



Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training Programs for College Campuses

“Gatekeeper” training can be an effective component of a comprehensive student mental health program on a college campus. In general, gatekeeper training is intended to increase the *“...knowledge, attitudes and skills to identify (those) at risk, determine levels of risk, and make referrals when necessary”* (Gould et al., 2003). According to SAMHSA (2002), only 18 percent of students who commit suicide have ever sought help from a mental health professional regarding their suicidal ideation prior to their death. Students who are returning veterans are particularly at-risk, due to the higher prevalence of post-traumatic stress and depression among this population.

Campus gatekeepers include any individuals that may come in contact with students on campus, including faculty, academic advisors, disabilities services staff, health center staff, veteran’s services staff, peer counselors and fellow students. Resident advisors in campus housing are also ideal candidates for gatekeeper training. Training campus gatekeepers increases the number of individuals that may recognize the warning signs of suicide and encourage students to seek professional help and can prevent such devastating tragedies from occurring. Campus gatekeeper training is most effective when used as part of a campus comprehensive strategic plan to identify and help at-risk students. **Most training is offered in two modules: 1) Training for Trainers and 2) Gatekeeper Training. Training for Trainers modules provides the opportunity for campus staff to build its internal capacity to offer their own gatekeeper training to students, faculty, etc. on an ongoing basis. This is typically a more cost-effective and sustainable model of disseminating**

Matrix A provides a comparison of the various programs appropriate for training campus gatekeepers. Most listed programs have been implemented on college campuses and all are listed in the Suicide Prevention Resource Center’s Best Practice Registry (BPR). See references for more information regarding the BPR.

MATRIX A: Training for Trainers and Gatekeeper Training Programs

Training Program	Modules/ Duration	Cost	Appropriate Trainees	Program Objectives	Program Format & Characteristics
<i>Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)</i>	Training for Trainers (groups of 15, 24 or 30) 5 days	\$2,600 per individual (includes ASIST instructors, materials, and site needs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College mental health professionals Peer Counselors Disabilities services staff Veteran’s services staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train campus staff to disseminate training to gatekeepers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participatory work groups Lectures, discussion, trainer practice and role plays Training in suicide first aid
	Gatekeeper Training (groups of up to 30) 2 days	\$36 per trainee for materials (handbook, workbook, wallet-size prompter card, certificate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty Advisors Health Center Staff Resident Advisors Peer Counselors Campus law enforcement Disabilities services staff Veteran’s services staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness of societal attitudes about suicide Enhance communication, identification, and intervention skills Increase knowledge of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participatory work groups Lectures, discussion, trainer practice and role plays Training in suicide first aid Available in Spanish and French; can be culturally adapted

