

# NH Suicide Prevention Newsletter

A joint publication of NH Suicide Prevention Council, NH Youth Suicide Prevention Assembly (YSPA), and NAMI NH's Connect Project

Winter 2011

## Building Partnerships through Suicide Prevention

### The City of Manchester Welcomes Cultural Effectiveness in Suicide Prevention

This summer the *Connect* Suicide Prevention Program, in partnership with the NH Minority Health Coalition, provided a training entitled, *Cultural Effectiveness in Understanding Mental Illness and Suicide Risk for Diverse Populations* for participants working with minorities. More than 30 participants representing social workers, refugee resettlement staff and educators were present to understand specific risk factors and enhance protective factors in diverse populations.

Currently there is a Suicide Prevention Implementation Planning Committee spearheaded by Mary Forsythe-Taber, Making it Happen Coalition; Marty Boldin, City of Manchester Office of Youth Services; and Ann Duckless, NAMI NH, to unfold trainings and community outreach in suicide prevention. Those who would like to participate are encouraged to contact Ann Duckless via e-mail at [aduckless@naminh.org](mailto:aduckless@naminh.org).

### NH Council of Churches Builds Postvention Capacity

In partnership with NAMI NH's *Connect* program, a suicide postvention training

was held for clergy and faith leaders in September at Wesley United Methodist Church in Concord. Father Bob from the Airman and Family Readiness Program at Pease Air Force Base and Becky McEnany, NAMI NH, trained over thirty members of the NH Council of Churches on how to respond to suicide deaths in NH and prepare communities and families for response and healing. More information on the NH Council of Churches may be obtained by contacting David Lamarre-Vincent at [david@nhchurches.org](mailto:david@nhchurches.org).

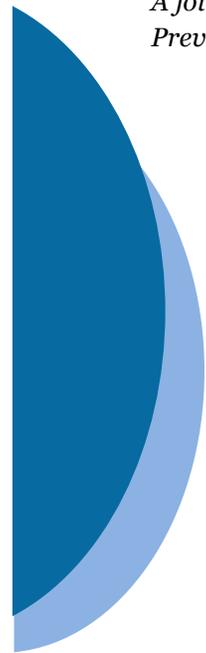
### NHH Hosts AMSR Training for Staff and Extended Network

In September, New Hampshire Hospital hosted an *Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk* (ASMR) for their mental health staff and extended network of mental health professionals. An American Association of Suicidology Trainer, Toni Paul, trained over thirty-five

participants. Designed as a best practice, the workshop focuses on competencies in clinical evaluation, formulation of risk, treatment planning and management of individuals at risk for suicide to protect their lives and promote their well-being. For specific information on AMSR trainings in NH, contact Bernice Lopez via email at [blopez@naminh.org](mailto:blopez@naminh.org).

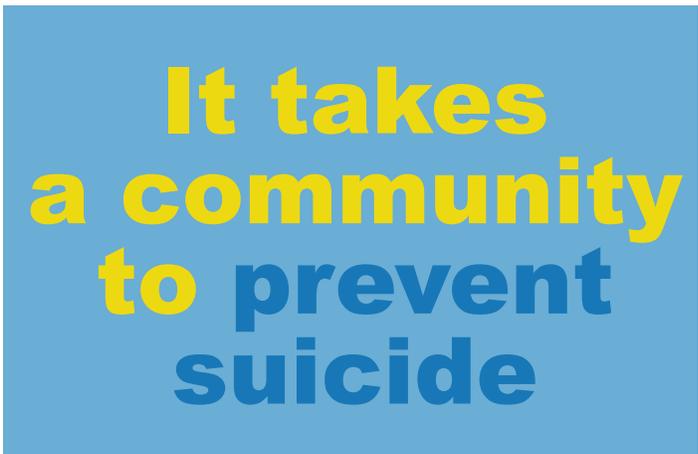
### NH Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) Presents CALM

New Hampshire Emergency Nurses Association presented *Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM)* at their summer membership meeting. Elaine Frank educated emergency room nurses on the importance of efficacy on discussing lethal means restriction when someone is at risk for suicide. Contact Elaine Frank for CALM information via email [elaine.m.frank@dartmouth.edu](mailto:elaine.m.frank@dartmouth.edu).



