

MINDS MATTER: A MODEL FOR CURRICULUM BASED MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION AND MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS

**Turning Mental Health into a “Common
Experience”**

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Texas State University



Overview

- Part 1
 - Tips for Broad Mental Health Outreach
- Part 2
 - Curriculum Details and Results



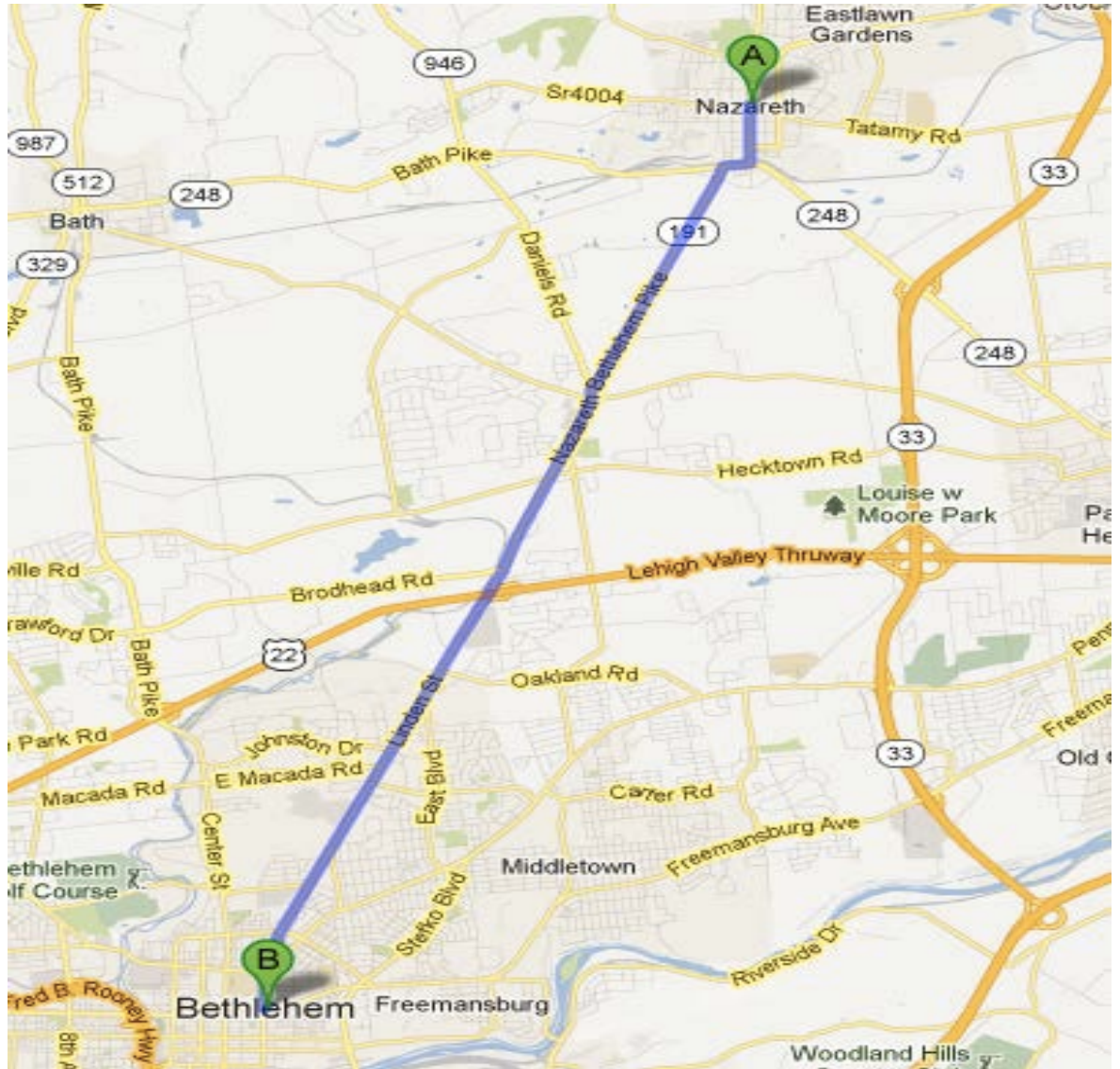
Director of National Mental Health Awareness Campaign