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<p><i>Kognito At-Risk (for University and College Faculty)</i></p>	<p>Gatekeeper Training (self-administer, web-based) 45 minutes</p>	<p>\$1,800 to \$4,800 (depending on # of online learners, up to 500; includes 1-2 year site license)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty • Advisors • Health Center Staff • Resident Advisors • Peer Counselors • Campus law enforcement • Disabilities services staff • Veteran's services staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase knowledge of signs of student psychological distress • Increase knowledge of how to communicate with at-risk students • Increase knowledge of local resources and referral points for at-risk students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customizable to campus-specific resources • Web-based simulation teaches analysis of profiles (academic performance, behaviors, and appearance) of virtual students and interaction • Symptoms of mental distress (i.e. depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts) • Program Manual should be reviewed prior to implementation • Campus counseling center staff should be able to assess and manage students at-risk prior to implementation. • Most effective when used as part of a campus comprehensive strategic plan to identify and help at- risk students.
<p><i>Kognito At-Risk (for Veterans on Campus)</i></p>	<p>Gatekeeper Training (self-administer, web-based) 30 minutes</p>	<p>\$2-20 per student user</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisors • Health Center Staff • Resident Advisors • Peer Counselors • Campus law enforcement • Disabilities services staff • Veteran's services staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase understanding of the unique value student veterans bring to campus • Increase understanding of the obstacles veterans may face in their pursuit of a college degree • Learn techniques for managing discussions around topics that may be sensitive to veterans • Learn best practices for connecting student veterans in distress with appropriate support services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customizable to campus-specific resources for veterans • Web-based simulation teaches analysis of profiles of virtual veteran students and interaction • Symptoms of mental distress (i.e. depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts) • Program Manual should be reviewed prior to implementation • Campus counseling center staff should be able to assess and manage veteran students at-risk prior to implementation. • Most effective when used as part of a campus comprehensive strategic plan to identify and help at- risk students.
<p><i>Kognito At-Risk (for College Students)</i></p>	<p>Gatekeeper Training (self-administer, web-based) 30 minutes</p>	<p>\$2-20 per student user</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase knowledge of signs of student psychological distress • Increase knowledge of how to communicate with fellow students who may be at-risk and how to persuade them to seek help • Increase knowledge of local resources and referral points for at-risk students • Increase knowledge of how to handle situations where students raise concerns that they may harm themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online, interactive program teaches students how to identify students at-risk, approach students to discuss their concerns, and make referrals to campus counseling centers • Students become familiar with campus resources that can help a fellow student at risk. • Using avatars, learners assume the role of a college student concerned about four friends, and learn effective conversation tactics and motivational interviewing techniques to encourage help-seeking.

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Campus Connect	Training for Trainers (groups of 25) 6 hours	\$4,500 (includes manuals and program trainer travel)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty • Advisors • Health Center Staff • Resident Advisors • Peer Counselors • Campus Mental Health Professionals • Campus law enforcement • Disabilities services staff • Veteran's services staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train campus staff to disseminate training to gatekeepers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of Campus Connect Readiness Checklist required prior to training • Developed at Syracuse University in NY, this program is specifically intended as a component of a broader college campus suicide prevention strategic plan.
	Gatekeeper Training (groups of up to 30) 2.5 hours	<i>Included in cost of training for trainers (see above)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Faculty • Advisors • Health Center Staff • Resident Advisors • Peer Counselors • Campus Mental Health Professionals • Campus law enforcement • Disabilities services staff • Veteran's services staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase knowledge of suicide warning signs and referral points for students at risk for suicide • Increase skills for responding to college students at risk for suicide • Increase self-efficacy regarding an individual's ability to respond to a student at risk for suicide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on suicide statistics, risk & protective factors, warning signs, and referral sources • Skills training on listening to, communicating with, and engaging at-risk students • Final role play activity to practice skills
LifeSavers Training	Gatekeeper Training (groups of at least 45) 3 days	\$230 per participant	Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase understanding of the warning signs of suicide • Increase ability to intervene with fellow students who may be at risk for suicide • Increase knowledge of referral points for fellow students who may be at risk for suicide • Enhance listening skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LifeSavers training is most effective when used as part of a campus comprehensive strategic plan to identify and help at-risk students. • Students learn to listen compassionately and offer non-judgmental and confidential support to help troubled peers find their own solutions to their problems

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QPR: Question, Persuade, Refer	Training for Trainers QPR Instructor Certification Self-Study Course 12 hours	\$495 per participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty • Advisors • Health Center Staff 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QPR Instructor Certification for 3 years
	Training for Trainers QPR Instructor Certification Live classroom training from QPR Trainer (minimum 10 participants) 8 hours	\$395 per participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident Advisors • Peer Counselors • Campus Mental Health Professionals • Campus law enforcement • Disabilities services staff • Veteran's services staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train campus staff to disseminate training to gatekeepers 	QPR Instructor Certification for 3 years
	QPR Gatekeeper Training Live classroom training (up to groups of 35) 1-2 hours	\$2 per trainee for materials (QPR booklet & card). <i>Cost varies depending on instructor</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Faculty • Advisors • Health Center Staff • Resident Advisors • Peer Counselors • Campus Mental Health Professionals • Campus law enforcement • Disabilities services staff • Veteran's services staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase ability to identify an individual who may be at risk for suicide • Increase ability to intervene effectively with those at risk for suicide Increase ability to refer someone at risk for suicide to an appropriate resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multimedia format • Uses "chain of survival" approach for recognizing and responding positively to warning signs and behaviors • Training on questioning at-risk individuals in order to determine suicide intent/desire, persuading a person to agree to seek help, and referring a person to appropriate resources • Available in other languages; can be culturally adapted
	QPR Gatekeeper Training (online training) 1 hour	\$29.95 Apply for a QPR Online Training mini-grant			

