

SOS Signs of Suicide[®] Prevention Program: Grant Toolkit



S O S P R O G R A M G R A N T L A N G U A G E

Screening for Mental Health, Inc.

The SOS Program Grant Toolkit

Before You Get Started

Thank you for your interest in the SOS Signs of Suicide[®] Prevention Programs and our training options. This toolkit will help you seek funding to pay for SOS Programs and trainings in your school or community.

To best serve your needs we outlined common grant application content. You can take pieces and adjust the language based on your school or organization needs and requests in the grant. This toolkit includes information for the following common grant content areas:

- Needs Assessment
- Program Design
- Organizational Capacity
- Logic Model
- Objectives/Deliverables
- Budget

Remember that in your grant proposals, the more specific you can be about how this program will address the needs of your youth, staff, and community the more powerful your grant request will be. Be sure to make adjustments to the logic model, deliverables, budget and any attachments, based on the number of youth you plan to reach, the number of adults you plan to train, and the needs of your community.

For a more comprehensive approach in your grant application, consider pairing SOS Programs with a training.

Please note that content in blue boxes is for you, the person seeking funding, to read, and not meant to be put into a grant application. The content in standard font can be cut, altered, and pasted directly into your grant application if necessary. The content in red is language that must be customized for your grant application (for example, where numbers are needed, etc.)

About Screening for Mental Health (SMH)

Screening for Mental Health (SMH), the pioneer of large-scale mental health screening for the public, provides innovative mental health and substance use resources, linking those in need with quality treatment options. SMH programs educate, raise awareness, and screen individuals for common mental health disorders and suicide. Organizations worldwide SMH's educational and screening programs which have reached millions of people from teenagers to older adults.

SMH developed the SOS Signs of Suicide Prevention Programs (SOS Program) as a curriculum to educate and screen middle and high school students for depression and suicidal behavior. The program uses a universal approach in which all students are exposed to important suicide prevention information. This is important because school staff cannot identify each student who is struggling with depression or suicidal thoughts. The program teaches students to identify signs and symptoms in themselves or a friend and to reach out for help from a trusted adult. The SOS Program combines two powerful suicide prevention strategies: universal education about depression and suicide and the importance of seeking help, and depression screening to identify students in need.

Evaluations/Research

The SOS Program is the only youth suicide prevention program that has demonstrated an improvement in students' knowledge and adaptive attitudes about suicide risk and depression, as well as a reduction in actual suicide attempts. Listed on SAMHSA's [National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices](#), the SOS Program has shown a reduction in self-reported suicide attempts by 40-64% in randomized control studies (Aseltine et al., 2007; Schilling et al., 2016).

Common Grant Questions

Needs Assessment

What you need to know:

Establishing need is a common start to any grant application. It is important to not only talk about the public health crisis of youth suicide from a national perspective, but also to show the need in your community. Below you will find some standard language to help establish need, including the SOS Program as part of the answer.

Resources to help you find state and local data

- Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey - The CDC conducts a survey in schools across the country every other year, assessing risky behaviors in youth. To find your state data, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/> If the schools in your area conduct the survey, you may be able to obtain specifics from the school administration.
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) - resources include published research outcomes and statistics about suicide prevention. You can also search their state database to find out what is going on in your state: <http://www.sprc.org/states>
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) - includes statistics, interactive charts and graphs, and state-specific infographics for the public. <https://afsp.org/about-suicide/suicide-statistics/>
- State and local suicide prevention coalitions/task forces, advocacy groups and nonprofit organizations - Search for the key players at the state and local level to see if they can provide local data. They may also be interested in partnering in your efforts.

You may discover that your state requires some sort of suicide prevention training, which will strengthen your chances of receiving funding for training.

Sample Language with Local Focus

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for adolescents aged 11-18 (CDC, 2015). It is estimated that 90% of youth and young adults who die by suicide have a diagnosable mental disorder (NIMH, 2009), most often depression and/or substance use disorders, which are treatable. **[INSERT LOCAL STAT]**.

[DOES THE STATE REQUIRE TRAINING? IS THERE LEGISLATION OR OTHER STATS THAT SUPPORT THE NEED FOR MORE TRAINERS?]

The SOS Signs of Suicide Prevention Program's training prepares adults to provide suicide prevention education for the youth in their communities and to train other adults as trainers. The SOS Certified Training Institute (CTI), is a train-the-trainer model that prepares and certifies local professionals to provide the youth suicide prevention training for school staff, parents and community members. These participants can train others to implement the SOS Program with students, and to be trusted adult gatekeepers ready to respond to youth at-risk.

