The Central Role of Crisis Centers in Local and National Behavior Health Care Systems

John Draper, Ph.D.
Lifeline Executive Director
NASMHPD Conference
July 2018
I've seen some weird shit
The crisis information and referral network for emotional and substance abuse problems. Strictly confidential.

1-800-543-3638

LIFENET

You could save someone's life.

Save this information.
Even Superheroes Need Help Sometimes.
1-800-LIFENET, Project Liberty, NY State, 2002
The Central Role of Crisis Centers in Disaster Response

“...LifeNet had relationships with government at all levels and with service providers. A communications infrastructure (like LifeNet’s) must be something recognized by consumers, govt. and providers as a central means of accessing services, and it must be in place beforehand. LifeNet was critically important, perhaps the single most important asset in the response.”

SAMHSA report on 9/11 response, Norris et al, 2006
Lifeline Network: Local & National Public Health Safety Net
SAMHSA-funded evaluations since 2005 have shown:

- Lifeline centers significantly reduce emotional distress and suicidality in callers (a mental health service!)
- Lifeline-sponsored trainings for centers (ASIST) significantly reduce risk in callers more than centers not receiving training
- Lifeline Policies effective in reducing imminent risk through less invasive means (76% highest risk de-escalated collaboratively)
- Lifeline follow-up calls to persons at risk work; 80% say calls helped keep them safe, with half saying “it’s the reason I’m alive”
In a 2014 evaluation of 10 California crisis centers:

"Callers to Lifeline-member crisis centers were more likely to be assessed for suicidality and show reductions in distress by the end of the call."

-RAND Corporation, 2014

Lifeline Centers: Training, Outreach & Linkages

**Educating the community (>80%):**
- Suicide prevention trainings (>60%)
- Mental Health First Aid and others (>40%)
- Law Enforcement trainings (>60%)
- Signs of Suicide/SOS (16%)

**Public Health/Safety Linkages**
- Mobile outreach services (>33%)
- ED agreements/linkages (>40%)
- Direct linkages with 911 (>30%)
- Formal relations with law enforcement (50%)
A National Mental Health Crisis & Emergency System?

National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act of 2017

✔ YEA  ❌ NAY
2017 National Hotline Improvement Act

- Passed in July 2018
- Study impact of a new national 3-digit dialing code (N-1-1) for a national mental health crisis and suicide prevention hotline:
  - Recommend best 3-digit number for a crisis hotline
  - Examine efficacy of current Lifeline and VCL and recommend improvements
  - Perform a cost-benefit analysis of using a three-digit code