1. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) workshop is for caregivers who want to feel more comfortable, confident and competent in helping to prevent the immediate risk of suicide. Over a million caregivers have received this training. Just as “CPR” skills make physical first aid possible, training in suicide intervention develops the skills needed for life assisting suicide first aid. ASIST is a two-day intensive, interactive and practice-dominated course designed to help caregivers learn how to intervene to prevent the immediate risk of suicide and provide safety-for-now.

The workshop is designed for all caregivers (any person over age 15 in a position of trust). This includes professionals, paraprofessionals and lay people. It is suitable for mental health professionals, nurses, physicians, pharmacists, teachers, counselors, youth workers, police and correctional staff, school support staff, clergy, and community volunteers. In ASIST, sophisticated helping concepts are translated into generic language so that different types of caregivers can learn together. ASIST is the most widely used suicide intervention training program in the world. Additional information is available online at http://www.livingworks.net.

2. COURSE CONTENT:

The ASIST workshop is divided into five sections. Here is a summary of the content of each section.

Preparing: This short but important section introduces and sets the tone for the workshop. Participants arrive at the workshop with a number of different ideas about what might happen, based on their hopes, needs and experiences. In this section, you want to tell participants about the workshop and create an atmosphere for active participation during the rest of the two days.

Connecting: Given the stigma and taboo that surrounds suicide, many participants will have had little chance to freely and openly discuss their attitudes about suicide. The Connecting section provides this opportunity. In group discussion, participants explore, express, identify, examine and perhaps modify their attitudes about suicide and life assisting, suicide first aid. Looking at attitudes toward suicide is the first step in learning the knowledge and skills to work with persons at risk of suicide.

Understanding: The Understanding section introduces participants to the Pathway for Life Assisting (PAL) model or guide. PAL is designed to meet the needs of persons at risk by guiding caregivers to do certain life assisting tasks that address those needs. This section supports the earlier discussion of attitudes and helps prepare participants for intervention practice on Day 2. If the objectives of the Connecting section are reached, participants end the morning with a commitment to learn more about life assisting, suicide first aid. This section is a chance to follow up on that commitment. Participants will learn about the PAL and have a chance to practice some parts of PAL. This afternoon lays the foundation for Day 2 where participants will study PAL in more detail and have the opportunity to use it in a series of simulations.

Assisting: This section focuses on the process themes that emerge in life assisting intervention. These themes are fluid and flexible while supporting the structural aspects of the PAL that are the same for every intervention. In the Assisting section, participants practice working with situations in which they can...
combine their desire to help with their understanding of what is helpful. Participants have the opportunity to practice and apply their learning.

**Working Together:** This section is about community and human resources, including self care, and about working together with other helpers in their community. By the time participants reach this section, they are beginning to think about how they can be a part of their community’s resources. In this section, participants first have a chance to explore further the way their role choices might impact their helping a person at risk. Next, they have a chance to experience how all community resources might aid a person at risk. Participants are also reminded of the importance of self care as a personal resource. Lastly, the section gives time for evaluation and concluding comments.

### 3. COURSE LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

The goals and objectives are listed for each section of the workshop

#### Preparing Section

The goal of this section is to prepare participants for the rest of the workshop.

By completing this section, participants will be able to:

1. Understand that the focus of this workshop is life assisting, suicide first aid.
2. Describe the need for caregivers to be able to do life assisting interventions.
3. Describe why ASIST is a good way for caregivers to learn life assisting.
4. Describe the goals and objectives of the workshop.
5. Be aware of the group’s experiences with suicide.
6. Know what they need to do to help make the workshop successful for everyone.

#### Connecting Section

The goal of this section is to provide a chance for participants to learn how their feelings, experiences, and beliefs—their attitudes—might affect them in suicide first aid.

By completing this section, participants will be able to:

1. Recognize how feelings about and personal experiences with suicide might impact them in suicide first aid.
2. Identify beliefs that might assist them to be direct and comfortable in suicide situations.
3. Identify beliefs that might help them to be more flexible in meeting a person at risk’s need for guidance.
4. Talk more openly about their attitudes toward suicide and life assisting, suicide first aid.

#### Understanding Section

The goal of this section is to understand how PAL meets the life assisting needs of persons at risk.