Program Design

What you need to know:

This section helps funders understand the design of the program for which you are seeking funding. Be sure to share concrete descriptions of the SOS Program and/or the trainings. Please find our standard language below.

While the statistics on youth suicide are troubling, there is an evidence-based path to intervention: encouraging youth to reach out to a trusted adult when concerned about themselves or a friend.

Research supports what we already know; teens are more likely to talk to each other about their struggles with depression and suicide than with adults (Kalafat & Elias, 1994). The SOS Signs of Suicide Prevention Program (SOS Program) uses a peer-to-peer model that encourages students to ACT (Acknowledge, Care, and Tell a trusted adult) when concerned about a friend.

Sample Descriptive Language for The SOS Program

The SOS Signs of Suicide Prevention Program is an evidence-based, universal prevention program for middle and high school students. Using the help-seeking acronym ACT (Acknowledge, Care, and Tell), SOS teaches youth to recognize signs of depression or suicide in themselves or in a friend and how to respond effectively. The program is designed to be universally administered to all middle and high school youth through a peer-to-peer help-seeking model. The program also engages school faculty/staff, parents, and community members as partners in youth suicide prevention and educates them as natural gatekeepers in ensuring youth safety. The SOS Program is the only youth suicide prevention program that has demonstrated an improvement in students' knowledge and adaptive attitudes about suicide risk and depression, as well as a reduction in actual suicide attempts. Listed on SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices, the SOS Program has shown a reduction in self-reported suicide attempts by 40%-64% in randomized control studies (Aseltine et al., 2007; Schilling et al., 2016).

Schools using the SOS Program receive they everything need to implement the classroom based program (implementation guide, DVD, discussion guide, screening forms), all planning and preparation materials (training DVD, online training module, implementation guide), along with supplemental materials (newsletters, wallet cards, info packets for coaches, posters, etc.).

The goals of the SOS Program are to:

- Reduce suicide and attempts by increasing knowledge and adaptive attitudes
- Encourage individual help-seeking and help-seeking on behalf of a friend
- Reduce stigma: mental illness, like physical illness, requires treatment
- Engage parents and school staff as partners in prevention
- Encourage schools to develop community-based partnerships

Program TIP: While the program does not require any training to be implemented, some communities wish to deepen their understanding of youth mental health and suicide prevention through training. Training also supports schools and communities in their efforts to gain schoolwide and community buy-in and to implement the program with fidelity.

Sample Descriptive Language for SOS Program Implementation Training

The SOS Program Implementer Training will fully prepare school staff to plan and implement the SOS Program with students, building confidence in their ability to talk to youth about depression and suicide. Participants also learn how to educate all trusted adults including faculty, staff, and parents about the signs of depression and suicide, and what to do if they are concerned about a student.

Goals of the SOS Implementer Training are to:

- Ensure program fidelity by sharing best practices in program delivery, discussing lesson learned, and making recommendations
- Support customization of program to fit community needs and available resources
- Build sustainability by helping gain buy-in from all relevant staff
- Engage all parts of the community in suicide prevention efforts by providing education to students, parents, and school staff
- Bridge communication between schools, parents, students and community providers

Sample Descriptive Language for SOS Certified Training Institute

The SOS Certified Training Institute (CTI) will provide a more comprehensive approach to youth suicide prevention for our community [and will help us meet upcoming legislative requirements- if applicable]. Each CTI educates an average of 30 youth suicide prevention champions who are certified to deliver a variety of comprehensive youth suicide prevention trainings tailored to specific communities. The two-day institute prepares certified trainers to disseminate important information about SOS Program implementation to schools and youth serving organizations, to provide trusted adult training in their community, and to advocate for suicide prevention programming for all youth.

Certified Trainers also provide ongoing support to those implementing the program. Trainers become the point of contact for questions regarding SOS Program implementation and ongoing trainings. They are often involved in the process of recruiting new program users and advocating for suicide prevention in their communities. By empowering champions outside of the schools, trainers can work across multiple schools and community settings- reaching more staff, parents, and ultimately youth.

The SOS Program Certified Training Institute Goals:

- Local Consultation and Support: While Screening for Mental Health staff provide ongoing consultation for all schools and communities implementing the SOS Program, local certified trainers provide “feet-on-the-street” support to program implementers.

