

News Highlights

Survivor Representative Appointed to Suicide Prevention Council

Marsha Chapple was appointed by Governor Lynch to represent the survivor perspective on the council. Marsha is an active speaker with the NH Survivor Speakers Bureau and served on some of the first work committees to address suicide prevention in NH. Marsha can be reached at mahshah@comcast.net.

HB 1436 to Study Feasibility of NH Participating in National Violent Death Reporting System

Submitted by the Suicide Prevention Council, HB 1436 has been signed into law by the Governor bringing together the Departments of Justice, Health and Human Services, and Safety to jointly issue a report describing the requirements for New Hampshire's participation in the National Violent Death Reporting System.

NH Legislators Instrumental in Establishing Military Suicide Prevention Legislation

Last year, Senator Shaheen and Congressman Hodes submitted a bill to expand Suicide Prevention and Postvention Services for National Guard and Reserve Members. Senator Shaheen's office is now working to secure appropriations for the services outlined in the successful bill.

Suicide Fatality Review Committee Signed Into Law

House Bill 1384 to establish a Suicide Fatality Review Committee was recently signed into law by Governor Lynch. The sponsor of the bill, survivor Rep. Roger Wells (R) Hampstead, believes the more you expand knowledge, the more able you are to prevent other suicides. The Committee will provide a structured forum to examine suicide deaths and identify trends and risk factors, which in turn will inform suicide prevention strategies in NH.

New Hampshire Survivors of Suicide



Newsletter 2010

Survivor Advocacy Highlights

"Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."
~ Margaret Mead

Janyce Demers lost her 23 year old son, Zachary, to suicide in 2008. In May of 2010, she brought a Connect Suicide Prevention training to her own community. Janyce organized all logistics of the training, prepared all materials (at her own cost) for this training and inspired other community members to get involved. Knowing how important it is to educate community members about suicide as a public health issue, Hooksett's Congregational Church Pastor David Richardson offered to host the training at his church. Two Connect trainers volunteered their time and expertise for this training - Dan Wells, a survivor and support group facilitator for other survivors, and Joan Haskell. Fourteen

community members attended the event, many of them friends and family members of Janyce and Kirk. Several participants came because they wanted to understand suicide, Zachary's death and how to support Janyce and her husband. The training was a great success, with one participant summarizing the night, "Education. I learned so much and had no idea there

were so many places to help someone who is contemplating suicide."

Janyce is an inspiring example of a survivor advocate for suicide prevention!

For information about Connect Suicide Prevention Trainings, please contact Elaine de Mello at edemello@naminh.org or 603.225.5359.



From L to R-Cara Demers Carr, Wayne Robie, Kelly Demers Snow, Martha Robie, Sue St. Germain, Janyce Demers, Vicki Therrien, Patti Gorton, Sandi O'Connor, Back-Tom Carr, Dan Wells, Pastor David Richardson and Joan Haskell. Missing from photo: Kirk Demers, Deb Jodoin and Pat Champagne .

2009 NH Suicide Prevention Volunteer Award Presented to Diane Bunnell



Diane Bunnell (L) received the 2009 Volunteer Award at the annual NH Suicide Prevention Conference in recognition of her work helping fellow survivors heal, her diligent efforts to reduce the stigma around suicide in NH, and her suicide prevention activities. Hailing from the North Country, Diane started the first survivor support group in Northern NH and has co-facilitated four AFSP survivor tele-conference gatherings. As an active member of the NH Survivor Speaker's Bureau, Diane shares her own story of loss at suicide postvention trainings and conferences to educate and help others heal.

The New Hampshire Suicide Survivors Network is a coalition of suicide survivors, joined by some mental health professionals, that is helping to publicize local and national resources that provide support to survivors of suicide (SOS). The survivor network is focused on helping each other with the unique, profound, lingering grief that suicide subjects us to, and which those who have not experienced death by suicide cannot understand. This newsletter was made possible through the support of Friends and Family of Eddie O'Rourke, The Martha Fuller-Clark Foundation, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and the NH Dept. of Health and Human Services. The views, policies, and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of our funders.

To read this newsletter online, please go to www.TheConnectProject.org.

Victims, Inc. Provides Support to Suicide Survivors and Family Members after Tragedies

Victims, Inc. is a private non-profit agency providing immediate service to people during the worst moments of their lives. Since the program began in December 1993, volunteers have been called by first responders to assist victims or family members after suicides, serious injury and fatal crashes, fires, robberies, drownings or other untimely deaths. Victims, Inc. services start within minutes of traumatic situations and continue as long as needed, often for two or more years. Volunteers go with police to give notification of tragedies, prepared to stay until the family support system is in place. They may sit in the hospital or home with the injured or the surviving family members. They are able to provide support and make referrals to other agencies and services.