By completing this section, participants will be able to:

1. Recognize PAL as a tool for meeting the life assisting needs of persons at risk.
2. Name the six needs of a person at risk and the basic caregiver tasks of PAL that address those needs.
3. Understand how to use PAL’s Safety Framework.

#### Assisting Section

The goal of this section is to help participants feel more willing, ready and able to assist a person at risk.

By completing this section, participants will be able to:

1. Appreciate PAL as a tool that helps participants combine their attitudes, knowledge and intervention skills to provide suicide first aid.
2. Understand how PAL works in practice.
3. Use PAL to help a person at risk of suicide through simulations.

#### Working Together

The goal of this section is to have participants appreciate the value of improving their community’s resources and the ways in which those resources work together.

By completing this section, participants will be able to:

1. Explore how their role choices might impact helping a person at risk.
2. Experience how community resources might benefit a person at risk
3. Recognize the value of personal support networks and other self care ideas for caregivers.

Texts and Instructional Resources
The ASIST workshop has been developed using the principles of adult-learning. Here is a list of the core training processes and activities used in ASIST.

- Presentations: lecture format is used for less than 10% of the workshop.
- Mini-presentations: Mini-presentations or mini-lectures are information pieces that take only a few minutes to present. They are used in the Understanding section, in presenting the summaries of the whole group simulations, and for the ending of the workshop in the Working together section.
- Open-ended questioning: Open-ended questions are used to start discussions. They are used in the Connecting section.
- Socratic questioning: Socratic questions are used to help the participants appreciate the value of their individual and collective understanding of suicide.
- Simulation experiences: There are a number of simulation experiences in ASIST, both in whole group and work group settings. Throughout these simulations, participants have the opportunity to intervene with trainers and participants role-playing persons at risk for suicide by practicing the PAL in various ways.
- Running simulations: A running simulation is a special type of simulation that is regularly stopped to give time for questions, comments, and discussions. The simulation in the Understanding section is this type.
- Commenting through restatements and summaries: Comments can be helpful to add to the learning process. The purpose of the restatements and summaries is to help participants integrate learning.

Required Texts, Readings, and Instructional Resources.

1. 24 page ASIST Participant Workbook
2. Helpers in Your Community handout that includes formal community resources and crisis lines
3. PAL model on quick reference cards and suicide first aid sticker
4. 2 instructional videos used
5. 95 slide PowerPoint presentation
6. Trainers attend a 40 hour Training for Trainers and use a 176 page standardized evidence-based trainer manual to provide fidelity and quality assurance

4. COURSE DESIGN:
This course will make use of lectures, demonstrations, discussion, role-plays, and media such as videotaped crisis situations involving persons-at-risk. This course will span over two days and will meet a total of eight hours each day. Students will demonstrate their knowledge acquisition by means of class participation and a short paper.

5. THEME RELATION TO MULTICULTURALISM & DIVERSITY, SOCIAL JUSTICE, HEALTH PROMOTION, PREVENTION, TREATMENT & REHABILITATION, AND SOCIAL WORK ETHICS AND VALUES:

Suicide has been a long existing social problem and public health issue. It is impacting groups of people from every ethnicity and socioeconomic status. It is important to gain effective assessment and intervention skills for identifying and assisting individuals and groups at-risk, while also promoting the healthy and stable well-being of others. This is consistent with many of the values of the Social Work profession, especially: Service, Dignity and Worth of the Person, Importance of Human Relationships, and Competence.

CANVAS WEBSITE
The course has a CANVAS website. As a student enrolled in the course, you will automatically have access to the website of SW790 Section 011 Spring/Summer 2014. All of the recommended readings are on the CANVAS site.

**PROTECT CONFIDENTIALITY**

One of the fundamental ethical values of social work is protecting client confidentiality. In this seminar, you will engage in small and large group discussions regarding personal and professional experiences with suicide. This information is to remain confidential; do not share this information with others who are not in the class.

