

PART I - PROJECT EVALUATION

Project Goals & Objectives (as stated on the project application):

This is a foundational proposal and is designed to get these people actively involved and embracing life in Sandy Bay. However, rather than being targeted for services by community agencies/services, we want to see them actively involved in designed the activities that would benefit them and then actively participating in them.

Did you meet your project goals and objectives? (Please describe why, or why not?)

We believe we did meet our goals and objectives. The word 'foundational' describes a widespread community response to suicide, and the development of a new community group dedicated to addressing it. The C.A.R.E. Team formed the day after the suicide of a 14 year old youth in July of 2013. That day, concerned community residents had gathered at the Community Resource Centre. With the initial prompting of Gabe McKay from Victim's Services in La Ronge, action was taken immediately, and a debriefing sharing circle was held that afternoon for the immediate family members and affected friends of the deceased youth. In addition, the local leaders formed the nucleus of the C.A.R.E. Team (standing for Crisis Action Response to Emergencies.

In the months following, the actual C.A.R.E Team met many times, primarily in the evenings, to clarify our role in the community response to suicide and the formally advance the development of the Team. The Team that gathered was usually never the same group twice but over time the nucleus of the Team became clear. It was primarily composed of concerned front line staff and 'first responders'. The Team defined their role as creating anti-suicide awareness throughout the community, and post-suicide intervention. These ongoing meetings helped create a focused Team, allowed for scenario training in crisis response, and instilled the need to advocate for suicide prevention support and caring responses throughout the community.

As the same time as a solid CARE Team was forming, the Embracing Life Initiative was also progressing and focused on combatting suicide in Northern Saskatchewan. The Team was made aware of this initiative, tried to actively disseminate the information coming out of it, made plans to attend the Embracing Life Conference in Prince Albert and to apply for project funding that was available from it.

The following metrics were identified on your initial project application that was submitted:

We naturally do not want to have any more suicides in the community, and want to reduce the number of attempts and even those contemplating suicide. By addressing the issue directly, actively engaging those most at risk, having them actively designing and participating in the programming, we feel that we will have met a basic objective over the long winter months ahead. We also want to build on these foundational experiences but continually adding momentum to the whole anti-suicide movement.

Please describe or provide the outcomes of your project (this may include the results from the metrics outlined above). You may attach additional documents or pages if required.

Awareness in the community certainly improved as a result of the C.A.R.E Teams Embracing Life efforts. The learning that took place for Team members was disseminated through the community with brochures about who to contact for support, and individual members used local radio programming to get as much information as possible out to the community at large.

The Embracing Life Committee (ELC) would like to highlight the accomplishment you've achieved with your project and share your success story with other communities across the north. To do this, please describe your project as a story that can be shared with other communities, including quotes and pictures from the event(s), as well as the development of positive partnerships. The story may be a personal reflection of the event(s), how the event(s) have contributed to health promotion, suicide prevention, intervention, or after-care, or may be a collection of stories, personal accounts or testimonies from your community. Your story may be used to encourage northern communities to work together and learn from each other. Please be advised that permission will need to be granted for any names used, and for those individuals appearing in any photos submitted (a sample photo-use permission slip is attached).

The highlight of the C.A.R.E. Team project was the Embracing Life Round-Dance. It was attended by well over 400 people – from across the age spectrum in the community. It brought out a lot of teenagers and young adults, who seldom participate in most community activities.

Both Elders (Howard Walker and A.J. Felix) – well respected and known for traditional lifestyles and positive living– spoke at length about the impacts of suicide on Aboriginal people and the need for all community to communicate effectively, follow tradition and practice respect.

Sharon Morin, C.A.R.E. Team member and a mother who lost a son to suicide, spoke passionately about the need to handle a family crisis in a good and positive way. She illustrated to the attentive audience how a suicide in the family affects the family, not just in the immediate aftermath of the tragedy, but for years to come.

The C.A.R.E Team was also able to contribute to local Youth Work Leo McDonald's work with the youth of Sandy Bay. He was able to take a group of high-risk youth to a Youth Leadership Conference in Saskatoon, and the money from the Team helped them to do activities in the city that they would not have been able to afford. In the money provided to him for the Lifting Your Spirits Family Activity Day, 9 families each with 4 children were able to gather for a fun and healing day.