Applications are being accepted for training the 27th class of Trauma Intervention Volunteers in Strafford and Rockingham counties. There are also plans to expand this service to northern NH with the help of volunteers from Coos and Grafton counties. Volunteer training will be offered there as well.

Especially in the event of a suicide death, suicide survivors can provide compassion, understanding and hope to new survivors. If you would like to become a trauma intervention volunteer (whether you are a survivor or not), or for more information, call Executive Director Pat Rainboth or Rose Woods, Office Manager and Victim Advocate, at the East Rochester office - 603.335.7777 or email pat.rainboth@victimsinc.org. Visit their website www.victimsinc.org.



Victims, Inc.



New NH Survivor Speakers Bureau Speakers - (L to R) Ron Hart, Diane McEntee, Susan Morrison, Maureen Sloan and Tim Lind. Missing from photo is Kristyn Bernier.

The NH Survivors of Suicide Loss Speakers Bureau was founded in 2008 and is comprised of individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide and have been trained to speak safely and effectively about their losses to the public. In May of 2010, six NH survivors completed a two day course on Public Speaking about Suicide. They join nine other trained speakers, who together, have shared their stories at over twenty-five venues in the past year alone. It is our hope that these personal stories will ultimately help prevent suicide by promoting open-mindedness, reducing the stigma, shame and isolation that survivors feel, increasing help-seeking behavior and teaching individuals and communities how to better help survivors and how best to respond to suicide deaths in a sensitive and informed manner. We also hope to

reach individuals who have survived a suicide death and may feel isolated to let them know that they are not alone. By educating individuals and communities, we not only teach compassion, but also help prevent suicides. By speaking about personal loss and telling the story about a loved one's life and death, survivors can promote healing and understanding, which in turn supports and encourages suicide prevention efforts. The public speaking trainings were funded by the NH Bureau of Behavioral Health, The Penates Foundation, and SAMHSA.

If you are interested in hosting a survivor speaker, or if you are a survivor who would like to take the Public Speaking Training (see page 4 for dates), please contact Becky McEnany at bmcenany@naminh.org.

The NH Life Keeper Quilt Continues to Comfort and Educate



In 2007, the NH Life Keeper Quilt project brought over thirty New Hampshire survivors together for support, to place a face on suicide and to raise public awareness of suicide. Since that time, the quilt has been exhibited at over 125 venues. Another NH quilt is now underway. To participate in this project please contact Ken LaValley at ken.lavalley@unh.edu. To display the quilt (pictured to the left) at your event, please contact Becky at bmcenany@naminh.org.

Resources for Survivors of Suicide

NH Survivors of Suicide Support Groups

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Concord NAMI NH	The Greater Concord Area Survivors of Suicide Loss Group	2nd Thursday of each month 6:30-8:00 pm Peer facilitated	Lisa MacNaughton 603.736.8604 lisamac@metrocast.net
Exeter Seacoast Hospice	Healing after Suicide for Children and Families	Adult: 6-week closed groups Children: 10-week closed groups "Coping with the Holidays" Nov. - Dec.	Deb Proulx 1.800.416.9207 www.seacoasthospice.org
Gorham	North Country SOS Support Group	Varies Peer facilitated	Becky McEnany 1.800.242.6264 bmcenany@naminh.org
Hampstead Hampstead Public Library	Coping with a Loved One's Suicide	Every Friday, 4-5pm Peer facilitated	Dan Wells 603.329.5276 Dwells5@comcast.net www.nhcopingwithsuicide.com
Keene The Samaritans, Inc.	A Safe Place - call for location	Every Thursday, 6:30-7:30pm	The Samaritans, Inc. 603.357.5510 www.samaritansnh.org
Lebanon Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center	Upper Valley SOS Support Group	Call for Information Peer facilitated	For local leader contact info, call 1.800.639.6095 (toll-free, 24/7). uvsos@valley.net
Merrimack Merrimack Home Health and Hospice Care	The Greater Nashua Area Grieving Survivors of Suicide	1st Wednesday of each month 6:30-8:00 pm Peer facilitated	Maureen Sloan 603.578.5966 Diane McEntee 603.673.7425 or 603.978.7848 (cell)
Peterborough The Samaritans, Inc.	A Safe Place - call for location and time	Weekly	The Samaritans, Inc. 603.357.5510 www.samaritansnh.org
Plymouth Varies	Plymouth Region SOSL	Varies Peer facilitated	Marcia VanderMast 603.764.4352 (evenings or leave message) Sue Brothers 603.481.0502
Portsmouth Portsmouth Public Library	Seacoast Suicide Bereavement Support Group	Meets Monthly Peer facilitated Call for date and time	Kathy Toof 603.749.1765, Katt1076@comcast.net CG Shaffer 603.770.8932 cgshaffer@gmail.com
Nationwide	Friends for Survival	Telephone Support	1.800.646.7322

