

# Evidence-Based Suicide Prevention Programs for School Systems

Using the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)'s National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP), DBHDD's Office of Behavioral Health Prevention recommends a list of approved suicide prevention trainings for Georgia public school system personnel. These suicide awareness and prevention trainings were compiled from an advanced search of NREPP evidence-based programs (<http://nrepp.samhsa.gov/AdvancedSearch.aspx>) using the keywords "suicide prevention," and narrowed down according to appropriateness and adaptability to public school personnel. Certified NREPP reviewers independently assess and rate intervention programs that are nominated by their developers or identified through SAMHSA/NREPP environmental scans via literature searches, focus groups, and interviews. As **evidence-based programs**, the interventions are rated according to the strength of their evaluation studies' methodology, extent of outcome impacts, program implementation according to design, and conceptual framework design. NREPP's criteria for being evaluated as an "evidence-based" NREPP intervention are being assessed for behavioral health outcomes, demonstrating evidence of behavioral health outcomes in one or more experimental or quasi-experimental studies, and being published in a peer-reviewed journal or professional publication. It is important to note that this list is not compiled from an exhaustive list of evidence-based programs, as NREPP does not review all interventions.

The five approved evidence-based trainings for Georgia public school personnel are **QPR Gatekeeper Training for Suicide Prevention, Kognito At-Risk for High School Educators, SOS Signs of Suicide, Lifelines Curriculum, and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)**. SOS Signs of Suicide, Lifelines Curriculum, and ASIST are trainings recommended particularly for school counselors or social workers, as opposed to all certificated school personnel, for the reasons listed below. Links to the NREPP websites for these programs are also provided, alongside an overview of each training.

## Resources for Effective Implementation from the NREPP Learning Center

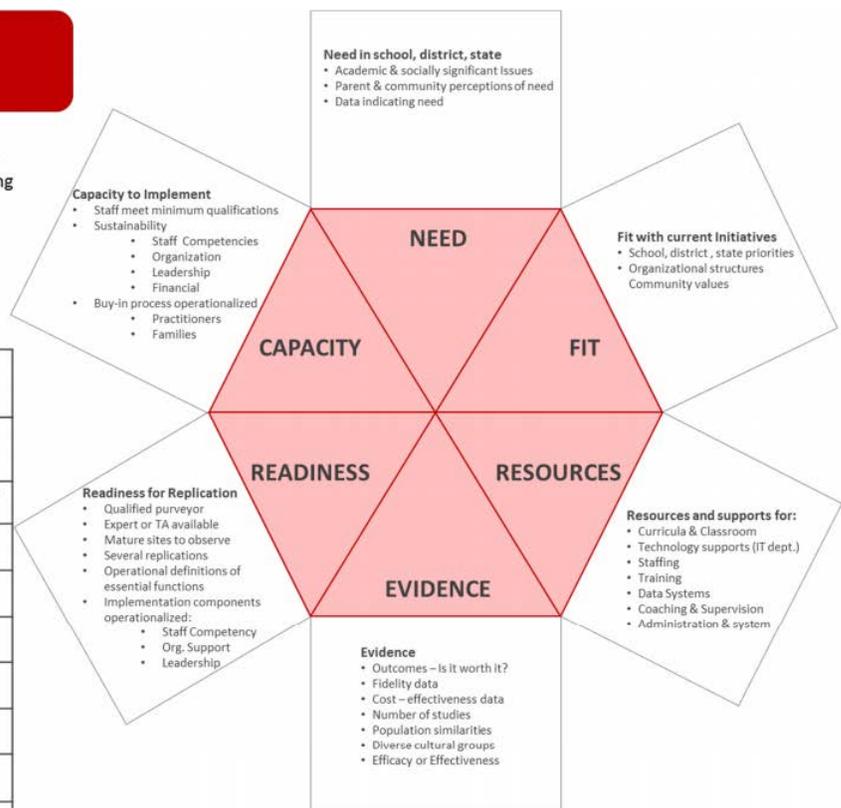
- National Implementation Research Network & UNC State Implementation & Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center – The Hexagon Tool: Exploring Context  
<http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/NIRN-Education-TheHexagonTool.pdf>
  - Tool to evaluate six factors prior to implementation: needs of students, fit of intervention, resource availability, evidence for outcomes, readiness for replication of intervention, and capacity to implement in sustainable and improvable way

### The Hexagon Tool Exploring Context

The Hexagon Tool can be used as a planning tool to evaluate evidence-based programs and practices during the Exploration Stage of Implementation.

