professionals (Workshop 2; Brock, 2006). This two-day workshop provides school-based mental health professionals with the knowledge and initial skills needed to meet the *immediate* needs of students and staff following a crisis event. Specifically, school-based mental health professionals are taught to prevent those psychological traumas that can be avoided and prepare for those that cannot be prevented. Once a crisis event has occurred, school-based mental health professionals are taught to (a) reaffirm physical health and student perceptions of safety, (b) evaluate the degree to which individuals have suffered psychological trauma, (c) provide and respond to the psychological needs of school community members, and (d) evaluate the effectiveness of school crisis intervention efforts.

Pilot Testing

Both workshops were pilot-tested in March 2006 and participants completed pre- and post-tests assessing crisis prevention and intervention attitudes and knowledge. Questionnaire responses from 41 participants for the Crisis Prevention and Preparedness workshop indicated increased confidence in their ability to collaborate with others to develop a crisis plan (t = -2.63, df = 38, p = .01). Results also revealed significant increases in overall participant crisis intervention knowledge from pre-test to post-test (t = -8.64, df = 40, p = .000.).

Pre- and post-test data for 37 Crisis Intervention and Recovery workshop participants indicated significant decreases in anxiety about providing crisis intervention (t = -4.272, df = 36, p = .000) and fearfulness that they might mike a mistake during crisis intervention (t = -4.920, df = 36, p = .000). Further, participants reported increased confidence in knowing what to do when required to respond as a part of a crisis response team (t = -4.605, df = 36, p = .000). Results also revealed significant increases in overall participant crisis intervention knowledge subsequent to workshop participation (t = -9.36, df = 36, p = .000).

Workshop Satisfaction

Since the pilot testing, data have been collated for three offerings of Workshops 1 and 2. In addition, three Training of Trainers sessions have been offered for Workshop 1 and two for Workshop 2. As shown in Tables 1 and 2, when asked a series of questions with responses from 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest), participants have reported a high degree of satisfaction with both workshops.

Table 1

*Participant Responses to the **Workshop 1** Evaluation Form* (n = 103)

Question	M	SD
Overall workshop experience	8.48	1.51
Better prepared to respond to school crises	7.82	1.76
Likelihood of recommending workshop to others	8.89	1.53

Table 2

Participant Responses to the Workshop 2 Evaluation Form (n = 92)

Question	M	SD
Overall workshop experience	9.30	0.96
Better prepared to respond to school crises	8.93	1.43
Likelihood of recommending workshop to others	9.36	1.07

Conclusion

The response to the PREPaRE crisis prevention and intervention curriculum has been extremely positive. Workshop participants have made gains in knowledge and attitudes. They have also expressed great satisfaction with the training. With the increasing numbers of school psychologists and other school-based mental health professionals being trained in the curriculum, we are building the local capacity to prevent, prepare for, and respond to crises that may affect schools.

References

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Or visit the PREPaRE website at:

www.nasponline.org/prepare/