

Program Overview November 2009

The *PREP_aRE School Crisis Prevention and Intervention Training Curriculum* (PREP_aRE) is designed to help schools meet the needs of students, staff, and families following school associated crisis events. PREP_aRE is a comprehensive crisis prevention and intervention curriculum developed by school-based professionals who have had direct experience in preparing for and responding to school crises. A primary goal of PREP_aRE is to build crisis management capacity at the local level, part of the National Association of School Psychologists' decades-long leadership in the field of school crisis response. Crises that affect schools range from natural disasters, terrorism and pandemic disease to school violence, the death of students or staff members and economic distress. How schools respond can shape the immediate and long-term affects of a crisis on a school community. Training and preparedness are critical to effective response and recovery.

Comprehensive and Research Based

PREP_aRE is grounded in research and theory that integrates the U.S. Department of Education's four crisis phases: prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery; and makes use of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and its Incident Command Structure. Specifically, PREP_aRE combines the important aspects of crisis team and crisis plan development and community collaboration with extensive training on the mental health implications for children and youth when a crisis event occurs. It also addresses how to minimize traumatic impact through good prevention, intervention, response, and recovery efforts. While most children and youth can be expected to recover from trauma exposure, the impact of these events can vary greatly depending on individual experience and risk and protective factors. Experts agree that proper interventions are critical to promoting healthy coping. In addition, the school crisis response addresses serious consequences, such as Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, which is related to increased risk for low academic achievement, depression, aggressive or delinquent behaviors, and substance abuse. Additionally, experts note that school-based intervention may be the best way to identify and meet the needs of children and their families after a crisis, and that given proper training and resources educators and school-based mental health professionals are well-situated to provide such interventions.

Designed to Meet the Unique Needs of Schools

PREP_aRE is an evidence-based crisis response curriculum specifically designed for schools by school-based professionals. The curriculum meets the unique needs and functions of school crisis teams, including reflecting school structures and laws, laying out the specific Incident Command Structure and steps for cohesive team development, providing common training and language, and integrating school personnel and community provider roles. PREP_aRE fits within an in-service staff development model, is affordable, and enables schools to comply with legal requirements regarding crisis preparedness.

"We have found it to be an excellent approach to thinking about and planning for crisis prevention, response, and, especially, recovery. It has given us a common language and a shared set of basic principles for talking among ourselves and to other district staff. We feel confident that the strategies in the PREP_aRE model represent state-of-the-art best practices. This material has become a key component of our district's approach to Emergency Response and Crisis Management."

– Martha J. Rosen, PhD, Manager of Psychological Services,
 Minneapolis Public Schools

Enhances School Safety, Wellness Promotion, and Learning

PREP_aRE is a comprehensive model that encompasses safety and crisis management from prevention to long-term recovery within the learning environment, with emphasis on the school-based mental health response to crises. The model aligns with a multi-tier delivery system and builds on existing personnel resources. PREP_aRE's prevention and preparedness elements supports school safety, improved school climate, student behavior and academic functioning, student resilience, and staff response capabilities. PREP_aRE's response and recovery elements provides training in mental health and crisis interventions, which strengthen the school community by reducing negative trauma reactions, facilitating recovery, and minimizing disruption to learning. Research shows that school mental health programs, prevention services, and social-emotional supports improve educational outcomes by decreasing absences and discipline referrals and improving test scores.

PREPaRE Workshops

There are two core PREPaRE workshops, *WS#1-Crisis Prevention & Preparedness: The Comprehensive School Crisis Team* and *WS#2-Crisis Intervention & Recovery: The Roles of School-Based Mental Health Professionals*. These can be taken together or independently of each other. School districts can either sponsor workshops for entire teams and/or all relevant staff on site or send team members to local, state, or national level trainings. Workshop participants receive extensive handouts and planning and implementation resources. To facilitate ongoing local professional development, each workshop has an accompanying Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop. The ToTs allow local educators to become PREPaRE trainers and offer workshops to their school- and community-based professionals on an ongoing basis. For a detailed description of PREPaRE workshops, visit www.nasponline.org/prepare.

"Workshop 1 gave us the structure to provide a district-wide training. Every school has completed the crisis plan, which has provided the district office a measure to ensure that schools are addressing school safety and practicing drills. Similarly, all school mental health professionals including school psychologists, school counselors and school social workers have completed Workshop 2, which has enabled them to define the roles of mental health service providers in times of crisis. PREPaRE has provided the continuity amongst providers that we have striven to reach for years."

--Dennis Rastatter, Director of Student Outreach, Thompson School District, Loveland, Colorado

Developing Local Capacity (2006-2009)

Table 1: The following Table summarizes the number of individuals who have received PREPaRE training.

WORKSHOPS	# OF INDIVIDUALS TRAINED
WS#1-Crisis Prevention & Preparedness	2198
WS#1-Crisis Prevention & Preparedness (ToT) Training-of-Trainers	233
WS#2-Crisis Intervention & Recovery	2385
WS#2-Crisis Intervention & Recovery (ToT) Training-of-Trainers	252

Table 2: The following Table summarizes the number of school districts and state, national, and international organizations that have received PREPaRE training.

LOCAL, STATE, NATIONAL, & INTERNATIONAL DISSEMINATION	
Number of School Districts in the United States and Canada within which PREPaRE Workshops have been conducted (<i>Does not include districts that send staff to training off-site.</i>)	54
Number of States within which PREPaRE Workshops have been conducted (<i>Includes trainings conducted at the district, university and state levels</i>)	36
Number of State and National Organizations that have held PREPaRE trainings (<i>NASP is working with state and national education organizations to raise awareness of the importance of crisis training and PREPaRE. This includes the National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, American School Counseling Association, and the School Social Workers of America, and conducting PREPaRE training for the National Association of School Nurses.</i>)	21
Number of Countries within which PREPaRE Workshops have been conducted (<i>U.S., Canada, England, and Greece; the University of Athens is considering adapting the PREPaRE model for use in their country.</i>)	4

Approved and Recommended by School Personnel

Every PREPaRE workshop includes mandatory pre- and post-tests and evaluations. From a random sample of approximately 1,000 workshop evaluations, PREPaRE participants indicate a high degree of workshop satisfaction, the majority rating workshop elements a 9 or a 10, with 10 being the highest possible rating. Additionally, participants report being significantly less anxious about crisis response and more confident about being a crisis team member, as well as demonstrating increased knowledge based on pre- and post-tests. Finally, initial anecdotal feedback from school personnel who have put their training to work indicates that PREPaRE training improves the response capabilities and outcomes for students. NASP is seeking grant opportunities to conduct additional research on the PREPaRE model.

"Shortly after our PREPaRE training, our district experienced three crises that proved our training prepared us to handle the situation. We were able to offer guidance and direction to administration, the counselors who had not been PREPaRE trained, teachers, and staff. We had the needed materials for record keeping and handouts for parents and knew the procedures to follow. The affected schools were grateful for outside support from counselors who were not as emotionally connected so that we could be the scaffolding support for those adults who were in crisis themselves."

--Ginny Armstrong, LCSW, Ed S Coun., Idaho Falls School District #91, Idaho

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- ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΤΥΠΙΑ [Eleytherotypia or Free Press] (Athens, Greece), 4-13-08, Δυοαμερικανοειδικοιαναλυουντι πρεπεινακανουνοιωπειθθυνογια προληψη: Οτανξεσπάσειηκρίσηστοσχολείοείναιαργά [Two American experts analyze what should make persons in charge for prevention: After a school crisis is too late].
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