See the Active Implementation Hub Resource Library  
<http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu>

EBP:			
5 Point Rating Scale: High = 5; Medium = 3; Low = 1. Midpoints can be used and scored as a 2 or 4.			
	High	Med	Low
Need			
Fit			
Resource Availability			
Evidence			
Readiness for Replication			
Capacity to Implement			
<b>Total Score</b>			



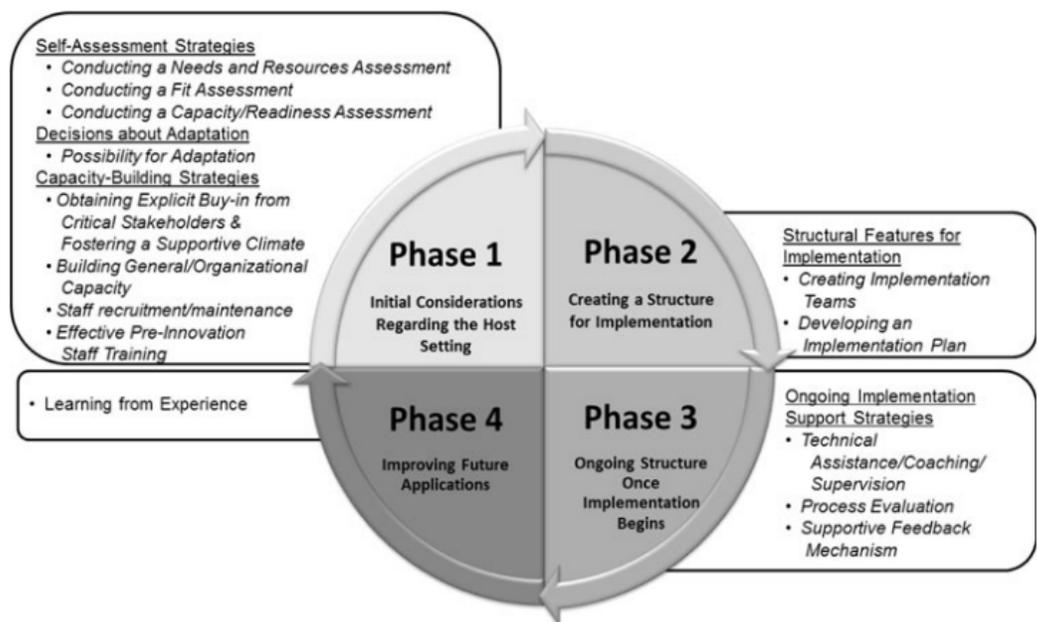
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 Adapted from work by Laurel J. Kiser, Michelle Zabel, Albert A. Zachik, and Joan Smith (2007)



- UNC State Implementation & Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center – Creating Meaningful Change in Education: A Cascading Logic Model  
<http://sisepp.fpg.unc.edu/sites/sisepp.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/SISEP-Brief6-CascadingLogicModel.pdf>
  - Ask “How” Five Times: How will students benefit? How will teachers be supported? How will District and school implementation teams be developed and supported? How will Regional supports be developed to support District and school implementation teams? How will state infrastructures be developed to expand and sustain capacity?

- National Implementation Research Network – ImpleMap: Exploring the Implementation Landscape  
<http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/NIRN-ImpleMap.pdf>
  - Used to survey areas of strength, overlap, gaps, degrees of integration and fragmentation with implementation efforts to ensure effective, integrated, efficient, and sustainable planning and readiness
- Meyers, D. C., Durlak, J. A., & Wandersman, A. (2012). The quality implementation framework: A synthesis of critical steps in the implementation process. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 50(3-4), 462-480.  
[http://nrepp.samhsa.gov/Docs/The%20Quality%20Implementation%20Framework\\_%20A%20Synthesis%20of%20Critical%20Steps%20in%20the%20Implementation%20Process%20.pdf](http://nrepp.samhsa.gov/Docs/The%20Quality%20Implementation%20Framework_%20A%20Synthesis%20of%20Critical%20Steps%20in%20the%20Implementation%20Process%20.pdf)

**Fig. 2** Dynamic interplay among the critical steps of the QIF. The *arrows* from one phase to the next are intended to suggest that the steps in each of the phases should continue to be addressed throughout the implementation process. Steps in each of the phases may need to be strengthened, revisited, or adapted throughout the use of an innovation in an organization/ community. While a logical order in which the critical steps unfold was needed to develop a coherent framework, we believe the manner in which they are implemented in practice will depend on many factors (e.g., context, resources, logistical concerns)



