



Project Rebound to end oil-spill counseling Dec. 31

By [AL.com and Press-Register staff](#)

on October 21, 2013 at 3:59 PM, updated October 21, 2013 at 4:07 PM

Project Rebound, a non-profit organization assisting Gulf Coast residents with oil spill crisis counseling and related issues, is currently phasing down its project and will come to a close on Dec. 31.

Project Rebound, which was funded by a BP award to the Alabama Department of Mental Health, has served more than 112,000 individual and group participants along the Alabama Gulf Coast since August 2010. This includes over 26,000 participants that were children under 18 years of age and more than 23,000 participants ages 65 and older.

"I'm so very proud of our counselors and the way they touched lives here on the Gulf Coast. It's been a long emotional journey," said Paige Rucker, Project Rebound State Director.

Project Rebound counselors consist of local residents trained in crisis counseling and suicide prevention who go to schools, churches, community programs and door-to-door providing crisis counseling and disaster preparedness training.

"In the beginning, some of our biggest challenges were going out in the community day-to-day listening to some of the most heartbreaking stories from all walks of life," Rucker said. "The immediate impact on families was overwhelming. Our ability to mobilize, reach out to the communities and the schools made a tremendous impact in the healing process. Our counselors were the shoulder to cry on, the person to vent to and the resource to turn to when they needed it most."

Project Rebound counselors, who are located in both Baldwin and south Mobile counties, are managed by AltaPointe Health Systems and Baldwin County Mental Health Center. During the next few months, counselors will be working with area non-profit and faith based organizations to help transition resources and services. The program's toll-free number will remain available until March 2014.

"For all of us who were a part of this project it was both rewarding and therapeutic. We will all be forever changed by our involvement in the oil spill," Rucker said.

The Alabama Department of Mental Health initiated Project Rebound to provide relief and assistance in the aftermath of a disaster in partnership with community organizations. Project Rebound first began after Hurricane Ivan, returned after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and also returned after a tornado devastated the Enterprise community. It was reactivated in 2010,

following the oil spill and served over 104,000 people after the 2011 tornado outbreak in North Alabama.

Project Rebound serves people directly or indirectly impacted by a disaster by dispatching teams of trained crisis counselors into affected communities and by operating a 24/7 call center with trained crisis counselors on the line. The range of services includes individual services, classroom presentations, public education and/or community support opportunities. Services are free, community-based and confidential.

For more information go to www.ProjectRebound.org or call 1-800-639-REBOUND (7326).