

## Concurrent Breakout Session Descriptions

Day 1: August 6, 2:00 – 3:15 pm

### ***A Pequot, a Hawk and a Mission: A Story About Connection***

This session will provide insight on how the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation built a positive and collaborative relationship with the state of Connecticut to support Suicide prevention and postvention efforts for Native youth throughout the state.

### ***Utilizing the Zero Suicide Framework to Improve Continuity of Care Across Youth-Serving Systems***

Over a five-year period, a public-private partnership—made up of state behavioral health leaders, state educators, family advocates, and public health researchers—has directed Pennsylvania’s previous SAMHSA-funded Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) Youth Suicide Prevention Grant team, working closely with county leadership in about 10 counties across the Commonwealth. The purpose of this presentation is to describe statewide and local efforts to improve suicide prevention across systems, using the Zero Suicide framework, with the goal of improving continuity of care for youth at risk of suicide as they transition between various youth-serving systems. The team will also discuss resources created to support the county efforts, including a toolkit to assist others in similar work.

### ***Creating Crisis Protocols – Developing a Model Suicide Policy for Schools***

This presentation will include key information about mental health in schools and youth suicide in South Carolina to highlight the importance of implementing strategies within youth-serving communities to address youth suicide risk and mortality. Presenters will introduce and discuss key components of a statewide model suicide prevention policy, how it relates to suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention strategies, and plans for sharing the model with a wider audience. Finally, presenters will offer suggested best practices and policies for participants to consider within their own school districts, providing opportunities for post-presentation reflection

### ***Someone to Talk to: Design and Evaluation of a Peer-to-Peer 988 Lifeline Education Tool Pilot***

This session highlights an initiative that meaningfully integrated youth and young adults into the design, implementation, and evaluation of a peer-to-peer 988 Lifeline conversation tool. Young adult contractors were trained in suicide prevention, evaluation, and research

methods, then conducted focus groups and a survey across Minnesota to better understand perceptions of mental health resources and communication. In collaboration with state public health staff, they developed “Someone to Talk to,” a conversation guide for peers to teach each other about the 988 Lifeline. High school peers with lived experience piloted the tool in school and community settings, and evaluation surveys measured changes in participants’ knowledge, confidence, and comfort discussing and using the 988 Lifeline.

### ***Implementing Statewide Suicide Prevention Programs for Youth in Alaska***

Alaska’s Garrett Lee Smith–funded suicide prevention initiatives strengthen statewide capacity through specialized trainings, lethal means safety campaigns, and the implementation of the Zero Suicide framework across health systems. The program supports postvention planning and community training to help Alaskans respond effectively after a suicide loss. Collaboration with the Department of Education and Early Development enhances youth-focused prevention, while aftercare coordination through the statewide crisis contact center ensures ongoing support for at-risk young people. These efforts are bolstered by strong partnerships with community organizations that promote outreach, education, and comprehensive suicide prevention strategies across the state.

### ***Connect and Collaborate: National Evaluation Networking Session (For Cohorts 17, 19, 19B Only)***

This interactive session provides GLS state/tribal project directors and evaluators with a dedicated opportunity to connect directly with staff from ICF’s national GLS evaluation team and fellow grantees in a small group setting. Through facilitated discussions, participants will build and strengthen relationships with their assigned Technical Assistance Liaisons (TALs); exchange insights and experiences with peers across cohorts 17, 19, and 19B; and explore grantee-specific questions and priority topics in a supportive, collaborative environment. Small groups will be designed to encourage meaningful dialogue around shared challenges, evaluation topics, and program-specific needs. The session is intended to foster ongoing collaboration, strengthen peer connections, and support practical problem-solving related to evaluation activities.

## Day 2 Concurrent Breakout Sessions

August 6, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

### ***Gathering the Goodness: Conversations Around Tribal History, Cultural Safety, and Community Collaborations With Suicide Prevention Grantees Across Minnesota***

Minnesota Department of Health tribal suicide prevention staff and the regional tribal suicide prevention coordinator collaborated to develop a one-day, in-person Indigenous knowledge training: the Tribal History and Cultural Safety Gathering (THCSG). The gathering specifically focuses on suicide prevention through Indigenous social determinants of health and seeking out community collaborations. Participants of the THCSG learn about the importance of community connections, meet local tribal partners, and learn ways to provide enhanced allyship in their service and partnerships with tribal partners. Participants in this breakout session can expect background information on the development of this gathering, an overview of the agenda, a review of lessons learned, next steps in train-the-trainer model development, and recommendations for adapting it in other communities.

### ***Building Sustainable School Mental Health Systems***

This presentation will highlight the work of two federal initiatives—Project Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education (Project AWARE) and Trauma-Informed Services in Schools (TISS). The presentation will share how states, districts, tribal communities, and partners strengthen school mental health systems through Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, prevention, early intervention, suicide prevention, workforce development, and strong school–community partnerships. The session will also highlight actionable strategies to support long-term sustainability.

### ***Youth Safety Planning in the Real World: Buy-In, Family Engagement, and Implementation Challenges for GLS Grantees***

Safety planning is a core expectation in youth suicide prevention work, but implementing it well can be more complicated than completing a form or training staff. GLS grantees often have to navigate partner buy-in, school and community workflows, caregiver involvement, confidentiality, staff confidence, documentation expectations, and follow-up processes across multiple settings. This session will focus on practical strategies for strengthening youth safety planning as a meaningful, youth-centered intervention. Participants will

explore common implementation barriers, strategies for engaging families and partners, ways to improve plan quality and usability, and opportunities for evaluators to help assess reach, consistency, and usefulness.

