

October 2008

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October Education Meeting

Linda Gill, founder of Columbia's Joy in the Mourning Center for Life Losses, will be the speaker for NAMI Mid-Carolina's Education meeting in October. In her presentation, "The Unique Grief of Mental Illness," she will describe the significant losses often associated with mental illness. In particular, she will cover the losses of the person with the diagnosis as well as the losses felt by the family of the person who is ill. She will also describe the grief process and the tasks of mourning.

Join us Tuesday, October 14, at 6 pm at Trenholm Road United Methodist Church to hear more about this important topic.

Important Event this Month!

The NAMI South Carolina Convention will be in Columbia this year, October 24-25. The Friday evening event will include a barbeque dinner at Trenholm Road United Methodist Church. The conference will be at the Embassy Suites on Saturday. A great program is in store for people living with a mental illness, family members, and professionals. Nominations are still being accepted for awards to be given on Saturday. For more information or to register, call 800-788-5131.

Join NAMI at the Out of the Darkness Walk for Suicide Awareness and Prevention



This Fall, Thousands Will Walk for Suicide Prevention

BE ONE OF THEM

By walking in AFSP's Out of the Darkness Community Walk, you will be walking with thousands of people nationwide to raise money for AFSP's vital research and education programs to prevent suicide and save lives, increase national awareness about depression and suicide, and assist survivors of suicide loss.

Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott opened the 2007 Out of the Darkness Walk.

Out of the
DARKNESS
COMMUNITY WALKS
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention



Riverfront Park
Columbia, South Carolina
October 19th, 2008
1:00 Registration
2:00 Walk
3:30 Closing Ceremony

Register today at OutoftheDarkness.org



The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) is the leading not-for-profit organization exclusively dedicated to understanding and preventing suicide through research and education, and to reaching out to people with mood disorders and those impacted by suicide. The closing ceremony this year will be led by David Cox, co-author of the new book *AFTERSHOCK: Help, Hope, and Healing in the Wake of Suicide*. (see story page 3).

Signs of Suicide

The following information about suicide awareness is provided by Mental Health America in South Carolina. If you would like more information or to schedule a suicide awareness and prevention seminar for your workplace, church, or civic group, call 803-779-5363.

In a typical high school class, two girls and one boy have attempted suicide in the past year.

- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for college students
- Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death for 15-24 year olds
- Suicide is the 5th leading cause of death for 10-14 year olds
- Since the 1950s, the rate of suicide in youth has tripled

While child suicide is very uncommon, mortality from suicide increases steadily through the teens

- Most don't die in their attempt
- Youth: 100-200 attempts per 1 completion
- Elders: 4 attempts per 1 completion
- Average: 25 attempts per 1 completion

Strongest predictors of suicide:

- Previous suicide attempt
- Current talk of suicide/making a plan
- Strong wish to die/preoccupied with death
- Depression (homelessness, withdrawal)
- Substance use
- Recent attempt by friend or family member

Behavioral Clues:

- Past suicide attempt
- Getting a gun or stockpiling pills
- Giving away prized possessions
- Impulsivity/increased risk taking
- Unexplained anger, aggression, irritability
- Self-destructive acts (i.e., cutting)
- Chronic truancy, running away
- Perfectionism

Situational Clues:

- Being expelled from school/fired from job
- Family problems/alienation
- Loss of any major relationship
- Death of a friend or family member, especially if by suicide
- Diagnosis of a serious or terminal illness
- Financial problems (either their own or within the family)
- Sudden loss of freedom/fear of punishment
- Feeling embarrassed or humiliated in front of peers
- Victim of assault or bullying

Other Youth Related Clues:

- Change in interaction with family and friends
- Recent disappointment or rejection
- Sudden decline or improvement in academic performance
- Physical symptoms: eating disturbances, chronic headaches
- Changes in sleep patterns, stomach problems.
- Increased apathy
- Homosexuality
- Loner attributes

Sometimes things happen to us
for things to happen in us
so that things can happen through us.
-- Stuart Briscow

Myths and Facts about Suicide

from Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Training

Myth: No one can stop a suicide, it is inevitable.

Fact: If a young person in a crisis gets the help they need, they probably will never be suicidal again.

Myth: Confronting a person about suicide will only increase the risk of suicide.

Fact: Asking someone directly about suicidal intent lowers anxiety, opens up communication and lowers the risk of an impulsive act.

Myth: Once a person decides to complete suicide, there is nothing anyone can do to stop them.

Fact: Suicide is the most preventable kind of death, and almost any positive action may save a life.



John Brown, Erika Kittrell, and Joe Ritchey join Angela Monts and September Education meeting speaker, Dr. Cathy Epps, both with Long's Pharmacy. Thank you to The Fresh Market for donating two dozen roses to our affiliate each month!