Co-Author Behind Happy Faces; Taking Charge of Your Mental Health

Peace Corps Volunteer in Botswana

CEO Human Power Project

PERSONAL STORY



Mental Health Approach

Normalize Mental Health-Public Health Approach

- Not solely mental illness education
- Not solely suicide prevention

Why this works

- Everyone's goal is to have positive mental health
- Students need a starting point



Dr. Patrick Corrigan and Dr. Otto Wahl Research

- But what is the stigma
- Focusing on overall mental health opens students to talking about emotions early which can prevent more severe problems.



Story Telling

Address emotions realistically and move people forward

- Good to relate to emotions and see positive examples
- It's not just about the drama

Mental Health Spectrum

Everyday Challenges

Stress
Lack of Sleep
Low Self Esteem
Poor Body Image

Environment

Verbal Abuse
Bullying
Sexual Abuse

Significant Events

Death
Divorce
Breakups

Mental Health Disorders

Depression
Anxiety
Bipolar Disorder
Schizophrenia
Eating Disorders

Developmental Disabilities

Intellectual Disabilities
Autism
Aspberger's Syndrome
ADHD

Balanced Life

Difficult to Balance

Need Help or Constant Assistance

Not Able to Balance



Awareness campaigns will always be important, but it's time to give students the tools they need to address their mental health.

- Counseling centers are overwhelmed
- 75% of students have their first episode with mental illness by age 24
- Why you never really leave high school
- Teach about coping mechanisms, brain development and how to help a friend



WE HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE MENTAL HEALTH!



