**MSPP Suicide Postvention Response Services**

In the aftermath of a suicide loss, the depth of anguish and the complicated bereavement for those left behind creates a need for support, education and guidance to assist in the immediate crisis. The risk of contagion is real and especially of concern related to youth and young adults. Suicide postvention efforts serve the dual purpose of assisting survivors through the grief process and preventing suicide for future generations. The Maine Suicide Prevention Program actively connects people struggling in the aftermath of suicide loss with the information and resources needed to support healing and to reduce the risk of contagion.

**Postvention support:** MSPP offers a broad range of support in the aftermath of a suicide. Prior practice focused primarily on addressing the needs of schools and school communities in the aftermath of a youth suicide or a high profile suicide attempt. Recent practice is to make the outreach to a range of community venues after a suicide. Much of the response continues to be based on contacts made by individuals or organizations in the immediate aftermath requesting support. There is no mechanism existing in the state to enable the MSSP to be notified of a suicide. The intent of addressing a suicide postvention request is to:

1. Provide local, state and national education resources to prepare people to respond to the immediate grief needs of affected people and to lower the risk of contagion.
2. Ensure that risk of immediate contagion is addressed through identification of vulnerable individuals or groups and developing a plan to increase support to these individuals. The new MSPP Postvention Resource Manual is actively being marketed and used.
3. To provide guidance on best-practice ways to support the needs of affected people,
4. To connect people and organizations with other local, state and national entities to support identified needs. This may include, at a minimum, regional crisis agencies, grief support programs or clinical support. In a limited number of cases, NAMI Maine staff have provided direct debriefing or support to individuals or organization staff seeking to address needs of those impacted by a suicide.

A range of people and organizations can benefit from postvention outreach including:

* School and college communities,
* Local community organizations,
* Health and mental healthcare programs,
* Law enforcement, EMS and corrections staff,
* Maine employers and workplace environments
* Individuals and families

For Postvention support, contact MSPP@NAMIMaine.org or call 1-800-464-5767

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