Internet Resources for Survivors

National Alliance on Mental Illness - NH	www.theconnectproject.org	Click on <i>get help</i> or email bmcenany@naminh.org
American Foundation for the Prevention of Suicide (AFSP)	www.afsp.org	Click on <i>surviving suicide loss</i> for general info and on-line support
American Association of Suicidology (AAS)	www.suicidology.org	Click on <i>suicide loss survivors</i>
GriefNet - an online support group and resource information	www.griefnet.org	Click on <i>adult or child support groups</i> , then <i>unique losses</i>
Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network (SPAN)	www.spanusa.org	Click on <i>survivor stories</i>
SAVE - Suicide Awareness/Voices of Education	www.save.org	Click on <i>coping with loss</i>
Suicide Prevention Resource Center	www.sprc.org	
Resources for Military and Veterans	www.taps.org www.realwarrior.net	
Before Their Time <i>Music written/performed in memory of those who died young</i>	www.beforetheirtime.org	All sales benefit hospice and suicide prevention efforts

Telephone Resources and Hotlines

If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal call 1-800-273-TALK or 911

National Suicide Prevention Crisis Hotline (National) - (800) 273-TALK(8255)

Military Hotline (National) - (800) 273-TALK(8255), Press 1

For Support in Spanish - (888) 628-9454

Headrest (NH/VT) - (800) 639-6095 (24/7); Headrest Teenline (800) 639-6095

Samaritans, Inc. (NH) - (877) 583-8336

Friends For Survival (National) - (800) 646-7322

Support For Youth

The following is a listing of websites and groups in NH that assist with children's grief, but are not necessarily specific to suicide loss.

National

Survivors Road2Healing.com - resources for children and teens specific to suicide loss
www.road2healing.com/children.html

GriefNet - an online, general grief support group for kids and teens.
www.griefnet.org

New Hampshire

Bridges for Children and Teens - Seacoast Hospice, Exeter
800.416.9207
www.seacoasthospice.org/index.cfm/grief-services

Children's Good Grief Program, Home Health & Hospice Care Nashua - 800.887.5973
www.hhhc.org/services/support_groups.php

Mountain of Hope, Center Ossipee - 603.569.2729 Ext 230,
www.vnahospice.net/news_events.htm

Pete's Place- Wentworth-Douglass Hospital Dover - 603.740.2689
www.wdhospital.com/body.cfm?id=181

Stepping Stones - VNA of Manchester & Southern NH, Manchester - 603.663.4005
www.manchestervna.org/hospice_support_groups.asp



National Alliance on Mental Illness

New Hampshire

15 Green Street
Concord, NH 03301
603-225-5359 • 800-242-6264
www.naminh.org
www.TheConnectProject.org

The New Hampshire Suicide Survivors Network is a coalition of suicide survivors, joined by some mental health professionals, helping to publicize local and national resources that provide support to survivors of suicide (SOS). The survivor network is focused on helping each other with the unique, profound, lingering grief that suicide subjects us to, and which those who have not experienced death by suicide cannot understand.

Upcoming NH Survivor Events

September 25th and Oct. 16th, 2010

AFSP Out of the Darkness Walks, Portsmouth and Rochester - Join the Out of the Darkness Walks to raise money for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Contact Ken LaValley (Portsmouth) at ken.lavalley@unh.edu or Melissa Turner (Rochester) melissaturner40@yahoo.com.

October 3, 2010

NAMI Walks NH 2010, NH Hospital Campus, Concord - Join NAMI NH in the largest stigma busting statewide event for mental health advocacy in New Hampshire. Come support suicide prevention and survivor support in NH. Meet other NH survivors. This 5k walk through the capital city begins and ends at the NH Hospital grounds in Concord. For more information or to register, contact Win Saltmarsh at 603.225.5359 or visit www.naminh.org.

October 6th, 2010

Theatre of War, Concord and Pembroke - Theater of War is an innovative project that presents readings of ancient Greek plays as a catalyst for town hall discussions about the challenges faced by service members, veterans and their families today. A panel discussion with the audience about challenges faced by returning military will follow each presentation. Seatings are 1:00 pm in Pembroke and 6:00 pm in Concord. For information, visit www.naminh.org. Admission is free.