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Sources of Strength	Training for Trainers 40 hours/3-6 mo. (3-6 hour orientation, monthly teleconference support with <i>Sources of Strength</i> staff)	\$5,000 (approx.. cost, plus trainer travel)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty • Advisors • Health Center Staff • Resident Advisors • Peer Counselors • Campus Mental Health Professionals • Campus law enforcement • Disabilities services staff • Veteran's services staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train campus staff to disseminate training to gatekeepers • Increase knowledge of suicide prevention and how to help at-risk students • Increase awareness of "codes of silence" that may inhibit help-seeking behavior • Increase connectedness between at- risk youth and caring adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to training the peer team, the crisis management protocols found in the <i>Sources of Strength Start-Up Guide</i> should be fully implemented and campus advisors should be identified and trained. • Campus staff advisors and peer leaders try to impact the campus young adult cultures through small group conversations and by delivering a series of "Hope, Help, and Strength" messages via presentations, PSAs, posters, videos, the Internet, and text- messaging. • Training for and support from adult advisors and peer leaders is ongoing.
	Gatekeeper Training 15 to 50 hours/ 3-6 month program, (inc. four-hour initial peer training)	<i>(Provided by campus staff who have received the Training for Trainers above)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase knowledge of suicide prevention and how to help at-risk peers • Increase awareness of "codes of silence" that may inhibit help- seeking behavior 	
Student Support Networks	Training for Trainers	\$1,000 - \$3,000 , plus trainer travel; <i>additional cost for post-training consultation</i>	Peer Counselors & other student leaders	Train student leaders to disseminate training to gatekeepers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are actively recruited to participate in the SSN Training the Trainers program based on their high level of involvement & leadership on campus and their desire to help others
	Gatekeeper Training	Training Manual available free of charge from the Worcester Polytechnic Institute Counseling Center	Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase ability to recognize signs of significant mental & behavioral health distress • Increase confidence and ability to engage distressed peers in an effective and supportive manner • Increase knowledge of appropriate campus & community resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core training components: knowledge of mental & behavioral health issues and campus & community resources; intervention skills, including empathic responding and working with resistance; connecting students with a wide range of resources; promotes attitudes which deigmatize mental health help-seeking.

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Suicide Alertness for Everyone (safeTALK)	Training for Trainers (groups of 15, 24 or 30) 1 and 2 day options	\$480 per participant (includes materials)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty • Advisors • Health Center Staff • Resident Advisors • Peer Counselors • Campus Mental Health Professionals • Campus law enforcement • Disabilities services staff • Veteran's services staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train staff & student leaders to disseminate training to gatekeepers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly structured training that provides graduated exposure for practicing skills • Six 60-90 second video scenarios, strategically used throughout the training
	Gatekeeper Training (groups of up to 30) 3 hours	\$5.50 per participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Faculty • Advisors • Health Center Staff • Resident Advisors • Peer Counselors • Campus Mental Health Professionals • Campus law enforcement • Disabilities services staff • Veteran's services staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge attitudes that inhibit open talk about suicide • Recognize a student who may be suicidal • Engage students in direct and open discussion about suicide • Listen to and validate feelings about suicide • Make an immediate and direct connection to resources 	
Operation S.A.V.E.: VA Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training (Campus Edition)	Gatekeeper Training 2 hours <i>(Referred to as "Guide Training" - provided by VA suicide prevention coordinators)</i>	No Charge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who are returning veterans • Veteran's services staff • Disabilities Services staff • Health Services staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the scope of suicide problem among veteran student population • Identify a vet who is at-risk • Ask questions about suicide in an objective & non-threatening way • Refer a vet for evaluation & treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Components of the S.A.V.E. model include: Signs of suicide, asking about suicide, validating feelings, encouraging help and expediting treatment • Provides links to online resources about veteran students mental health • Adapted from QPR Gatekeeper Training (see above)