- Fig. 2 shows the continuous phases of the Quality Implementation Framework (QIF) in the implementation process
  - Phase 1. Initial Considerations Regarding the Host Setting
    - Self-Assessment Strategies
    - Decisions about Adaptation
    - Capacity-Building Strategies
  - Phase 2. Creating a Structure for Implementation
    - Structural Features for Implementation
  - Phase 3. Ongoing Structure Once Implementation Begins
    - Ongoing Implementation Support Strategies
  - Phase 4. Improving Future Applications
  - Repeat phases

## **NREPP evidence-based trainings for all certificated school personnel**

The evidence-based trainings recommended for all certificated school personnel are **QPR Gatekeeper Training for Suicide Prevention** and **Kognito At-Risk for High School Educators**. Both of these programs are gatekeeper trainings, which means that these programs will teach certificated school personnel, who may have routine contact with students potentially at-risk for suicide, how to recognize and respond to these youth and then refer them to appropriate resources.

<b>Program</b>	<b>QPR Gatekeeper Training for Suicide Prevention</b>
<b>Audience</b>	Adults 18 years or older strategically positioned to recognize and refer someone at risk of suicide (i.e. parents, friends, neighbors, teachers, coaches, caseworkers, police officers); can be adapted for school systems/youth and other occupations; U.S. and international
<b>Description</b>	1-2 hour in-person or online gatekeeper training aimed to teach participants how to <b>Question</b> the individual's desire or intent regarding suicide, <b>Persuade</b> the person to seek and accept help, and <b>Refer</b> the person to appropriate resources
<b>Components</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Epidemiology of suicide and current statistics, with myths and misconceptions about suicide and suicide prevention</li> <li>2. General warning signs of suicide</li> <li>3. Three target gatekeeper skills (question, persuade, refer)</li> <li>4. School/youth focus with local rates of students' suicidal behavior and the school district's protocol for responding to suicidal students</li> <li>5. Booklets/wallet cards as a tool to recall skills and resources learned in training</li> </ol>
<b>Activities</b>	Short video of interviews with people who have experienced suicide in their families, schools, and neighborhoods; standardized role-play dialogue for behavioral rehearsal practice session
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Knowledge about suicide (rated 2.6/4.0)</li> <li>2. Gatekeeper self-efficacy (rated 2.6/4.0)</li> <li>3. Knowledge of suicide prevention resources (rated 2.9/4.0)</li> <li>4. Gatekeeper skills (rated 2.8/4.0)</li> <li>5. Diffusion of gatekeeper training information (rated 2.5/4.0)</li> </ol>
<b>Link</b>	<a href="http://legacy.nreppadmin.net/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=299">http://legacy.nreppadmin.net/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=299</a>

<b>Program</b>	<b>Kognito At-Risk for High School Educators</b>
<b>Audience</b>	High school teachers and other school personnel in the U.S.
<b>Description</b>	1-hour online gatekeeper training to develop knowledge and skills for identifying, approaching, and referring students exhibiting signs of psychological distress (i.e. depression, anxiety, substance abuse, suicidal ideation)
<b>Components</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduce evidence-based communication techniques to handle the topic of psychological distress and motivate students to accept appropriate support</li> <li>2. Avoid pitfalls in referral conversations</li> <li>3. Increase confidence and ability to handle real-life situations</li> <li>4. Reduce stigma around mental health issues by normalizing mental health disorders and increasing protective factors</li> <li>5. Provide local mental health resources within course links</li> </ol>
<b>Activities</b>	Human Interaction Game Engine with role play conversation practice simulations with animated, emotionally responsive student avatars that act and respond like real humans
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preparedness to recognize, approach, and refer students exhibiting signs of psychological distress (rated 2.8/4.0)</li> <li>2. Likelihood of approaching and referring students exhibiting signs of psychological distress (2.8/4.0)</li> <li>3. Confidence in one's ability to help students exhibiting signs of psychological distress (2.8/4.0)</li> </ol>
<b>Link</b>	<a href="http://legacy.nreppadmin.net/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=317">http://legacy.nreppadmin.net/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=317</a>

## **NREPP evidence-based training for school counselors and social workers**

The evidence-based trainings recommended for school counselors and social workers are **SOS Signs of Suicide**, **Lifelines Curriculum**, and **Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)**. SOS Signs of Suicide and Lifelines Curriculum are predominantly educational curriculums for middle to high school students that include other program components that may not be evaluated as evidence-based at this time. These trainings are recommended for school counselors and social workers, or other trained mental health professionals among school personnel, so that they can learn the educational curriculums and know how to disseminate and facilitate the programs for students. ASIST is recommended for school counselors and social workers due to the in-depth, two-day training that includes suicide safety planning with at-risk students, not just the gatekeeper role asked of all certificated school personnel.