October 12th and 13th, 2010

Public Speaking For Survivors, Keene - NAMI NH and The Samaritans will hold a two-day training for survivors who would like to learn to tell their stories safely. By speaking about personal loss and telling the story about a loved one's life and death, survivors can promote healing and understanding, which in turn supports and encourages suicide prevention efforts. To register or for more information, please contact Becky McEnany at bmcenany@naminh.org.

November 5th, 2010

NH Suicide Prevention Conference Loon Mountain Club, Lincoln - There will be large group presentations as well as smaller workshops on a number of different topics related to suicide prevention and suicide risk identification for all ages. There will be workshops for survivors in the morning and afternoon. The event is presented by the NH Suicide Prevention Council and the Youth Suicide Prevention Assembly. Contact Elaine de Mello at edemello@naminh.org for more information.

November 20, 2010

National Survivors of Suicide Day AFSP Teleconference - Saturday, November 20th marks the 12th Annual AFSP Survivors of Suicide Teleconference. With support from the Seacoast AFSP Walk, the NH Department of Department of Health and Human Services and NAMI NH, survivor gatherings are held around the state. 2010 locations include Concord, Lancaster, Merrimack, Portsmouth, Moultonborough, Westmoreland, Conway, Manchester (VA) and Hampstead. To register for a NH site, visit www.TheConnectProject.org or contact Becky McEnany at bmcenany@naminh.org. You may also watch the webcast online from your home computer by registering at www.afsp.org.

August 20th - 21st, 2011

8th Annual PaddlePower, Wilder, Vt. (tentative date) Support the West Central Behavioral Health Center in Lebanon by joining this river adventure to support the 24/7 emergency crisis intervention services offered to the community by the mental health center. To participate in PaddlePower 2010 call the event coordinator at 603.448.0126.

Monthly Survivor Conference Calls

Stay informed about suicide prevention and survivor activities, let us know what is happening in your community, find out how you can get involved and ask any questions you may have. Calls begin at Noon.

To participate, call **1-800-704-9804** and type in the participant code **326118#** when prompted.

2010 Dates: October 27, December 8

2011 Dates: February 2, April 6, June 8 and August 3

The Samaritans, Inc. - Samaritans is a non-profit, 501c(3) charitable organization supported, in part, by the Monadnock United Way. The Samaritans, originally founded in London in 1953, has spread to 40 countries and now has 335 branches. There are 6 branches in the United States, including our Keene, NH branch, which was started in 1981. Over the years, we have spread throughout the Monadnock Region and today have hotlines in both in Keene and Peterborough, and a NH statewide toll-free number - 1.877.583.8336. In addition to our crisis lines, we provide community outreach, and educational programs; prevention and postvention services; a weekly confidential and anonymous support group for those who have lost a friend or loved one to suicide; and support to individuals, families, organizations and others in need of our services.

On April 21, over 150 community members of the Monadnock Region participated in a day of suicide awareness at Keene State College co-hosted by KSC and the Samaritans. The ***Dreams Untitled*** project is a national campaign that grew out of the compelling statistic that someone in the U.S. attempts suicide every minute. Participants were encouraged to "open the dialog" about suicide by creating chalk murals that symbolized *hope*. For more information, please call 603.357.5510 or visit www.samaritansnh.org.

-Submitted by The Samaritans, Inc.



Seacoast Suicide Bereavement Support Group - Co-facilitators Kathy Toof and CG Shaffer (in photo above) announce the formation of a new support group for survivors of suicide in Portsmouth. "Our goal is to offer survivors a safe place to share our stories and concerns, to feel and discuss our pain, and to work through the complicated emotions that survivors of suicide often feel (anger, guilt, confusion, anxiety, etc.). By listening, talking, and grieving together we can support each other during this trying and difficult journey in healing. Although we may never overcome the loss of our loved ones to suicide, we can infuse hope and meaning into our lives."

See page 3 for more information on this group and other survivor support groups.

Do you want to get involved but don't know where to begin? Here are some ideas:

1. Attend an event (Walks, AFSP Teleconference, Paddlepower, NH Suicide Prevention Conference)
2. Join the NH Survivor email list
3. Participate in a Suicide Prevention Committee
4. Contribute to this newsletter
5. Exhibit or transport the Life Keeper Quilt
6. Attend a support group or start your own
7. Let us know about stories on suicide in your local papers
8. Join the NH Survivors Speaker Bureau
9. Be trained as a Victims Inc. Volunteer
10. Join or start a Suicide Prevention Coalition (see below)
11. Apply for Community Health and Healing Funds for your own community healing idea

To get involved, please contact Becky McEnany - bmcenany@naminh.org.

