



# AUGLAIZE COUNTY SUICIDE PREVENTION COALITION

**COMMUNITY CONTEXT:** Auglaize County is located Northwestern Ohio. In 2019, the estimated population was under 50,000 with white, non-Hispanics accounting for the largest percentage. Auglaize County is approximately 402 square miles which is mostly rural. We focus on middle aged men, youth, veterans, and the rural population.

## LEAD AGENCY OR CONVENER GROUP

Prevention Awareness Support Services created the Auglaize County Suicide Prevention Coalition at the request of the MHRS Board of Allen, Auglaize, and Hardin Counties to address suicide prevention in Auglaize County.

## COALITION MEMBERSHIP

The Coalition consists of members representing the highest risk populations and those entities serving these populations. Moving forward, we intend to solicit involvement from sectors which are not yet represented.

### OPERATIONS AND PROCESSES

The Auglaize Suicide Prevention Coalition meets monthly. Coalition and community members can access the coalition through email distribution, the Prevention Awareness Support Services website, and the Coalition Facebook page. Decisions are made through group consensus.

### LEADERSHIP AND STAFFING

Prevention Awareness Support Services (PASS), with support from the MHRS Board of Allen, Auglaize, and Hardin, acts as the fiscal agent for the Coalition. PASS provides staff, training, and resources to the Coalition. Coalition members choose which Coalition activities to which they commit their time, resources, and leadership.

### STRUCTURES

The Coalition is a non-profit entity and does not have formal by-laws. The mission of the Auglaize County Suicide Prevention Coalition is "to provide guidance and expertise to promote hope, wellness and mental health through outreach, education and collaboration as a means of preventing suicide in our community."

### POOLED RESOURCES

The Coalition is connected to other organizations by involving them in the work and reaching out with volunteer opportunities. Cross-organizational initiatives include implementing conferences and trainings to increase awareness of suicide prevention and postvention resources and services. Data is collected by PASS directors, LOSS team members, coroner's office, and the Auglaize County Health Department.

### MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Coalition members play the primary role of identifying, recruiting, and onboarding potential new members. The Coalition supports members in identifying their unique roles in suicide prevention. Ideas are highlighted, communicated, and celebrated thus maintaining belonging and reinforcement of communication.

### ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING

Members are familiar with prevention-specific strategic planning and draw on that knowledge along with member experiences when creating annual action plans. The Coalition utilizes data trends to inform evidence-based decision-making regarding action plans.

SYNERGY

### IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIES

We acquire resources for the implementation of our strategies through Coalition members, identified community partners, and volunteers. There are often many more resources available to us than we realize at the outset of a project, and our human capital gives us a way to access those resources.

### COMMUNITY CHANGE OUTCOMES

The Coalition's goals are to support and provide trainings and presentations on suicide prevention to those serving Auglaize County's high-risk outcomes, continue to support suicide prevention in middle and high schools, and to find and identify resources to make sure activities are met.

### COMMUNITY CAPACITY

Through the work of the Auglaize County Suicide Prevention Coalition, members of the community and various agency partnerships, we have been successful in developing capacity, and building social capital that can be applied to other health and social issues.

### HEALTH AND SOCIAL OUTCOMES

The Coalition provides a variety of resources that meet the changing needs of many different organizations. The Coalition helped deliver care packages to the LOSS family members when the annual dinner could not be held.

FORMATION

MAINTENANCE

INSTITUTIONALIZATION

## **Community Coalition Action Theory- Longer Narrative Auglaize County Suicide Prevention Coalition Auglaize County, Ohio**

### **Community Context**

Auglaize County is located in Northwestern Ohio. The county seat is Wapakoneta which is the largest city in the county. St. Mary's is a close second to Wapakoneta in population. The county consists of 402 square miles, which are mostly rural. In 2019, the estimated population in Auglaize County, Ohio was 45,656. In regards to ethnicity, 95.7% of the population is white, non-Hispanic. The median household income in 2019 was \$64,074. The poverty rate is 8.6%. There are six different school districts in Auglaize County which are mainly rural. The county has a rich history in farming and manufacturing.

### **Lead Agency or Convener Group**

The Auglaize County Suicide Prevention Coalition began its work in 2010 at the request of the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Allen, Auglaize, and Hardin Counties. In 2010 a strategic plan conversation set forth an outline of goals and objectives for the coalition. These goals included increasing education, awareness, professional development and resources surrounding the work around suicide prevention. Prevention Awareness Support Services (PASS) led efforts to begin the coalition with representatives from the Auglaize County community. Representatives included local clergy, mental health agencies, United Way, NAMI, law enforcement and school officials. PASS has acted as the fiscal agent and coordinating entity for the Auglaize County Suicide Coalition since its inception. PASS provides many of the coalition's resources such as meeting places, office supplies, manpower and training.

### **Coalition Membership**

The coalition consists of members representing the highest risk populations and those entities serving these populations. Membership may also include attempt survivors and loss survivors. The coalition continuously invites new members and makes a concerted effort to recruit new members from all corners of the county. Moving forward, we intend to solicit involvement from sectors which are not yet represented. We are currently seeking more effective strategies to engage high-risk populations in coalition activities.

### **Coalition Operations and Processes**

Coalition members are empowered to take action to combat suicide and strengthen the community's awareness and prevention skillset. The coalition embraces a collaborative method and mindset to address the work and make informed decisions. The coalition makes decisions through a group consensus. The Auglaize County Suicide Prevention Coalition meets monthly. Membership engagement is measured by attendance at monthly meetings and participation in coalition projects and/or financial and moral support. Benefits to individuals and their organizations include being of service to the community and being able to share information about resources, programs and services with other agencies. Coalition members can also join the coalition email distribution list or follow the Coalition Facebook page to stay updated on local programs and events. Open and frequent communication among members helps to create a positive organizational climate and makes effective assessment and planning more likely.

