Lessons from the Field: Ethical Considerations When Engaging Young People in Youth Participatory Action Research

Jack Baker, Miami University
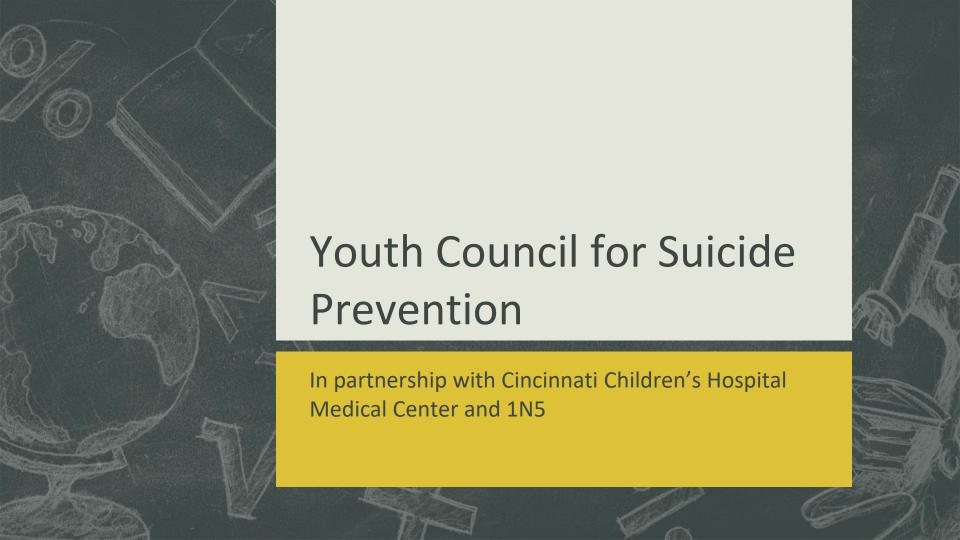Kristen Haddad, University of Cincinnati

Background

- Participatory Research
- Community-based Participatory Research (CBPR)
- YPAR
- Today's Presentation: YPAR in Two Settings
  - Public Health
  - Social Justice

Youth Council for Suicide Prevention

In partnership with Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and 1N5

Youth Council for Suicide Prevention

- YCSP Video
- In the United States, suicide is the **2nd leading cause of death** among adolescents.
- Although many suicide prevention programs have been developed, there is mixed evidence about their effectiveness and **a need for young people to be involved in the development of prevention efforts alongside researchers, clinicians, and policymakers.**

Youth Council for Suicide Prevention

- Initiated in 2013 by CCHMC
- ~125 young people have served on the council
  - Advised researchers on suicide screening in ED
  - Presented work at a regional high school leadership conference for 5 years in a row
  - Research projects, including surveys, interviews, and workshops with youth, parents, school personnel
  - Outreach: held fundraiser gala to raise awareness, promote YCSP at events such as Warrior Run, collaborating with organizations to hold joint workshops/events

YCSP Ethical Considerations

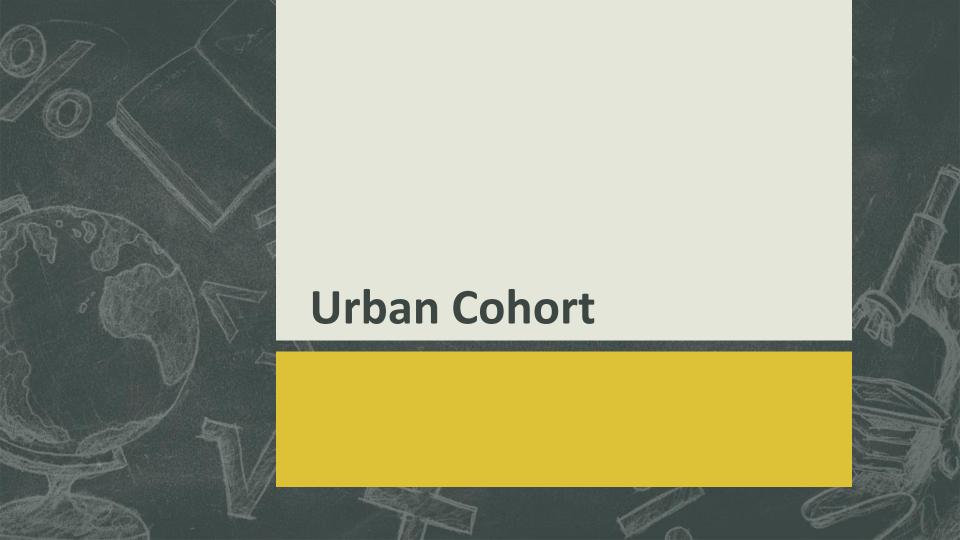Mental health concerns of students in suicide prevention

- Case example #1
- Disclaimers about sensitive topics
- Permission to "take space"
- Making time for student self-care
- Annual emergency contact information forms
- Checking in with MIA students

Sharing ownership of our work

- Case example #2
- Ground rules
- Group norms and values

Urban Cohort

Urban Cohort

- Action-oriented program that exposes college students to urban perspectives through high-need schools and organizations
- Originally conceptualized as a teacher-preparation program
- 3 year program
  - Classes about social justice/equality
  - Co-taught by community members
  - Engagement in YPAR

Ethical Considerations for YPAR Evaluation

- What Outcomes to Prioritize?
  - Critical Consciousness
  - Agency
- Positionality Should Be Considered
  - "Outsiders" putting vulnerable youth under a microscope
  - Race and gender playing a role
  - Data being used for the scholarly advancement of others
- Language Should be "Youth-first"
  - The Effects of YPAR on Youth
  - Youth Engagement in YPAR
- Use of quantitative methods

Pair and Share Activity

- How might you use YPAR in your practice/research?

- What ethical considerations may come into play when doing so?