Shifting our Prevention Paradigms

- Strength Focused
- Hope Help Strength
- Peer Led
Sources of Strength Model

**COMMUNITY OF STRENGTH**

- DIVERSE
- INCLUSIVE
- COLLABORATIVE

(ADULT ADVISORS + PEER LEADERS) X STRATEGIC MESSAGING CAMPAIGNS = POSITIVE CULTURAL CHANGE

- CARING, CONNECTED AND POSITIVE
- INFLUENCE WITHIN THEIR SOCIAL GROUP
- ENGAGE, INTERACT AND APPLY
- POSITIVE SOCIAL NORMING
Impact of Sources of Strength

Cluster Randomized Control Trial (NIMH, SAMSHA Funding)
18 Schools; 465 Peer Leaders; 2,700 Students

Peer Leaders
- Increased healthy coping attitudes/norms
- More connections to adults (M +1 connection)
- 4X more likely to refer peer to adults
- Largest Gains for least connected or healthy PL’s

School Population
- Increased help-seeking acceptability
- Increased perception that adults help suicidal peers
- Largest gains for students with a history of suicide attempts

Wyman et al. (2010). *American Journal of Public Health*
An Outcome Evaluation of the Sources of Strength Suicide Prevention Program Delivered by Adolescent Peer Leaders in High Schools

Peter A. Wyman, PhD, C. Hendricks Brown, PhD, Mark LoMurray, BA, Karen Schmeelk-Cone, PhD, Mariya Petrova, BA, Qin Yu, PhD, Erin Walsh, MS, Xin Tu, PhD, and Wei Wang, PhD

Suicide accounts for more deaths among 10- to 24-year-olds in the United States than do all natural causes combined.¹⁻³ Each year, 5% to 8% of adolescents attempt suicide, and up to one third of these attempts result in an injury requiring medical intervention.¹⁻³ To address this public health problem, school-based suicide prevention programs have proliferated as a cost-effective and convenient way to reach adolescents; however, few have been rigorously evaluated, and only a narrow range of approaches has been used along the continuum of public health interventions.¹

Currently, school-based suicide prevention programs focus primarily on reducing individual-level risk factors by increasing identification and referral for treatment of students at high risk. However, little is known about the impact of these programs in enhancing protective factors and improving mental health outcomes among students. The aim of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Sources of Strength suicide prevention program in enhancing protective factors among peer leaders trained to conduct schoolwide messaging and among the full population of high school students.

**Objectives.** We examined the effectiveness of the Sources of Strength suicide prevention program in enhancing protective factors among peer leaders trained to conduct schoolwide messaging and among the full population of high school students.

**Methods.** Eighteen high schools—6 metropolitan and 12 rural—were randomly assigned to immediate intervention or the wait-list control. Surveys were administered at baseline and 4 months after program implementation to 453 peer leaders in all schools and to 2675 students selected as representative of the 12 rural schools.

**Results.** Training improved the peer leaders’ adaptive norms regarding suicide, their connectedness to adults, and their school engagement, with the largest gains for those entering with the least adaptive norms. Trained peer leaders in larger schools were 4 times as likely as were untrained peer leaders to refer a suicidal friend to an adult. Among students, the intervention increased perceptions of adult support for suicidal youths and the acceptability of seeking help. Perception of adult support increased most in students with a history of suicidal ideation.

**Conclusions.** Sources of Strength is the first suicide prevention program...
Conclusions. Sources of Strength is the first suicide prevention program involving peer leaders to enhance protective factors associated with reducing suicide at the school population level. (Am J Public Health. Published online ahead of print July 15, 2010: e1–e9. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2009.190025)
Spread messages of hope, help, & strength

Avoid messages of sad, shock, & trauma
TEMPLATED CAMPAIGNS
FOR PEER LEADERS

- Getting the Word Out
- Strengths
- Trusted Adults

- Thankfulness Challenge
- I Am Stronger
- Sources of Strength Week

- What Helps Me
- Connect
- We Belong
CAMPAIGN PLANNING CYCLE

CALANDARIZE
Choose the order and assign dates

ROLL OUT CAMPAIGN
Set your plans in motion, let's go!