For details about events see page 4 of this newsletter.

After Noah

by Penelope King

We will never be the same
Noah's suicide has changed us forever
We were halted in our tracks
Forced to accept the unacceptable

Some days we push it away
Some days we can't believe he's gone
Some days we take time to be with our loss
None of us will ever be the same

Some of us have moved back home
Some of us have lost weight or gained
Some of us are sitting still
None of us are in the same place

Some moments we cry
Some moments we are numb
Some moments we find peace
None of us can stop wondering why?

Some of us read about suicide
Some of us don't want to talk
Some of us have asked for help
None of us have stayed the same

Some moments we hold our breath
Some moments we hyperventilate
Some moments we can breathe
None of us will ever breathe the same

Some of us have broken up
Some of us have met new friends
Some of us are content to be
None of us will ever forget

Some days we move backwards
Some days we run in place
Some days we move forwards
None of us will ever stop missing Noah

Suicide Prevention Coalitions

Seacoast Suicide Prevention Coalition – 3rd Wednesday of the month, 2-4pm, Cross Roads House, Portsmouth. Contact Elaine de Mello edemello@naminh.org.

Raymond Coalition for Youth – 2nd Thursday of the month, 9:00 AM, Lamprey Health Care, Raymond. www.rcfy.org

The North Country Suicide Prevention Coalition – Meets monthly in Stratford. Contact Becky McEnany at bmcenany@naminh.org.

The Moultonborough Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Coalition – 2nd Wednesday of the month, 4:00pm, Moultonborough Town Library. Contact Peter Whelley at ptw@sau45.org.

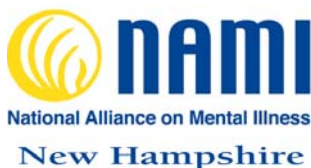
Everyone is welcome at all meetings!



Ron Pelchat from the North Country Suicide Prevention Coalition poses with the book *Healing the Hurt Spirit*, written for survivors of suicide by NH survivor Catherine Greenleaf. See article below.

North Country Coalition Secures Funding from CHH to Provide Books to New NH Survivors

Having heard author and survivor Catherine Greenleaf speak at a Suicide Prevention event in Groveton, Ron Pelchat from the North Country Suicide Prevention Coalition wanted all new NH survivors to have access to Catherine's book, *Healing the Hurt Spirit: Daily Affirmations for People Who Have Lost a Loved One to Suicide*. Through an application to the Community Health and Healing Fund and the generosity of the author, his idea became a reality. Beginning in Fall 2010, new survivors will be offered these books through the Survivor Resource Folder sent from the Medical Examiner to the next of kin after a NH suicide death.



A Day in the Life of Overnight

By Ron Hart

Wearing my "honor vest" decorated with prevention pictures, buttons, id tags, and items from other survivors, I headed to Boston for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Overnight Walk where I would meet up with fellow NH survivors. At the opening ceremony, we chose honor beads, the color of the beads representing our personal losses, and Robert Gebbia spoke about the walk and breaking the stigma. He then started the walk, and we were off.

We watched the wave of colorful shirts all decorated with losses slowly move away from Government Center. Very empowering indeed, as we stayed back and watched how it all developed. We then joined in at 8:00 PM, weaving down the Charles River, over the Alston bridge and a left up Storrow Drive, around Fenway, Copley Square, out to Castle Island for a midnight dinner. Next into North End, Boston Garden, Faneuil Hall, then



Ron Hart shares a hug with other NH survivors, Paula Snow and Pam Ferry at the AFSP Boston Out of the Darkness Walk 2010.

finish at Government Center. As we wound our way around Boston, we shared our stories, our sadness, our sorrows, but even our hopes, dreams, and desires. At the finish was a display of illuminated luminaria bags decorated by family and friends. The closing ceremony was very emotional, as all of us accomplished our goal. It surely was a message of hope for the future for suicide prevention. I walked not only for my loss, but for the loss of others, to help spread awareness, and help break the stigmas of depression, and mental illness in association with suicide prevention. "I do this in my son Jason's honor."

Funds for Community Healing Available

The goal of the Community Health and Healing Fund is to promote healing and reduce risk following a suicide death. The fund has been used to support many activities including training survivors as support group facilitators, hosting a community depression forum, providing information packets to next of kin after a suicide death, advertising and refreshments for the annual AFSP suicide survivor teleconference, and printing and distributing the NH Survivor Newsletter. The funds are not limited to these activities and communities are encouraged to apply for financial support of activities that they feel will promote healing and reduce risk after a suicide death in their community. To apply, contact Bernice Lopez-Stanizzi at blopez@naminh.org or call 603.225.5359.