- Growing Impact: By empowering suicide prevention advocates with a localized strategy, we are able to increase the number of youth exposed to evidence-based youth suicide prevention programming. Trainers will work with schools to adopt appropriate policies, procedures, and evidence-based programming to prevent youth suicide in their communities.
- Sustainability: Training key community members to redeliver the SOS message is critical to sustaining the good work accomplished by piloting universal suicide prevention programming in any school or community.
- Culturally Competent Program Delivery: Certified trainers are the experts on their community. All trainers are encouraged to consider the cultural, religious, ethnic, socioeconomic and historical context of their own community, and tailor their training accordingly. SOS Program implementation material and CTI trainings include extensive information about how different groups process mental health and suicide information.

Two-Day SOS Certified Training includes:

- Recruitment of key local advocates and community leaders
- Customization of training to meet needs of **[LOCATION]** (cultural considerations, postvention education, local resources)
- Nuts and bolts of program implementation
- Provision of Certified SOS Trainer's Handbook to all participants
- Access to online portal containing customizable materials for Certified SOS Trainers to provide training in their communities (videos, PowerPoint slides, handouts, etc.)
- Support for Trainers through regular webinars, monthly emails with recent research/best practices, and one-on-one calls to ensure dissemination of ongoing training to community members
- Ongoing training evaluation, data collection, and reporting

Program TIP: If you plan to use the trainings in your grant application, be specific about who you would invite to these trainings and what the structure of program roll out would be.

Organizational Capacity

What you need to know:

In this section, it is important to be very specific about how your school/organization has the capacity to take on a universal suicide prevention program. Be specific about what existing staff can be involved, what outside agencies you can get involved, etc. Grantors want to see whether or not you have the capacity to implement the program and fulfill the grant's goals.

Express your school or organization's dedication to youth suicide prevention by providing a short history of the efforts you have put in to get youth suicide prevention programming into the school/organization. Follow this by listing the qualifications of staff who will be involved and providing information about potential partner organizations. If you plan to include any SOS Training components you can highlight how this will further improve your organizational capacity.

Show the grantor that you have already started thinking through the logistics by discussing what classes/programs suicide prevention programming will complement and enhance, whether it is health class or staff professional development days.

Logic Model

What you need to know:

Many grant applications require a logic model, and often a template is provided. Here is an example of a logic model used for SOS Program and the SOS Implementer Training. Use this as a guide for thinking through the logic of your planned program.

Definitions

Inputs- the resources used in the program

Activities- the activities the program undertakes

Outputs- what is produced through the activities

Outcomes- the changes or benefits as a result of the program

Measurement- what you will use to measure the impact/outcome

Sample SOS Program and Training Logic Model

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	MEASUREMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff coordinating training - Trainer(s) - Training Participants - Foundation funding - Training space, materials, food - SOS Programs - Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utilize existing partnerships and build additional partners to gather additional resources for training and SOS Program implementation - Plan, schedule and implement SOS Implementer Training with xxx staff and xxx community partners - Implement the SOS Program with all xxx graders, ensuring fidelity to its evidence-base. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - xxx staff trained in SOS - Staff implement SOS with xxx students, who receive education and screening program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -100% of students screened for risk of depression - 9-15% of students identified for needed follow-up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sign in sheet from SOS Implementer Training - Data from student screening forms (without identifying information)

Sample Deliverables/Outcomes Language

What you need to know:

This section gives you the opportunity to put in your own words, how the grant will affect change in your community. The content of this section will depend on what it is you're requesting. Remember to be specific and to tie outcomes to the planned activities, timeline, and your logic model. Below is sample language that reflects the logic model proposed above.

Sample Language for Deliverables/Outcomes Section

Over the next year **[I/WE/WHOMEVER]** will provide evidence-based, universal suicide prevention programs and training to local school staff in **[LOCATION]** to support youth suicide prevention programming in **[DISTRICT/SCHOOL/COMMUNITY]** schools. The training will prepare our school to follow the fidelity of the SOS Program, and to engage all community members in our suicide prevention efforts (parents, school staff, students, etc.). We will host a full day training for **XX** school staff in the region.

Short term outputs (3 months-1 year)

- Training of **XX** SOS Program implementers in the **[LOCATION]** region
- SOS Program distribution to **XX** schools, reaching **XXX** students
- Increase parent and other trusted adult engagement through staff and parent trainings
- Increase in youth receiving evidence-based programming
- Increase in youth being screened for risk of depression

Outcomes (1 year)

- Increase in youth help-seeking and help-seeking on behalf of a friend
- Increase in students referred for mental health services

Budget

What you need to know:

SMH is will provide a quote for program materials and training fees as you are developing a project budget. Please visit <http://shop.mentalhealthscreening.org/collections/youth-programs> for SOS Program material pricing information. Please contact youth@mentalhealthscreening.org for a customized training quote and further information on pricing prior to submitting your proposal.

