

NAMI NH *Connect Youth Leaders: Partnering with Adults to Prevent Youth Suicide* Training on Best Practice Registry

CONCORD, NH – September. 18, 2012 – Youth collaborating with adults in suicide prevention presents a powerful combination. NAMI NH is pleased to announce that *Connect Youth Leaders: Partnering with adults to prevent youth suicide* training is now listed on the National Best Practice Registry, a directory of programs reviewed by a panel of experts and managed by the Suicide Prevention Resource Center and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

Friends of youth at risk are typically the ones who first see suicidal warnings. Because youth may not know what to do about a friend at risk, or may keep a suicidal plan “secret”, it is important for youth to be trained in suicide prevention and intervention. Research consistently shows that teens training their peers is an effective method to educate youth.

A true partnership of youth and adults, *Connect Youth Leaders* training is a two-day training for youth leaders and adult co-facilitators that prepares them to conduct *Connect Youth Suicide Prevention* training for teen-age audiences. “The program is unique in two regards– it brings together youth and adults to talk about suicide and empowers youth by putting them in the role of training other youth,” comments Ann Duckless, MS, the *Connect* trainer who developed the program.”

Connect Youth Leaders is based upon NAMI NH’s *Connect Suicide Prevention Training*, a designated National Best Practice Program. The training emphasizes the role of youth is to seek help from an adult when there is a concern, NOT to take on the role of a counselor. It also includes developmental considerations for teen-aged youth as well as safe messaging guidelines.

During the first day of training (adults only), participants will become more aware of suicide as a public health issue and its impact on communities and individuals. Information will be presented on suicide data and how age, gender, culture, and other factors impact suicide risk. Additionally, participants will gain greater knowledge of communication techniques to use in crisis situations. Best practices concerning restricting access to lethal means, safe messaging, and communication about suicide for a youth audience will be discussed.

On the second day, the adults and youth leaders together will receive training in recognizing suicide risk and protective factors and warning signs. Information about resources and how to connect a person to help will be given, as well as generating positive attitudes towards helping others. Adults and youth will have the opportunity to practice co-facilitating the training and receive feedback and coaching from the *Connect* trainer.

Connect contracts with host organizations across the county to provide its National Best Practice training programs for a fee. For information on how to bring *Connect Youth Leaders: Partnering with adults to prevent youth suicide* to your community, please contact Anne Rugg at 207-752-7351 or arugg@naminh.org.

Connect is a nationally designated Best Practice Program developed by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) – New Hampshire. For more information visit www.TheConnectProgram.org