PART 2

CURRICULUM DETAILS AND RESULTS

A COMMON EXPERIENCE THEME

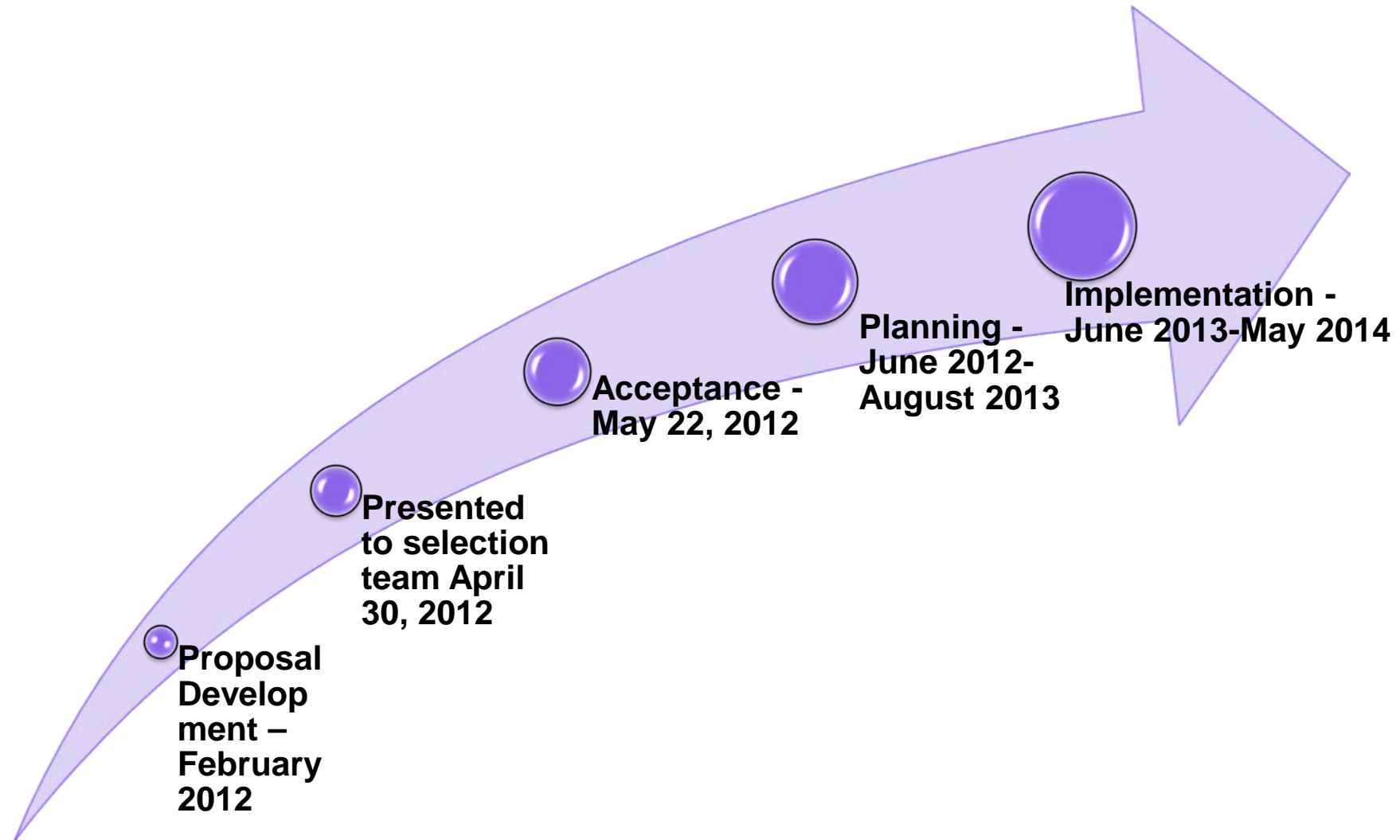
- “The Common Experience is a year-long initiative of Texas State University-San Marcos designed to cultivate a common intellectual conversation across the campus...”
- Makes it “possible to engage tens of thousands of people in shared consideration of a single topic.”
- The 2013-14 Theme was “Minds Matter: Exploring the Realities of Mental Health and Illness”

<http://www.txstate.edu/commonexperience/>

Some Intentions

- ★ increased awareness
 - coping mechanisms
 - recognition of distress
 - self
 - others
- ★ Increased access to care
 - earlier
 - crises
- ★ context for dialogue
- ★ Reduction of stigma
- ★ Shift from dichotomous thinking

Timeline



Some Existing Structure

★ **Counseling Center**

- How to DEAL
- Groups
- “**at-risk**” training
- presentation collaborations with Office of Professional Development
 - QPR
 - College Mental Health