<b>Program</b>	<b>SOS Signs of Suicide</b>
<b>Audience</b>	Middle school (ages 11-13) or high school (ages 13-17) students for main curriculum, with gatekeeper training portions for adults (i.e. parents or school staff)
<b>Description</b>	Classroom educational DVDs and guided discussion to improve knowledge about depression and suicide, while encouraging positive attitudes towards help-seeking through the ACT technique of acknowledging the problem, expressing care, and telling a trusted adult. Includes an optional screening tool for depression and suicide risk, as well as 2 gatekeeper training tools.
<b>Components</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Decrease suicide and suicide attempts by increasing student knowledge and adaptive attitudes about depression, suicidality, and self-injury</li> <li>2. Encourage personal help-seeking and/or help-seeking on behalf of a friend through ACT (Acknowledge, Care, Tell)</li> <li>3. Reduce the stigma of mental illness and acknowledge the importance of seeking help or treatment</li> <li>4. Engage parents and school staff as partners in prevention through “gatekeeper” education</li> <li>5. Encourage schools to develop community-based partnerships to support student mental health</li> </ol>
<b>Activities</b>	Educational DVDs for school staff to play for students, guided classroom discussions for students about suicide and depression, optional student screening tool for depression and suicide risk to identify students for referral, 22-minute DVD of gatekeeper training for staff meetings/parent nights, 90-minute online gatekeeper training course with suicide prevention information and step-by-step implementation guidance
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Suicide attempts (2.3/4.0)</li> <li>2. Knowledge of depression and suicide (2.2/4.0)</li> <li>3. Attitudes toward depression and suicide (2.8/4.0)</li> </ol>
<b>Link</b>	<a href="http://legacy.nreppadmin.net/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=53">http://legacy.nreppadmin.net/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=53</a>

<b>Program</b>	<b>Lifelines Curriculum</b>
<b>Audience</b>	Middle to high school adolescent students, ages 13-17
<b>Description</b>	Curriculum to educate students about suicidal behavior and discuss their role in suicide prevention, which is the last sequential component of the larger Lifelines Program that includes resources and procedures to respond to students at risk, training for school faculty and staff for identification and response to suicidal students, workshop and materials for parents, and the student Lifelines Curriculum.
<b>Components</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote a caring, competent school community encouraging and modeling help seeking and recognition of suicide as an issue that cannot be kept secret</li> <li>2. Increase the likelihood that school staff and students know how to identify at-risk youth, provide appropriate initial response, obtain help, and take action</li> </ol>
<b>Activities</b>	Four 45-minute or two 90-minute lessons for health teachers and/or guidance counselors to teach in the regular school health curriculum, applying the social development model and interactive teaching techniques
<b>Outcomes</b>	<p>(Only the Lifelines Curriculum component of the Lifelines Program has been evaluated as evidence-based thus far, so the following outcomes are applicable only to the Lifelines Curriculum component.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Student knowledge about suicide (2.9/4.0)</li> <li>2. Student attitudes about suicide and suicide intervention (2.9/4.0)</li> <li>3. Student attitudes about seeking adult help (2.9/4.0)</li> <li>4. Student attitudes about keeping a friend's suicide thoughts a secret (2.9/4.0)</li> </ol>
<b>Link</b>	<a href="http://legacy.nreppadmin.net/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=37">http://legacy.nreppadmin.net/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=37</a>

<b>Program</b>	<b>Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)</b>
<b>Audience</b>	Anyone over the age of 16; community helpers or more formal/professional helping roles; no previous experience/education required; U.S. and international
<b>Description</b>	2-day gatekeeper training program to develop "suicide first aid" skills and competencies to reduce immediate risk of suicide, including risk assessment and "safeplan" development
<b>Components</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand attitudes about suicide</li> <li>2. Provide guidance and suicide first aid to a person at risk</li> <li>3. Identify the key elements of an effective suicide safety plan and actions required to implement it</li> <li>4. Appreciate the value of improving community suicide prevention resources</li> <li>5. Recognize important aspects of suicide prevention, including life-promotion and self-care</li> </ol>
<b>Activities</b>	Interactive audiovisual aids, large and small group discussions, skills practice and development, availability of "tune-up" training
<b>Outcomes</b>	Improved personal resilience and self-concept (rated "promising" by NREPP)
<b>Link</b>	<a href="http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/ProgramProfile.aspx?id=42">http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/ProgramProfile.aspx?id=42</a>