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## NH Trainings to Strengthen Suicide Prevention Efforts

### Serenity Place Sponsors Suicide Prevention, Intervention Training

Serenity Place trains staff on suicide prevention and intervention in substance abuse protocols. The curriculum is focused on building the agency's response plans for suicide incidents and decision trees for emergency response. Serenity Place, located in Manchester, offers four distinct areas of support for those suffering with addiction: crisis services, detoxification, the REAP program, resources for evaluating alcohol problems, a state approved education curriculum for the Impaired Driver Intervention Program, Phase II and Multiple Offender Programs; Intensive Outpatient Program for treatment of substance use disorders; and the transitional living program for men at Tirrell House.

### Raymond Community Receives 3-Day Booster Trainings in Suicide Prevention

Building on initial suicide prevention trainings in 2008, Celeste Clark and the Raymond Coalition for Youth (RCFY) have partnered to provide booster trainings for community leaders representing schools and agencies in discipline-specific and gatekeeper suicide prevention. RCFY is committed to keeping *Connect* suicide prevention protocols as a viable resource for addressing suicide prevention as part of their mission. For more information on RCFY, contact Celeste Clark at [cclark@rcyf.org](mailto:cclark@rcyf.org).

### North Country Bus Drivers Trained in Suicide Prevention

This summer, sixty-five bus drivers from W.W. Berry Bus Company completed the *Connect*

Suicide Prevention and Intervention training as part of their required yearly training prior to the school year. W.W. Berry Bus Company provides transportation services to most North Country schools, as well as other districts. Bus drivers see their students twice a day and have known many



of them for years—placing them in a key position to notice changes in behavior, risk factors and warning signs and to connect youth to help. As one participant said, *“It opened my eyes about suicide. It showed me what to look for and how to help youth at risk.”* The company's owner, Mr. Berry, attended the training, emphasizing the importance of the topic and giving hands-on guidance to the drivers of what procedures to follow should they notice a student at risk. Kelly Renaud from White Mountain Regional High School also spoke about the school's procedures and how these combined efforts would help create a safety net for students in school and after school.

### Campbell High School Provides Information and Training to Parents and Key Student Leaders in Suicide Prevention

School administration builds capacity by providing parents and students with the *Connect* Youth Train-the-Trainer in suicide prevention protocol. Twenty-one youth leaders were trained on risk factors and how to enhance a safe

school environment for all. Research has consistently shown that cross-age training is an effective method to educate youth. Having youth trainers validates the importance of the topic among their peers, increases participation and promotes cultural acceptance around help-seeking. For more information on how to get your school involved in suicide prevention trainings, contact Ann Duckless via e-mail at [aduckless@naminh.org](mailto:aduckless@naminh.org).

### Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Promotes Suicide Prevention Training

The increase in suicide deaths is one of the most distressing issues facing military leaders today. Working with the Military is a priority area within the Garrett Lee Smith Workplan to reduce the rates among service members by providing information, training and building skills on how to respond to suicides. In January, Ken Norton presented on suicide prevention awareness and postvention efforts to the Shipyard's fleet and family support personnel. The suicide postvention training focused on how to respond to suicide deaths and promote community healing.

### SurvivorVoices Adds Eight New Survivors of Suicide Loss to Share Their Stories and Educate the Public

A two-day training held in Concord last fall brought eight new individuals to share their stories and provide support to communities that have experienced a loss to suicide. The next SurvivorVoices: sharing the story of suicide loss training will be held April 28-29, 2012. For more information, please contact Becky at [bmccenany@naminh.org](mailto:bmccenany@naminh.org).

## Communities Coming Together in Suicide Prevention

### 8th Annual Suicide Prevention Conference promoted “Healing, Hope and Health”

On November 4th over 220 individuals gathered to learn and participate in NH suicide prevention efforts statewide. The State Suicide Prevention Council, NAMI NH, and the Youth Suicide Prevention Assembly (YSPA) partnered to present the Annual



Dr. Thomas Joiner and Elaine de Mello

Suicide Prevention Conference which provided a variety of workshops addressing co-occurring disorders, the roles and responsibilities of crisis help-lines and perspectives from a suicide survivor as well as many others. National speakers such as Dr. Thomas Joiner and Robert Bryant presented their expertise and experience in the mental health field and addressing suicide.

