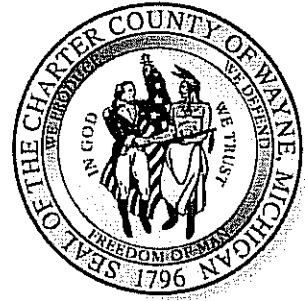




**Detroit-Wayne County
Community Mental Health Agency**

Always here... whenever you need us.



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NEWS RELEASE

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Mental Health Agency offers training for Suicide Prevention

The Detroit-Wayne County Community Mental Health Agency is offering a two-day intensive training program on suicide prevention as a part of an ongoing plan to help reduce suicides in Wayne County.

The training is called Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training or ASIST. ASIST is an interactive training curriculum that will enhance a person's ability to properly assess, engage, and offer safeguard options to a person with suicidal ideations or experiencing a crisis posing a potential for self-harm.

ASIST is geared toward "gatekeepers" a term that refers to those who have a natural or job-related opportunity that gives them a particular vantage point to observe behavior changes, such as depression. Many see the training as important: the next training session on Tuesday and Wednesday November 13th and 14th in Detroit are full.

"Gatekeepers are important and caring eyes and ears in the community. They includes teachers, counselors, coaches, clergy, hair dressers and others who interact with people on a regular basis," said Veda Sharp, deputy director for the Detroit-Wayne County Community Mental Health Agency. "Almost anyone can be a gatekeeper, and the ASIST provides skills that might allow gatekeepers to help someone at an important time." - continued-

In 2005, there were about 200 suicides in Wayne County. Close to 88 % of suicides are related to either an undiagnosed or untreated depression. Depression is treatable, and manageable through proper intervention.

The Agency offers ASIST trainings regularly to the community either through registration of a specific session or by arranging a presentation for targeted groups of 25 or more.

The Detroit-Wayne County Community Mental Health Agency serves more than 55,000 persons with mental illness, developmental disabilities, serious emotional disturbance and substance use disorders.

For suicide prevention or crisis assistance, contact the 24-Hour Help Line at 1-800-241-4949.

For more information about ASIST trainings, contact the Agency at (313) 833-3984. - end --