

NOT IN MY FAMILY BASIC INFORMATION SHEET

PROJECT BACKGROUND

- Suicide is the **SECOND leading cause of death** among children ages 15-24.
- **Teen suicide has increased 200%** since the 1960's.
- New Mexico ranks **3rd** in the nation for suicide in all age groups, and **7th** for teen suicide.

Statistics from the *Center for Disease Control*

- Half of all lifetime cases of mental disorders start by age 14
- Less than 30% of youth with diagnosable disorder receive any service, and, of those who do, less than half receive adequate treatment. For the small percentage of youth who do receive service, most actually receive it within a school setting.

“More than 3,000 children and young adults, ages 10-24, take their own lives each year in this country. That's the human loss equivalent, in children, of September 11, repeating itself every year.”

National Center for Health Statistics, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2000)

“About half of Americans will meet the criteria for (mental health disorder) sometime in their life with first onset usually in childhood or adolescence. Interventions aimed at prevention or early treatment need to focus on youth.”

Archives of General Psychiatry (June 2005)

PURPOSE AND TARGET AUDIENCE

It has been said in New Mexico that no one will attend AA meetings because they don't want their car to be seen in the parking lot. This is a phenomenon peculiar to rural society and certainly is a symptom of concern in addressing issues that are stigmatized such as alcoholism or mental health. It is the purpose of this project, “Not in My Family”, to bring the topic of mental health care into the open and to create discussion around the issue so that communities can address access and care issues more effectively as well as encouraging those who need it to seek that help.

The primary target audience for this project is community leaders and parents who need to take the lead in discussing this issue openly and with fervor. For this reason, one of the key audiences will be teenagers. Not only will they help us reach the primary target but they have a very difficult time addressing the issue for fear of peer rejection. This teen audience is crucial as well because peers are usually the first to observe and perhaps identify the problem.