The 2012 conference planning is underway. See Page 6 for date and location! For more information contact Bernice Lopez at [blopez@naminh.org](mailto:blopez@naminh.org).

### State Suicide Prevention Reports New Successful Programming

The State Suicide Prevention Council (SPRC) held its annual press event themed *Positive Responses to Negative News: Turning Challenges into Opportunities* in honor of World Suicide

Prevention Week in September. This gave an opportunity for the state to learn about work such as engaging gun shop owners in suicide prevention as well as the role that emergency response clinicians play in community mental health centers. They also learned about innovative partnerships through coalitions and local businesses. Speakers included: Dr. Thomas Andrew, NH Chief Medical Examiner, with an overview of data and goals of the Suicide Fatality Review Committee; Dr. Peter Whelley, Moultonborough Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Coalition on challenges and successes of sustaining grassroots movement; Elaine Frank and Tom Brown with the NH Firearm Safety Coalition on origins and project implementation; Susan Morrison a survivor of suicide loss presented on perspective of her loss and local survivor supports throughout the state; and Elizabeth Fenner-Lukaitis, DHHS Behavioral Health, presented on the role of the local community mental health center and its emergency response clinician. For more information on the State Suicide Prevention Council and opportunities to get involved, contact Jo Moncher via e-mail at [jamoncher@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:jamoncher@dhhs.state.nh.us).

### International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day

Over 90 survivors of suicide loss across the state gathered together on November 19th in solidarity for International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day. Sponsored by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), the survivors of Suicide Loss Day takes place annually on the 3rd Saturday of November. These gatherings bring local people together to connect with others who have lost a friend, family

member or co-worker to suicide along with those who understand the powerful and troubling emotions they experience. Interested in organizing a site for 2012? Contact Becky McEnany at [bmcenany@naminh.org](mailto:bmcenany@naminh.org).

### Firearm Safety Coalition

The NH Firearm Safety Coalition brings together individuals and organizations with a broad range of views on gun ownership who share a concern with safety and preventing suicide. The group includes: gun shops and firing ranges; legislators; injury prevention and mental health advocates; researchers; and committed volunteers. Firearms are the method used in over half of the suicides in NH and research shows that putting time and distance between a suicidal individual and access to a lethal method can save a life.

In 2009, the Coalition took on the Gun Shop Project—a collaborative effort to engage gun shop and firing range owners, their employees and their customers on preventing suicide—the number one type of firearm death in the US. Since then, a variety of brochures, tip sheets and posters have been developed and distributed to help alert to the risk of suicide by firearm. An article in *Combat Handgun Magazine*, a national publication, describes the benefits of this effort: <http://www.tactical-life.com/online/combat-handguns/avoiding-disasters/>.

The Coalition continues to distribute materials and evaluate their utility with this audience. More information and materials developed by the Firearm Safety Coalition can be found at: <http://www.theconnectproject.org/nh-firearms-safety-coalition>.

## Suicide Prevention Award Winner

### Recently Honored— Wayne DiGeronimo, Assistant Deputy Medical Examiner (ADME)

The Elaine Frank Award Committee recently honored Wayne DiGeronimo, Assistant Deputy Medical Examiner, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner at the 8th Annual Suicide Prevention Conference. Wayne has played a pivotal role in suicide prevention across the state and nationally. Wayne's observations and "connecting the dots" have an extremely high potential to reduce suicide; thereby highlighting one of the criteria— *"This is someone who consistently does the 'right thing' regardless of personal, professional, or financial gain."* Wayne has especially contributed to the reduction of suicide in two noteworthy ways. One is as the "originator" of what has become known as the "Gun Shop Project". Wayne was the ADME who responded to two of the three suicides that spurred the creation of this project. Wayne noted an unusual pattern, recognized the connection to suicide prevention and shared his observations and

concerns with someone who had the ability to further address his *"key element to achieving suicide prevention"*. His comments, made in April 2009, have led to national presentations of the "Gun Shop Project" and were written in *Combat Handgun* magazine in December.