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MATRIX B: College Campuses Implementing Gatekeeper Training

Training Program	College Campuses – CALIFORNIA	College Campuses – OTHER STATES
<i>Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)</i>	California Community Colleges Porterville College	Fairfax Community College Lancaster Community College East Mennonite University
<i>Kognito At-Risk Web-Based Suicide Prevention Trainings</i>	California State University campuses: Northridge San Diego California Community Colleges San Jose City College Foothill College Mira Costa College Shasta College Santa Monica College Bakersfield College Devry University	Fordham University LaGuardia Community College Virginia Tech University James Madison University Massachusetts College of the Liberal Arts Colgate University St. John's University William and Mary College Kansas State University Vanderbilt University Penn State University New York University Indiana University Purdue University University of Wisconsin University of Illinois University of Notre Dame University of North Carolina Read testimonials from Campus staff
<i>Campus Connect</i>		University of Nebraska Syracuse University
<i>QPR: Question, Persuade, Refer</i>	California Community Colleges Santa Rosa Junior College	Colgate University University of Michigan University of Connecticut ALIVE! Mental Health Fairs Program <i>(opportunities for college campuses nationwide to host a mental health fair that includes a no-cost, 1-hour QPR Gatekeeper Training for students and staff)</i>
<i>Student Support Networks</i>		Worcester Polytechnic Institute (Student Support Network model developer) University of Southern Maine

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MATRIX C: Gatekeeper Training Program Efficacy - Links to Research & Reviews

Training Program	Research and Reviews
<i>Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)</i>	Review of the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST): Rationale, Evaluation Results, and Directions for Future Research
<i>Kognito At-Risk Web-Based Suicide Prevention Trainings</i>	At-Risk for University & College Faculty: Follow Up Study of Online Gatekeeper Training Simulation at 68 Universities, 2011 At-Risk for University & College Students: Results from a National Study at 35 Leading Universities & Colleges in the US, 2011
<i>Campus Connect</i>	Campus Connect: Research Findings from Syracuse University, Counseling Center & Options Program
<i>QPR: Question, Persuade, Refer</i>	Randomized Trial of a Gatekeeper Training Program for Suicide Prevention: Impact on School Staff after One Year Proximate Outcomes of Gatekeeper Training for Suicide Prevention in the Workplace Evaluation of Gatekeeper Training for Suicide Prevention in Veterans Tennessee Lives Count: Statewide gatekeeper training for youth suicide prevention A college suicide prevention model for American Indian students. The Short-Term Effectiveness of a Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training Program in a College Setting with Residence Life Advisers
<i>Student Support Networks</i>	How Worcester Polytechnic Institute is Making a Positive Impact on Student Safety and Well-Being
<i>Sources of Strength</i>	An Outcome Evaluation of the Sources of Strength Suicide Prevention Program Delivered by Adolescent Peer Leaders in High Schools, 2010

References:
 United States Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), [National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: Goals and Objectives for Action. SAMHSA News online, Fall 2002.](#)

[Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#), Education Development Center, Inc, Waltham, MA, 02453 1-877-GET SPRC (1-877-438-7772)

[SPRC/AFSP Best Practice Registry, Section III](#) (*The BPR identifies, reviews, and disseminates information about best practices that address specific objectives of the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention*)

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