

# Turning an idea into reality...the formation of a Suicide Attempt Survivor Support Group



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# Session Objectives

- Identify the components of a safe and effective suicide attempt survivor support group for persons diagnosed with an SMI.
- Describe the research and philosophy surrounding the promotion of a suicide attempt survivor support group.
- Recognize the important role that peers play in psychiatric recovery.
- Explain the importance of suicide attempt survivors in reducing stigma and preventing suicide.

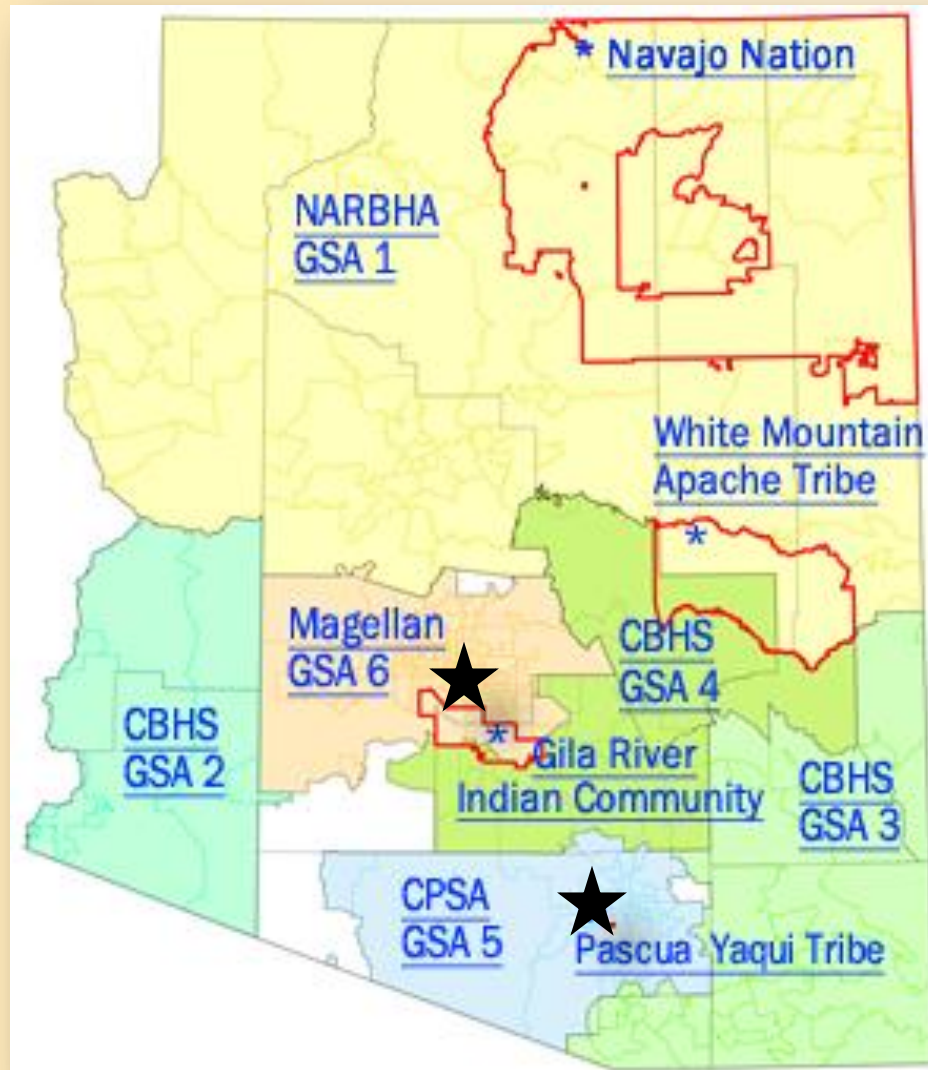


# Agenda

- Identifying the need for a Suicide Attempt Survivor Support Group
- Working out the concept and identifying key players
- Acquiring funding for the new initiative
- Lessons learned
- Implementing the program
- Future Plans



# Who We Are



# Identify Need for Support Group

- Suicide rate amongst people registered in the behavioral health system: 6 – 12 times higher than other high risk groups
- Though high rate of suicide, few support group options exist even nationally
- Determined need to review service options for this population



# Getting Support

- Suicide Attempt Survivors Support task group identified needs
- Most support groups are family members and people left behind after someone commits suicide
- Suicide survivors who have a failed suicide attempt are often left out of support groups



# Potential Roadblocks



Fear that bringing suicide survivors together will result in them making another attempt



The stigma of suicide attempts can limit options for funding and support



# Understanding Key Concepts

- Research shows little research and few existing groups
- Must engage suicide survivors and de-stigmatize the suicide attempt
- Research confirmed that suicide survivors is a VERY underserved group nationwide
- Program must focus on recovery





# Involving Key Players

- Peer involvement is **REQUIRED** to reduce stigma of suicide attempt
- Support team must give the group the heartfelt care and acceptance to have a positive impact



# Involving Key Players

- Giving peers the power to run the program lets them reach out more effectively
- Consider using 2 peers to run each support group with clinician support



# Not Assigning Blame



**VS.**



Treat suicide as a disease to help members move on



# Reducing Stigma

- Understanding that a suicide attempt can be viewed as a malfunction of the brain muscle
- Open communication with peers, others who have attempted suicide, can help the group to reconcile the attempt
- Managing the group must be conducted by peers to reduce stigma



# Gaining Funding for Your Group

- Tips for getting funding for your support group
- Medicaid Reimbursable?
- Donations to a non-profit
  - Space, refreshments
  - Clinical support



# Lessons Learned

- ✓ Peer involvement is key to success
- ✓ Participants need the peer interaction to reduce the stigma and lower the suicide rate
- ✓ Feeling heard is crucial to reducing another suicide attempt



# Keys to Implementing

- Identify the need for the program in your area
- Secure funding
- Find and train peer facilitators
- Reach out to potential group members
- Begin meetings



# Next Steps

- Continue serving this underserved group
- Raise awareness for Suicide Survivor awareness
- Reinforce training for peer facilitators





# Questions?



**Information**



Thank you, from the



For more information,  
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