

Dear Valued Media Partner:

Thank you for taking the time to review the Helping Others Prevent and Educate About Suicide (HOPES) information enclosed in this media kit.

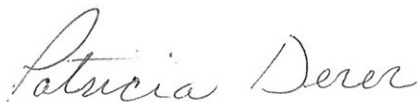
HOPES is a grassroots organization that was founded in 1998 by volunteer survivors who lost their loved ones to suicide. Susan Conlin Opheim, Tina Neupert and I created this organization to teach people the signs of depression that may lead to suicide. We strive to remove the stigma associated with this public health crisis, so others will seek the help they need and ultimately reduce the number of suicides.

HOPES is actively involved statewide. Besides holding an annual Walk for Awareness and Fundraising Dinner, we also educate the community through our Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) trainings. QPR trainings are 90 minute presentations offered to all types of groups interested in learning the signs and symptoms of depression. Through this training, we educate attendees to save lives by questioning, persuading, and referring those in need.

In this kit, you will find a comprehensive guide to HOPES' programs and services, our mission and background, and facts related to depression and suicide.

For more information, please visit our web site at www.hopes-wi.org or email me at info@hopes-wi.org.

Sincerely,



Patricia Derer
HOPES President

HOPES of Wisconsin Inc.

Helping Others Prevent and Educate About Suicide

Mission Statement

To educate people about signs and symptoms of depression and mental health issues. We want to help remove the stigma associated with this public health problem so others will seek the help they need. By achieving this, we will reduce the losses to suicide.

Background

Founded in 1998 by volunteer survivors who lost their loved ones to suicide.

HOPES is Wisconsin's first grassroots organization that teaches people the signs of depression and mental illness.

HOPES joined with the department of Health and Family Services and the state of Wisconsin to write the Wisconsin Strategy for Suicide Prevention in 2002.

Annual Events

Educational Dinner

Held in February

Features an educational speaker and aims to further educate the community on suicide prevention.

Walk For Awareness

Held in May

Participants walk in the memory of loved ones and help to fight the stigma associated with depression and suicide.

Board of Directors

Patricia Derer

President & Treasurer

Pat Derer co-founded HOPES in 1998 with Susan Conlin Opheim and Tina Neupert. Together they wanted to make a difference for families dealing with mental health issues. Derer strives to help educate others about the signs of depression and reduce the stigma associated with this illness. Pat is currently serving as President and Treasurer of HOPES and is a certified QPR instructor.

Sue Howell

Vice President & Volunteer Coordinator

Sue Howell became involved with HOPES by volunteering for the annual Walk for Awareness. She joined the Board of Directors in 2004 and is currently Vice President and Volunteer Coordinator. Sue became a survivor of suicide when her brother, Mark, died by suicide on February 23, 2001. Motivated by her loss, she works to bring education and awareness regarding suicide prevention.

Eric Garland

Fundraising Coordinator & Public Relations Consultant

Eric Garland is a more recent member of the HOPES Board of Directors joining in March of 2007. He is the Fundraising Coordinator and Public Relations Consultant and keeps the HOPES web site up to date. Eric became a survivor of suicide on February 15, 2006, when his only son, Brandon, took his own life. Since that time, Eric has become a true advocate for suicide prevention, education and awareness efforts.

Mary Moldenhauer

Secretary & Newsletter Editor

After the loss of her husband, Dave, in September, 2001, Mary chose to educate herself about depression and suicide for the sake of her three teenage children, recognizing that mental illness is hereditary. It was at that time she became involved with HOPES and attended their annual Walk for Awareness, as well as an educational seminar in Kimberly, WI. Since then, Mary has become a Certified QPR Gatekeeper Instructor for suicide prevention and now serves as Secretary on the Board of Directors for HOPES.

Sara Leikness

Informational Materials & Prize Coordinator

Sara attended a spring conference at St. Mary's Center in 1998 where she learned of HOPES and volunteered to help. She feels that it is vital to spread the word about the illness of depression. Sara recently received her certification as a QPR Gatekeeper Instructor. She believes it is important for others to learn the signs and symptoms of depression and what to do, so other families won't have to suffer a loss.

Donna Bichanich

Quilt & Memory Book Coordinator

Donna is one of the newer members of the HOPES Board. Her vitally important duty is the constructing of the "Many Faces of Suicide" Memory Quilts and the maintenance of the Memory Book. Donna's husband, Craig, completed suicide in June of 2005. In addition to her participation on the Board, she is a Certified QPR Gatekeeper Instructor and does volunteer work for the Survivors of Suicide support group.

Darlene Helming

Youth Volunteer Coordinator & Accessories Coordinator

Darlene has been a member of the HOPES Board of Directors since March, 2007. She organizes student volunteers for HOPES events and makes the HOPES beaded jewelry. Darlene became a survivor of suicide in April, 2006 when a very special family friend completed suicide.

Dennis Gates

Representative & Coordinator for "Survivors of Suicide" Groups

Dawn Leikness

Senior Publicist & Technology Coordinator

Dawn joined the HOPES Board of Directors in April 2008, after nine years of volunteering with the organization. She contributes to the board as Senior Publisher and Technology Coordinator. At the age of fourteen, Dawn became a survivor of suicide on November 12, 1997 after losing her brother, Daniel, to his battle with depression. Since then, Dawn has been motivated to eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health and suicide. She is passionate about making a difference within our larger community.