### ***Social Determinants of Health: Addressing Upstream Factors to Strengthen Suicide Prevention and Community Well-Being***

Suicide is a complex public health issue that requires a comprehensive prevention approach. While many suicide prevention approaches address individual and downstream factors, approaches that target upstream factors—such as the broader systems, environments, and social conditions in which people live—can be an effective component of a suicide prevention ecosystem. Various institutions play a critical role in addressing these upstream factors through policies, programs, and cross-sector partnerships. In this session, we will explore how these upstream structural factors impact the populations and communities you serve, discuss the role organizations can play in reducing suicide risk, and identify strategies to address root causes to promote overall well-being and a comprehensive suicide prevention ecosystem.

### ***Strengthening School Suicide Prevention Through Project SMARTS***

Schools are a non-negotiable setting for suicide prevention, with approximately 75% of youth mental health services delivered within school systems. This presentation will explore how Project SMARTS addresses these critical needs while offering implementation strategies that can be adapted to meet the unique needs of school districts across the United States.

### ***From Identification to Follow-Up: Strengthening Continuity-of-Care Data Collection (For Cohorts 17, 19, and 19B: GLS National Evaluation)***

This session focuses on strengthening grantee approaches to collecting high-quality data across the continuity-of-care pathway, with an emphasis on youth identified as at risk for suicide in clinical and educational settings. Building on previous communities of practice discussions, participants will engage in facilitated, setting-specific, small group conversations to explore real-world data collection experiences in schools and emergency departments. During this session, participants will share challenges and promising practices; discuss strategies for improving individual-level and screening-related data collection; and identify actionable approaches to strengthen referral, follow-up, and connection-to-care tracking. Participants will leave with practical ideas to enhance data

quality, improve feasibility, and strengthen continuity-of-care measurement across diverse implementation settings.

### Day 3 Concurrent Breakout Sessions

August 7, 9:00 am – 10:15 am

#### ***Connecting States and Campuses***

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) has maintained a decades-long partnership with the Campus Suicide Prevention Center of Virginia (the Center), located at James Madison University near the border of West Virginia. Established in 2009 with the stated purpose of “getting people to think differently about what it means to prevent suicide,” the Center serves Virginia community institutes of higher education and newly, K–12 schools. With an emphasis on social interconnectedness as an upstream public health approach, the Center continues to identify, lead, and innovate, with an emphasis on shaping environments so Virginia’s youth can learn and thrive. This breakout session will discuss the origin of a public health approach to suicide with Virginia characteristics and explore how VDH, the Center, and other partners continue to identify, deepen, and maintain a shared commitment toward making suicide as preventable as possible.

#### ***Gizmo’s Pawesome Guide to Mental Health: An Upstream Approach to Mental Health and Suicide Prevention for Elementary***

This session will provide an overview of the Gizmo’s Pawesome Guide to Mental Health Elementary Curriculum and the associated evaluation being performed under the Connecticut Partnerships for Hope and Healing Initiative, a Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention Grant (SM086113). This fun, flexible, turnkey curriculum for third and fourth grade elementary youth introduces the lessons and Mental Health Plan in Gizmo’s Pawesome Guide to Mental Health that are based on the Stanley-Brown Safety Plan. Video segments and interactive required and optional activities help youth learn to identify and care for their mental health needs themselves and by turning to trusted adults for support. The curriculum strives to help youth, their trusted adults, and the settings in which they live and learn support their mental health and social emotional learning. The program creates a greater sense of individual and community connectedness, thereby strengthening children’s mental wellness and reducing their risk of many negative health outcomes, but most importantly poor mental health. Attendees will learn: (1) why and how the curriculum

was developed; (2) the main concepts of the curriculum and how they help connect youth to trusted adults and appropriate levels of care; and (3) about the evaluation process to assess effectiveness.

### ***Tribal – Grief Training – Creating Safe Spaces to Heal***

Spaces to Heal introduces a community-focused approach to addressing grief and loss in tribal communities. This session provides an overview of the three-day training that blends storytelling, traditional knowledge, culturally aligned Western models, and readiness tools to help tribes develop grief and loss programs tailored to their regions. Attendees will learn how the model supports the revival of traditional grief practices and strengthens local provider capacity to respond to grief as a public health issue.

### ***CODE RED: Universal Safety Planning***

As part of Kentucky's GLS grant, over 15,000 people have been trained in CODE RED. This upstream universal safety planning intervention is designed for everyone ages 12 and up to create their own safety plan before their worst day. This presentation will introduce CODE RED and give preliminary data from youth and adults.

### ***Building Capacity for Suicide Prevention in Michigan's Child Welfare Agency***

Michigan's GLS Program (Transforming Youth Suicide Prevention in Michigan) has been working in partnership with the state's child welfare agency for over a decade. This presentation will review elevated risk for suicide among child welfare involved youth, share needs assessment findings from child welfare staff, and present a data-driven and iterative process of developing and evaluating the new free online Suicide Prevention in Child Welfare course. Promising results of the course's impact on learners' self-reported preparedness, behavioral intentions, and self-efficacy to engage in suicide prevention actions with high-risk youth in the child welfare system will be shared.