## **Leadership and Staffing**

Currently PASS staff acts as the chair of the coalition. Coalition members and volunteers take leadership of specific events and activities they are passionate about. Responsibilities are shared through communication, collaboration and programming. The coalition seeks out community leaders or resources to fill any identified gaps.

## **Structures**

The coalition is a non-profit entity and does not have formal by-laws. The coalition does have formal mission and vision statements. The mission of the Auglaize County Suicide Prevention Coalition is “to provide guidance and expertise to promote hope, wellness and mental health through outreach, education and collaboration as a means of preventing suicide in our community.” Work groups are utilized to create initiatives and special projects.

## **Pooled Resources**

The coalition is connected to other organizations by involving them in the work and reaching out with volunteer opportunities. Cross-organizational initiatives include implementing conferences and trainings and increasing awareness of suicide prevention and postvention resources and services. Funding is provided by PASS/MHR SB, grant funding, sponsorships and private donations. Data is collected by PASS directors, LOSS team members, coroner’s office and the Auglaize County Health Department. We work with local law enforcement agencies, faith-based organizations and schools for outreach opportunities.

## **Member Engagement**

The coalition supports members in identifying their unique roles in suicide prevention. At each coalition meeting members introduce themselves with an explanation of job responsibilities and their connection to the coalition, allowing others to understand their work and connection to the coalition. Coalition members play the primary role of identifying, recruiting and onboarding potential new members. Current members are personally or professionally invested in the cause of suicide prevention. The coalition promotes and encourages connectedness and communication by sharing our sense of purpose. During meetings, goals such as successfully completing an awareness walk or fundraiser creates the sense of accomplishment which satisfies members and creates a participatory attitude toward the coalition. Member ideas are highlighted, communicated and celebrated thus maintaining belonging and reinforcement of communication.

## **Assessment and Planning**

The coalition does not have a formal framework for strategic planning, though these conversations have been held and many members are familiar with prevention-specific strategic planning. We draw upon member experiences when creating annual action plans. The coalition utilizes data trends to inform evidence-based decision-making regarding action plans. Interventions are directed at multiple levels which makes it more likely to create change in community policies, practices and environment.

## **Synergy**

When organizations come together and combine resources, knowledge, skills and different points of view, they create something new that can accomplish more than the individual organizations could have accomplished on their own (Taylor-Powell, Rossing & Geran, 1998.) There is something powerful in this partnership which researchers and others call synergy (Lasker, Weiss & Miller, 2001;

Taylor-Powell, Rossing & Geran, 1998.) In the CCAT, synergy occurs through the combination of: pooled resources, member engagement and assessment and planning. Synergy is evident in our coalition through the leadership team's annual suicide prevention walk, LOSS team and training programs.

### **Implementation of Strategies**

The coalition ensures it has enough members/volunteers to execute strategies. There are often many more resources available to us than we realize at the outset of a project. We try to give opportunities to our community and coalition members to dedicate themselves to events and strategies we are focusing on.

### **Community Change Outcomes**

The Auglaize County Suicide Prevention Coalition seeks to see a reduction in completed suicides, reduce stigma surrounding mental health and suicide and increase awareness by promoting suicide prevention education and postvention collaborations. Goals for the coalition include:

- **Professional Development:** Objectives: Continue to support teacher in-service training on suicide prevention. Continue to offer and facilitate suicide prevention presentations for faith-based leaders. Create and facilitate educational presentations to service clubs. Provide and support QPR and Mental Health First Aid trainings throughout Auglaize County.
- **Education/Awareness:** Objectives: Continue to provide Lifelines programming to middle/high schools. Support the Teen Gatekeepers in Auglaize county schools. Plan and host the Annual September Suicide Prevention Walks in Auglaize County. Host Responsible Servers Training for local bars/retail establishments. Support the LOSS Team efforts to aid families and friends who have lost a loved one to suicide. Continue to place purple "stop" signs with the HOPELine numbers throughout Auglaize County.
- **Funding/Resources:** Objectives: Find and identify resources to make sure activities are met.

### **Health and Social Outcomes**

The coalition provides a variety of resources that meet the changing needs of many different organizations. Current changes in suicide prevention programming in our community include increased online/virtual trainings due to COVID-19. The coalition must have increased social media visibility and increased outreach to more isolated areas and communities in the county due to stay-at-home orders and COVID-19 restrictions. The coalition helped deliver care packages to the LOSS family members when the annual dinner could not be held. The coalition must share social media page invitations and events. The coalition is committed to providing more QPR and Gatekeeper training to learn emergency response to someone in a mental health crisis.

### **Community Capacity**

Through the work of the Auglaize County Suicide Prevention Coalition, members of the community and various agency partnerships, we have been successful in developing capacity, and building social capital that can be applied to other health and social issues. We hold annual suicide awareness walks, placed purple "stop" signs throughout the county with the HOPELine numbers, and held a responsible servers training, in addition to helping support our LOSS Team and law enforcement connections. We have Gatekeeper groups in the local high schools, in addition to a Lifelines suicide prevention program. We offer Mental Health First Aid and QPR to further educate the community.

**Community Coalition Action Theory- Shorter Narrative**  
**Auglaize County Suicide Prevention Coalition**  
**Auglaize County, Ohio**

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