History of the Suicide Prevention Center

Los Angeles Suicide Prevention Summit
September 7, 2011

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Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services

1-877-727-4747
Suicide Prevention Crisis Line

Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services
The Founding Fathers of the Suicide Prevention Center

Dr. Norman Farberow

Dr. Edwin Shneidman

Dr. Robert Litman
Drs. Farberow and Shneidman study cases of known suicide.

Drs. Farberow and Shneidman study suicide notes in the Los Angeles County Coroner’s basement.
1955

Working with suicidal individuals

Dr. Shneidman, Dr. Farberow and Dr. Litman interview a woman who attempted suicide.
1958
The Suicide Prevention Center is born

- Began with a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health
- Nation’s first scientifically and clinically-based program to study and prevent suicide.
- Became the prototype for centers in the U.S. and abroad.
- Included research, training and suicide prevention services.
1959
Training in Suicide Prevention

SPC offers extensive training in suicide prevention to local professionals.

1965: SPC begins training crisis responders. Dr. Farberow gives a lecture to Los Angeles Police Department officers.
1962
The Psychological Autopsy

SPC gained international recognition after performing a psychological autopsy on Marilyn Monroe.

Dr. Farberow, L.A. Coroner, Thomas Curphey, and Dr. Litman
1963
Suicide hotline expands to 24-hour coverage

- Pioneered an approach in which trained nonprofessionals took crisis calls.

- Developed the idea that most people who became acute suicidal were in that state for a relatively brief time and emphasized the need for active intervention.

- “Where do you hurt” and “How can I help?”
1981
Survivors after Suicide (SAS)

Provides bereavement support to those who have lost someone to suicide.

Groups are 8 weeks, led by a therapist and co-facilitated by a survivor.

Offered in 5 locations in Los Angeles.

Since 2011, SAS groups are now offered in Orange County.

Survivor Quilt

Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services
The Suicide Prevention Center Today

Since 1997, SPC has become an integral program of Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services

- Member of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
  1-800-273-TALK (8255)

- 24/7 Spanish coverage

- Over 175 trained volunteers and staff
In collaboration with the Los Angeles City Mayor’s Office, the Suicide Response Team provides support and comfort to families and friends at the scene of a suicide.
2010-2011
Community Outreach and Education

Provided 293 presentations educating over 45,000 people on suicide prevention

 Conducted over 60 media interviews since 2008

Offered Best Practices Training to over 300 people
Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and safeTALK Trainings

Trained over 100 first responders
Additional Services Offered by SPC

Working with Emergency Departments

Follow-up program for high-risk callers

Survivors of Suicide Attempts Support Groups

Expanding language capacity on Crisis Line
Alive and Running 5K Walk/Run for Suicide Prevention
September 25, 2011
www.aliveandrunning.org
2010 Alive and Running
Walking for Kyle
Carrying on the Legacy

How you can help prevent suicide

Volunteer

Get involved in the L.A. Suicide Prevention Network

Talk about suicide and share your story

Support SPC’s Alive and Running fundraiser

Call Didi Hirsch’s Suicide Crisis Line

877-727-4747
Contact Information

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