★ **Mental Health Advisory Council**

February 2012

- university wide
- chaired by Social Work faculty

★ **Alcohol & Other Drug Advisory Committee** June 2012

- university wide
- chaired by Student Health Center, Health Promotion Services

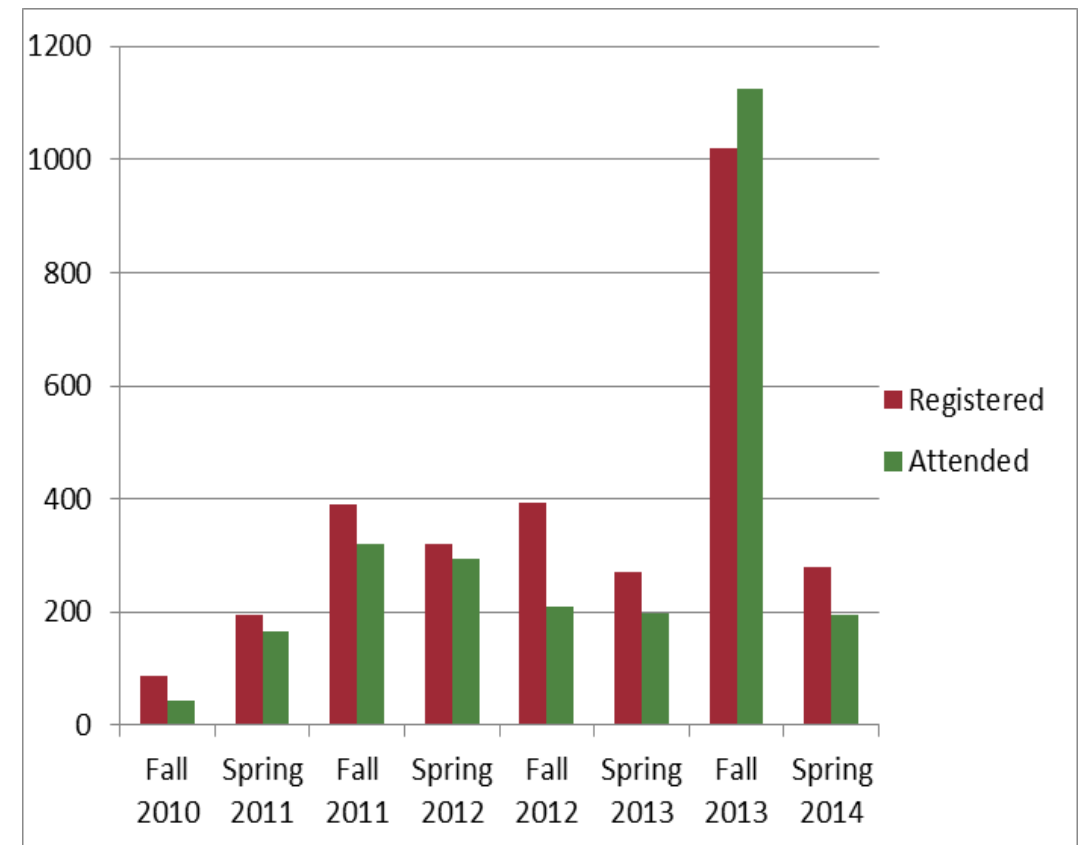
Curriculum 102 events

- ★ US 1100 Reading - Behind Happy Faces
 - Speaker – Ross Szabo (Oct 30)
 - Over 300 students
 - Instruction Guide written by K. Czar PhD (CC Post Doc)
- ★ Distinguished Speaker Series - Patrick Kennedy (Oct 08)
 - 950 people
- ★ Counseling Center
 - DeStress Fest (Oct 09) -400
- ★ Psychology
 - Melba Vasquez, PhD (Sept 26)
- ★ Business Leadership Week - Mental Health in the Workplace: It's good for business (Feb 17)
- ★ Art (Feb 11)
- ★ Music
- ★ History- Suzannah Lipscomb (Oct 03)
- ★ Philosophy (Sept 30)
- ★ School of Mass Comm & Journalism (Oct 21)

[http://events.txstate.edu/list/month/2013/09/20/to/2014/05/31/cal/FJ?subject=Common Experience Events](http://events.txstate.edu/list/month/2013/09/20/to/2014/05/31/cal/FJ?subject=Common%20Experience%20Events)
[Calendar](#)

Outcomes

- “at-risk” training
- Facebook “likes”
- YouTube views



The Good, the Bad & the Ugly...

- Evaluations, anecdotal, correlational data all tell us that this was well received and dynamic
- An unprecedented implementation
- Approval for one more psychologist position (has been requested each year for past 8 years)
- Effort and funding went into programming but not resources to support likely impact
- Counseling Center services pushed to limit
 - Initial consultations – up 8% in fall from previous semester, with 2.5 fewer staff, and up again another 7% this spring
 - Sessions
 - Request for presentations
- Increase in emergency hospitalizations



Discussion