AFTERSHOCK: Help, Hope, and Healing in the Wake of

Suicide by David Cox and Candy Arrington
(From www.candyarrington.com)

In the wake of this horrific decision, people are left behind...people like you. They are wives who needed their husbands, children who depended on their mothers, parents who loved their teenager, and friends who never saw it coming. Millions of lives are affected annually when individuals around the globe from all socio-economic levels, ethnic groups, and religions decide suicide is the only viable option. Left behind are the survivors.

So, where do you go from here? How do you escape the feelings of guilt, fear, frustration, abandonment, and anger? How do you begin to heal and rebuild your life? Although suicide is a devastating life crisis, you can recover and go on. *AFTERSHOCK: Help, Hope, and Healing in the Wake of Suicide* is a resource to help you start the process. This book contains stories of real people who are survivors of suicide. Read of their losses, struggles, and triumphs. Learn from others who have journeyed the path you are on now – a path not of your own choosing.

AFTERSHOCK will aid you in processing the complicated emotions surrounding suicide. It will encourage you and remind you that you are not alone in your grief. Perhaps your connection to suicide is not the personal loss of a loved one, but you want to understand and minister to someone dealing with a suicide loss.

AFTERSHOCK will give you practical ways to help. Or maybe you are concerned that someone you care about is suicidal.

AFTERSHOCK will provide clues to suicidal thought patterns and behaviors so you can act as an intervener or know when you need to get in touch with professionals. If you need immediate help, call (800) 784-2433 – National Hopeline or www.hopeline.com.

**UNMASKING MENTAL ILLNESS
NAMI'S 4TH ANNUAL GALA
CELEBRATION**

Wednesday, October 15, 2008 7:30 pm
Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium
Washington, D.C.
Contact Darcy Taylor: 703-524-7600

**W.J.B. Dorn V.A. Medical
Center presents events for
Mental Illness Awareness
Week**

The public is invited to two events at the Dorn VA Medical Center to commemorate Mental Illness Awareness Week, October 5-11. The dates are:

**Monday, October 6th 1:00 to 3:00 pm and
Thursday, October 9th 9:00 am to 1:00 pm**

Activities include informational booths, self-screenings, information on services, and speakers. Both events will be in Building 106, Room D-100.

For more information, contact Louise Will-Wallace at 803-776-4000, extension 6395.

New and Renewing Members

Ms. Patricia Davis
Ms. Barbara Gregory
Mr. Michael Fleming
Ms. Anne Boylston
Ms. Emma Lilley
Dr. Anthony Stakis
Ms. Regina Fields
Ms. Patsy Moon

Senator John Courson
Ms. Margie Bodie
Mr. Frank White
Ms. Betty Lewis
Mr. George DuRant
Mrs. Louise Kennedy
Mr. Carl Kennedy
Ms. Christina Isenhower



You can also view the Brain Storm
at www.namimidcarolina.org

Thursdays 10/2, 10/9, 10/16,
10/23, 10/30 6 pm
NAMI Connections, Trenholm
Road United Methodist Church
(TRUMC), 3401 Trenholm Rd.

Mondays 10/6, 10/13, 10/20,
10/27 3 pm NAMI Connections,
Dorn VA Bldg. 106, Room A-237

Tuesdays 10/7, 10/21, 10/28,
6 pm NAMI Connections and
Family Support Group, TRUMC

Tuesday 10/14 6 pm
Education Meeting, TRUMC
(see story page 1)

Sunday 10/19 2 pm
Out of the Darkness Walk,
Riverfront Park

October 24 - 25
NAMI SC Conference, Columbia

December 5 - 7
NAMI SC Training, White Oak

Saturday, April 25, 2009
NAMIWALKS for the Mind of
America

NAMI In Our Own Voice

National Alliance on Mental Illness

One of the most difficult issues faced by people who are mentally ill is the stigma associated with their diseases.

Stigma arises out of the public's unawareness of the hope that new medicines and therapeutic practices provide.

To inform a wider audience of all this, NAMI Mid-Carolina provides *In Our Own Voice (IOOV)*, a program in which persons with a history of mental illness tell their stories to varied audiences.

The presentation begins with the dark days when the person first became aware of his or her illness, progressing through acceptance of the illness. It then proceeds to the treatments and therapies he or she underwent and the coping strategies the person developed along the way. It concludes with triumphs, hopes, and dreams. An *IOOV* presentation offers its audience an understanding, not just of the diseases themselves, but also of the nature of the people who possess the diseases. Coupled with a message of hope, the presentation can help minimize or eliminate stigma.

If you are part of a group that would like one of these important presentations, please e-mail Michael Stockdell at stockdellm@gmail.com or call him at 678-591-3846.