




**Suicide Prevention Resource Center**  
Promoting a public health approach to suicide prevention



The nation's only federally supported resource center devoted to advancing the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention*.



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## Presenter Disclosures

**Ellyson R Stout**

(1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

**No relationships to disclose**

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## Sustainability outcomes among suicide prevention grantees one year post-federal funding

APHA Annual Meeting  
November 5, 2013

Ellyson Stout, MS, Robert Apsler, PhD,  
Scott Formica, MA and Colleen Carr, MPH



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## About SPRC



- ✓ Technical assistance center
- ✓ Training Institute
- ✓ National Resource Center
- ✓ Secretariat for the national Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention



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## GLS Program Background

- ✓ Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act (2004)
- ✓ Funded through SAMHSA
- ✓ Currently 150 grantees:
  - ✓ 34 States
  - ✓ 34 Tribes
  - ✓ 82 Campuses



White House photo by Paul Morse. Image downloaded Oct 24, 2013, from George W. Bush White House Archives: [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2004/10/21/04-10-21-13\\_09p017.jpg](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2004/10/21/04-10-21-13_09p017.jpg)



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## 2013 Sustainability Project

**Goals:**

- ✓ Assess:
  - ✓ what has been sustained by GLS 'alumni'
  - ✓ key factors in their success
- ✓ Provide recommendations for suicide prevention practitioners



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## Approach

- I. Literature review
- II. Survey of GLS alumni
- III. In-depth interviews with selected survey respondents
- IV. Summarize findings and recommendations



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## I. Sustainability literature



- ✓ Research in its infancy
- ✓ Complex concept
- ✓ Importance of sustainability
- ✓ No common definition or model



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## II. Survey of GLS alumni

- ✓ Assessed infrastructure/activities after GLS funding
  - Before, during, after funding
- ✓ Inclusion criteria: 1 year past funding
- ✓ Respondent pool of 68 alumni
- ✓ 53% response rate (n=36)



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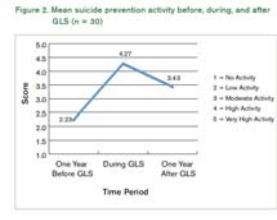
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## Survey Findings

- ✓ All respondents still active
- ✓ Activity increased during grant funding, then declined



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## Chart description for slide 11

The chart shows mean suicide prevention activity across all survey respondents at three points in time: 1 year before GLS funding, during GLS funding, and 1 year after GLS funding.

Activity was measured on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing no activity and 5 representing very high activity.

The overall level of activity across all respondent sites increased significantly from one year before funding (2.33) to the peak of funding (4.27), and then declined one year after GLS (3.43). However, the overall level of activity after funding remained significantly higher than it was before funding.



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## Importance of Key Factors

Highest rated:

- ✓ Consistent and qualified staff
- ✓ Consistent and qualified leadership
- ✓ Support from Administrators/Elders/Tribal Council members
- ✓ Financial support (funding/endowments)



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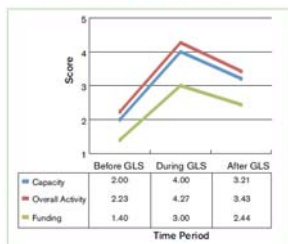
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## Funding is key

Figure 4. Association among suicide prevention funding, capacity, and activity before, during, and after GLS




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### Chart description for slide 14

The chart shows the overall level of activity, capacity, and funding for all respondent sites at three points in time: 1 year before GLS funding, during GLS funding, and 1 year after GLS funding.

Activity was measured on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing no activity and 5 representing very high activity.

The overall level of activity, capacity, and funding across all respondent sites increased from one year before funding to the peak of funding, and then declined one year after GLS. This shows that the amount of funding sites obtained after their GLS grants ended was closely associated with sustained suicide prevention efforts.




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## III. Interviews

- ✓ Survey asked for agreement
- ✓ Sustainability scale ranking
- ✓ 15 most sustainable sites interviewed
- ✓ In-depth phone interviews




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## Interview Findings



Two overarching themes:  
- Heterogeneity  
- Funding



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## IV. Recommendations

1. Adopt a Sustainability Mindset
2. Build Momentum
3. Foster Leadership
4. Cultivate Partnerships
5. Secure Resources



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## 1. Sustainability Mindset

- ✓ Vision for what will be in place after funding
- ✓ Sustainability in mind: design to implementation
- ✓ Decisions and course adjustments throughout

"I didn't just throw something together related to sustainability in the end. It was an effort right from the beginning that, [for] everything we were starting, my intention was to continue it way past the three years."  
—GLS campus alumni



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## 2. Catalyze Momentum

"...the reason we got additional state funding was that there were so many people who had bought into this that I know the state felt they couldn't just let it fall by the wayside."

—GLS state alumni

- ✓ Develop or maintain momentum
- ✓ Engage diverse stakeholders and influencers
- ✓ Build community involvement




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## 3. Foster strong leadership

- ✓ Select or cultivate a strong leader
- ✓ Prioritize funding for consistent leader after the grant
- ✓ Leaders should have/build key skills

"The person that you hire at the head of your programming has to be a person with passion, persistence, and come with a wealth of prevention skills. If not, then it would be very hard to get this much done in three years."

—GLS tribal alumni




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## 4. Cultivate Partnerships

"[Partnerships] offer the opportunity to continue doing this work, because everyone has an investment in the outcome.... It becomes something that they take ownership of."

—GLS campus alumni

- ✓ Identify various partners
- ✓ Establish strong relationships
- ✓ Develop/strengthen the planning or leadership group




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## 5. Secure Additional Resources

- ✓ Plan how to identify new funding
- ✓ Prioritize funding for staff time
- ✓ Lower level of funding may be enough

“Once you’ve built the system, it doesn’t require the same kind of funding to keep it going. It’s one thing to maintain a house as opposed to building the home. We had the money to build the house [from the GLS grant] and now we are maintaining it.”

—GLS campus alumni



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## Project Limitations

- ✓ Inclusion criteria limited the sample size.
  - 68 sites were eligible, 36 participated.
- ✓ Sites that were better able to sustain may have been more likely to respond.
- ✓ Limitations reduce the generalizability of the results.



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## Report and next steps

- ✓ Report: [www.sprc.org](http://www.sprc.org) (search ‘Leaving a Legacy’)
- ✓ Next steps:
  - Disseminate broadly
  - ‘Hands on’ version
  - Explore publication/ opportunities for follow up study



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## Acknowledgments

- ✓ EDC: Colleen Carr and Zoe Baptista
- ✓ SSRE: Scott Formica and Robert Apsler
- ✓ Internal and External Reviewers
- ✓ Alumni respondents to survey and interviews



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THANK  
YOU!



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