Mr. DiGeronimo, on a national level, presented at the American Academy of Forensics on an investigation of a suicide he responded to at the state prison and county jail in which a specific mechanism was used. He shared this with Dr. Thomas Andrew, who then encouraged him to do some further research. Wayne went back over ten years and discovered almost half of the suicides involved the same mechanism on a new type of cot. This mechanism was used in over half the suicides following the statewide purchase, yet only a few had occurred prior to this time. Wayne shared this feedback with representatives at the state and local levels in the field of corrections. Modifications have since been made to reduce the risk of suicide by this method in most settings; in those facilities

that have not made modifications, administrators have been alerted to this danger.

Wayne's efforts in suicide prevention have spread in other areas as well. A few times a year, Wayne will contact a family member of someone who has died by suicide. Wayne recognizes family members of someone who dies by suicide are at a higher risk of suicide themselves. This may be someone who is not the "official" next of kin that will receive a survivor packet in the mail or someone who may need the information sooner, or it may be someone who has questions and/or needs above and beyond what is traditionally offered in the packets.

Wayne presents to provider groups as well as community mental health centers on different issues that help categorize a death by suicide, and many other factors. He highlights information that helps the OCME in the investigation and common factors that he has seen in suicides he has responded to.

## Congratulations— Nominees of the Elaine Frank Youth Suicide Prevention Assembly Award

Congratulations to the Elaine Frank Youth Suicide Prevention Assembly Award Nominees for their contributions in suicide prevention:

**Marsha Chapple**, Survivor Speaker, Survivor of Suicide Group Facilitator, Suicide Prevention Council member.

**Toni Paul**, Certified Psychiatric and Mental Health Nurse, member of American Association

of Suicidology (AAS), Youth Suicide Prevention Assembly (YSPA) member.

**Rhonda Siegel**, Program Manager for Maternal and Child Health, Chair of Communications Sub-Committee of the Suicide Prevention Council (SPC), Child Fatality Review Committee member.

**Wayne DiGeronimo**, Assistant Deputy Medical Examiner, Office of Chief Medical Examiner.



## Recognizing Community Champions

### Suicide Prevention Council Member, Catrina Watson, Commission on PTSD & TBI



Ms. Catrina Watson is the co-chair of the Suicide Fatality Review Committee and the Communication & Education Committee within the State's Suicide Prevention Council (SPC). She has been added to the legislative commission on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD and traumatic brain injury (TBI) to study the effects of those suffered in the line of duty by members of the armed forces and veterans. She will serve on both councils and ensure the subcommittees of the State Suicide Prevention Council collaborate and communicate in the service to our military.

### Seacoast Suicide Prevention Coalition Welcomes New Coordinator

Jayde Cherico is the new Coordinator of the Seacoast Suicide Prevention Coalition (SSPC). Learning about the Coalition's work through news-paper articles, fueled with her Passion for working with youth through past experiences at Timberlane Regional High School, led to her involvement with the SSPC. Jaydee started as a UNH intern and over the past two years has been part of the Coalition's work with the Seacoast community.



Her goals for the SSPC are to continue to build the coalition and reach more community members to get involved. Plans are underway to start a bereavement group in the spring. She hopes to continue to strengthen partnerships with schools to provide more training in the area. Contact Jayde Cherico at [jaydedecherico@gmail.com](mailto:jaydedecherico@gmail.com) to get involved with suicide prevention efforts in the Seacoast area.