SHARE
Tell your school and community about your work

BRAINSTORM & PRIORITIZE
What is possible? What sounds fun and realistic?

ACTION STEPS
Assign PLs and AAs to each task

RECORD
Stories, pictures, videos - save the good stuff

REFLECT & CELEBRATE
How did we do?
TARGETED MESSAGING:
SUCCESSFUL PREVENTION MESSAGING

Internalized Strength Stories

POSITIVITY

AWARENESS

ENGAGE INTERACT APPLY
Robert Hart’s Ladder of Participation

Children’s Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship

**RUNG 1 - Manipulation:** Adult-led activities, in which youth do as directed without understanding of the purpose for the activities.
Robert Hart’s Ladder of Participation

**Children’s Participation:** 
*From Tokenism to Citizenship*

**RUNG 1 - Manipulation:** Adult-led activities, in which youth do as directed without understanding of the purpose for the activities.

**RUNG 2 - Decoration:** Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, but have no input in how they are planned.
Robert Hart’s Ladder of Participation

Children’s Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship

RUNG 3 - Tokenism: Adult-led activities, in which youth may be consulted with minimal opportunities for feedback.

RUNG 2 - Decoration: Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, but have no input in how they are planned.

RUNG 1 - Manipulation: Adult-led activities, in which youth do as directed without understanding of the purpose for the activities.
Robert Hart’s Ladder of Participation

Children’s Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship

**RUNG 4 - Assigned, but informed:** Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, decision-making process, and have a role.

**RUNG 3 - Tokenism:** Adult-led activities, in which youth may be consulted with minimal opportunities for feedback.

**RUNG 2 - Decoration:** Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, but have no input in how they are planned.

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Robert Hart’s Ladder of Participation

Children’s Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship

**RUNG 5 - Consulted and informed:** Adult-led activities, in which youth are consulted and informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of adults' decisions.

**RUNG 4 - Assigned, but informed:** Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, decision-making process, and have a role.

**RUNG 3 - Tokenism:** Adult-led activities, in which youth may be consulted with minimal opportunities for feedback.

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Children’s Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship

Robert Hart’s Ladder of Participation

**RUNG 6 - Adult initiated shared decisions with youth:**
Adult-led activities, in which decisions making is shared with youth.

**RUNG 5 - Consulted and informed:** Adult-led activities, in which youth are consulted and informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of adults decisions.

**RUNG 4 - Assigned, but informed:** Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, decision-making process, and have a role.

**RUNG 3 - Tokenism:** Adult-led activities, in which youth may be consulted with minimal opportunities for feedback.

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RUNG 8 - Youth initiated shared decisions with adults: Youth-led activities, in which decision making is shared between youth and adults working as equal partners.

RUNG 7 - Youth initiated and directed: Youth-led activities with little input from adults.

RUNG 6 - Adult initiated shared decisions with youth: Adult-led activities, in which decisions making is shared with youth.

RUNG 5 - Consulted and informed: Adult-led activities, in which youth are consulted and informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of adults decisions.

RUNG 4 - Assigned, but informed: Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, decision-making process, and have a role.

RUNG 3 - Tokenism: Adult-led activities, in which youth may be consulted with minimal opportunities for feedback.

RUNG 2 - Decoration: Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, but have no input in how they are planned.

RUNG 1 - Manipulation: Adult-led activities, in which youth do as directed without understanding of the purpose for the activities.
“Young people’s participation cannot be discussed without considering power relations and the struggle for equal rights. It is important that all young people have the opportunity to learn to participate in programmes which directly affect their lives. This is especially so for disadvantaged children for through participation with others such children learn that to struggle against discrimination and repression, and to fight for their equal rights in solidarity with others is itself a fundamental democratic right…. The highest possible degree of citizenship in my view is when we, children or adults, not only feel that we can initiate some change ourselves but when we also recognise that it is sometimes appropriate to also invite others to join us because of their own rights and because it affects them too, as fellow-citizens.”

Roger A. Hart, *Children’s Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*
SOCIAL RECESSION