Attachments

(other items to include in typical grant application)

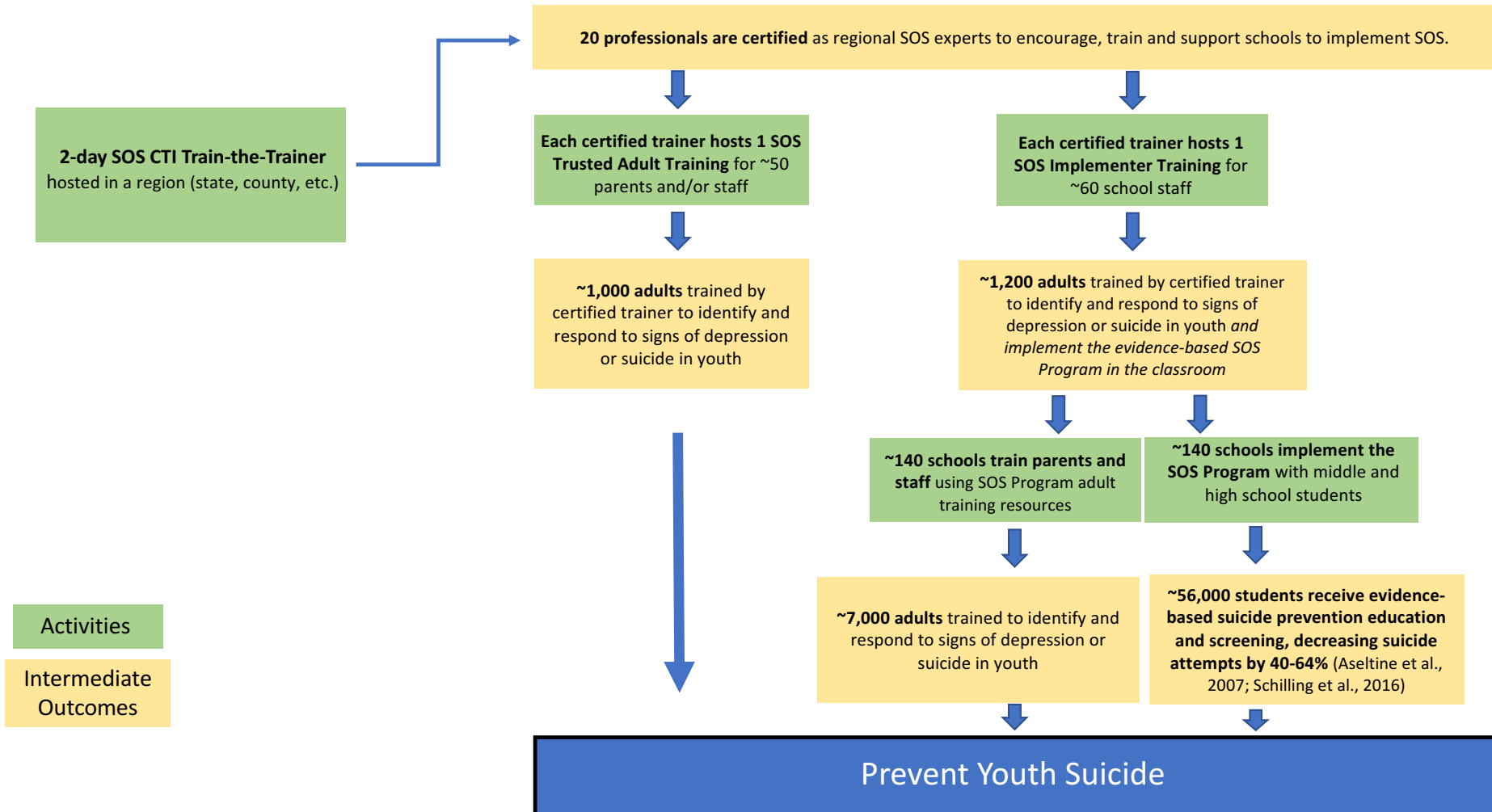
- **Letters of Commitment** from key supporters of your efforts
- **Bios/Resumes/CVs** from key staff involved

Theory of Change

What you need to know:

Some foundations request a theory of change to show the model and potential impact of a project. If you are applying for the SOS Certified Training Institute you can use the theory of change on the next page.

Theory of Change for the SOS Certified Training Institute



NOTE: Numbers are based on one CTI taking place, over a two year period. Theoretically, impact would continue to grow over time as trainers continue to train.