## National Resources

### Study Shows: Suicidal Teens Rarely Receive Treatment

A new study reports, few suicidal teens receive the treatment and care they need. The researchers found only 13% of the teenagers with suicidal thoughts visited a mental health professional through their health care network; and only 16% received treatment during the year, even though they were eligible for mental health visits without a referral and with relatively low copayments. In the study, reported in the journal *Academic Pediatrics*, researchers analyzed the use of health care services among 198 teens ranging in age from 13 to 18 years. Half of the

teenagers had suicidal thoughts; the other half did not. The researchers found mental health services were underused among all the teens studied. Although 86% of the teens with suicidal thoughts had seen a health care provider, only 13% had seen a mental health specialist. Just 7% received antidepressants, the study found. Follow the link to access publications [http://www.ambpeds.org/publications/pubs\\_journal.cfm](http://www.ambpeds.org/publications/pubs_journal.cfm).

### National Action Alliance Releases Draft of Task Force

In September, the National Action Alliance on Suicide Prevention released a draft of the Task

Force Report which outlines recommendations to motivate, support and sustain systemic improvements. The report states: "The Task Force focused its deliberations and recommendation on care in four environments:

1. Emergency Departments and Medical-Surgical Units;
2. Primary Care and General Medical Settings;
3. Behavioral Health Entities;
4. Crisis Services.

To download the report: <http://actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org/wp-content/themes/twentyten/images/pdfs/taskforces/ClinicalCareInterventionReport.pdf>

## Announcements and Upcoming Events

**2010 State Suicide Prevention Annual Report** contains information on NH data across the lifespan. The report offers a comprehensive look at suicide deaths in NH and also provides updates on all the different suicide prevention efforts underway in the state. Copies of the report can be downloaded at [www.theconnectproject.org](http://www.theconnectproject.org) under NH Suicide Prevention Data Report.

### Bi-Monthly NH Survivors' Conference Calls

Stay informed about suicide prevention efforts and support throughout the state, let us know what is happening in your community, find out how you can get involved in survivors of suicide loss activities. For information on the ongoing schedule, contact Becky McEnany via email at [bmcenany@naminh.org](mailto:bmcenany@naminh.org).

### SAMHSA Announces a Working Definition of "Recovery"

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recently announced a new working definition of recovery from mental disorders and substance use disorders. The definition, "a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential," delineates four major dimensions SAMHSA has identified as supports for a life in

recovery: health, home, purpose and community. The definition is a product of a year-long effort by SAMHSA and a wide range of partners in the behavioral health care community and others fields. To read the full article: <http://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/advisories/1112223420.aspx>.

### Suicide Prevention Council Welcomes Barbara Bonney (PMH, CNS, APRN)

Barbara is the Suicide Prevention Coordinator for the White River Junction Veterans Administration Medical Center. With over thirty years of mental health experience in a variety of clinical settings, she brings a wealth of knowledge in suicide prevention.



### Film Screenings to Promote Suicide Prevention Hosted by SPC's Communications Subcommittee

If you would like to participate in any of the film screenings or are interested in hosting in your community, contact Rhonda Seigel, [rsiegel@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:rsiegel@dhhs.state.nh.us).

### Community Health and Healing Funds Available

YSPA, NAMI NH and a representative from Survivor Voices oversee the Community Health and Healing Fund (CHH) to provide supports to survivors and communities following a suicide death. Applications are reviewed collaboratively and funds are disseminated for interventions consistent with the goals

of the State Suicide Prevention Plan and Connect prevention protocols. To obtain the criteria for applying, please contact Bernice Lopez via e-mail at [blopez@naminh.org](mailto:blopez@naminh.org).

**NAMI NH Annual Conference**  
Saturday, March 24, 2012  
Grappone Center  
Contact Claudia Ferber at 603.225.5359, ext 13 or [cferber@naminh.org](mailto:cferber@naminh.org)

**Annual State Suicide Prevention Conference**  
Friday, November 9, 2012  
SERESC Conference Center  
Bedford, NH

**2nd Annual Ride for Nathan**  
August 2, 2012 (tentative)  
Let's ride together to help prevent suicide! For more information, contact Michael Folley via e-mail at [mfolley@comcast.net](mailto:mfolley@comcast.net).

**10th Annual Paddlepower**  
August 18th and 19th, 2012  
Lebanon  
By joining this river adventure fundraiser, you'll paddle your way down 25 miles of the Connecticut River. For more information, go to <http://www.paddlepower.org>.



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