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

If you need an accommodation for a disability, contact the instructors as soon as possible. It is possible that aspects of the course can be modified to facilitate your learning process. There are resources available to help us to meet your needs including Students with Disabilities, the Adaptive Technology Computing Site, etc. If you disclose a disability to us, then we will treat that information as private and confidential.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

In this seminar there are 2 requirements:

(a) Attendance and participation (A&P) (75 points)
(b) Individual Reflection Paper (25 points)

The policy for late assignments is as follows: Assignments that exceed the due date must be completed prior to receiving a grade for this course.

**Required - Attend and participate in each session. (Maximum 75 points).**

A sign in sheet will be passed out each class. Please do not miss either date or come late. You will not be able to leave class early. If unanticipated circumstances arise that prevent you from attending or cause you to arrive late or leave early, you must notify one of the instructors as soon as possible.

**Required – Assignment: Students will write a two page summary paper (25 points).**

Upon completion of the two day mini-course, each student will complete a two page summary paper. The paper can be about: 1) The student’s experience participating in the workshop; 2) The student’s plans to utilize this intervention into their social work practice; or 3) A reflection on the readings and material covered in course lectures, discussions, and role-plays.

**SESSION OUTLINE**

Day One (6/26/2015)
9:00 15 min. 1.1 Preparing-Registration Whole Group
9:15 15 min. 1.2 Preparing-Why First Aid? Whole Group
9:20 5 min. 1.3 Preparing-Why ASIST Training is Needed Whole Group
9:35 15 min. 1.4 Preparing-About the Participants Whole Group
9:45 10 min. 1.5 Preparing-About the Workshop Whole Group
9:55 10 min Break
10:15 20 min. 1.6 About Connecting and show video *Cause of Death?* Whole Group
10:35 50 min. 2.2 Connecting Feelings & Experiences with Suicide & Helping Workgroup
11:25 30 min. 2.3 Connecting Introductions Workgroup
11:55 60 min. 2.4 Connecting Attitudes with Suicide and Helping Workgroup
1:00 1-hour Lunch break; return to workgroups after break
2:00 10 min. 3.1 Understanding-Introduction to Understanding Workgroup
2:10 15 min. 3.2 Understanding-Explore Invitations Workgroup
2:25 15 min. 3.3 Understanding-Ask about Thoughts of Suicide Workgroup
2:40 10 min. 3.4 Understanding Choices Phase Workgroup
2:50 10 min Break
3:00 20 min. 3.5 Understanding-Hearing their Story Workgroup
3:20  20 min.  3.6 Understanding-Supporting Turning to Safety. Workgroup
3:40  10 min.  3.7 Understanding-Assisting Life Phase Workgroup
3:50  10 min  Break
4:00  30 min.  3.8 Understanding-Develop a Safe Plan Workgroup
4:30  10 min.  3.9 Understanding-Confirm Actions. Workgroup
4:40  20 min.  3.10 Understanding-Concluding Understanding Workgroup
5:00  End of the Day

Day Two (6/27/2015)
9:00  15 min.  4.1 Starting the Assisting section. Whole Group
9:15  50 min.  4.2 Assisting-PAL in Action presentation & video Whole Group
10:05  15 min  Break
10:20  10 min.  4.3 Assisting-Transition to practice Whole Group
10:30  10 min.  4.4 Assisting-Connecting simulation. Whole Group
10:40  15 min.  4.5 Assisting-Support Turning to Safety simulation. Whole Group
10:55  40 min.  4.6 Assisting-PAL simulation. Whole Group
11:35  15 min.  4.7 Assisting-Safety Framework Simulation Whole Group
11:50  15 min.  4.8 Assisting-Whole group closing; workgroup introduction. Whole Group
12:05  10 min  Move to workgroup for instruction on 4.9
12:15  1-hour  Lunch Break
1:15  75 min.  4.9 Assisting-Complete at least one practice situations.
2:30  10 min.  Break
2:40  85 min  4.9 Assisting (cont.)
4:05  5 min  5.1 Assisting-Organizing and Starting Whole Group
4:10  20 min.  5.2 Assisting-Relationships with Persons at Risk discussion. Whole Group
4:30  15 min.  5.3 Assisting-Community Relationships discussion. Whole Group
4:45  15 min.  5.4 Assisting- Closing: ASIST sticker, feedback; certificates Whole Group
5:00  End of Day

COURSE RECOMMENDED READINGS


