

*Committed to the Reduction of  
Suicidal Behaviour and its  
Impact on Individuals, Families  
and Communities*

# Waterloo Region Suicide Prevention Council



Waterloo Region  
Suicide Prevention Council  
[www.wrspc.ca](http://www.wrspc.ca)

## NEWSLETTER ISSUE 7 WINTER 2014-2015

### WRSPC receives \$75,000 annualized base funding from the LHIN

In June, the Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integrated Network (LHIN) Board approved \$75,000 annualized base funding for the WRSPC. Specifically, this funding will help support two outcomes. First, a nine week suicide bereavement closed group led by professionals will be resurrected in our community. In total, four of these groups will take place each year in the Cambridge, Kitchener-Waterloo and Guelph areas. WRSPC will be partnering with agencies throughout the two regions to train more facilitators therefore building more capacity for our region. In addition, individuals will be able to select locations and timing that work best for them. Secondly, the money will help to support prevention efforts through the support of staff.



**Ontario**

Waterloo Wellington Local  
Health Integration Network

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**WORLD  
SUICIDE  
PREVENTION  
DAY**

... PAGE 2

**FUNDRAISING**

... PAGE 5

**SUPPORT  
GROUPS**

... PAGE 7

#308conversations is a grassroots campaign spearheaded by the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) that invites each of Canada's 308 Members of Parliament (MPs) and other community leaders to lead a conversation in their community about suicide prevention. #308conversations is designed to include Canadians from coast to coast to coast in a national dialogue about suicide prevention. Raising the profile of mental health issues and encouraging public discussion on suicide prevention awareness is a shared responsibility for all Canadians and across all orders of government. In July, the WRSPC partnered with the Honourable Gary Goodyear and MP's Harold Albrecht, Stephen Woodworth and Peter Braid to host Waterloo Region's #308 Conversations. There was a full morning of dialogue and discussion with sixty community partners followed by an afternoon SafeTALK workshop. A full report of the day's discussion was shared with the MHCC and will be collated with reports from across Canada to help inform future steps for suicide prevention nationally. Locally, the council is embracing ways to implement key suggestions made.

### 308 Conversations



WRSPC members Chair Kim Hewitt, Tana Nash, WRSOC alumni Kathy Payette, Bev Voisin, Adrienne Luft.



MP Stephen Woodworth, MP Harold Albrecht, Tana Nash, Conestoga College President John Tibbits, MP Peter Braid, MP Gary Goodyear



## WRSPC first MSW student!

Working with Renison College School of Social Work (University of Waterloo), WRSPC has an MSW student for the first time. WRSPC welcomes Christy Kent to the team. You may have already met her at events throughout the fall as she has become familiar with the activities of the council. Christy will be spearheading the bowlathon this year and will be with us until May. Please introduce yourself when you see her with Tana out in the community.



## New Website Launched! [www.wrspc.ca](http://www.wrspc.ca)

On World Suicide Prevention Day, WRSPC launched their updated website at the well attended Annual General Meeting which features more resources and personal stories by those bereaved by suicide and suicide attempt survivors. Additionally, you will see a place on the website where you can sign up for the newsletter/or further updates from the council. This now feeds directly into our mailing list for any updates we send out. Encourage people to sign up if they are interested in staying current. A HUGE thank you to Mark Hallman from Evergreen Digital Marketing for the many hours he put into this project. Please let us know what you think and send us any suggestions. [tnash@lutherwood.ca](mailto:tnash@lutherwood.ca)

## Ongoing training

Increased Training and Education continue to be key objectives for the council. WRSPC continues to work with the community suicide prevention training team to provide Safe Talk and ASIST workshops. Additionally, WRSPC has formed a partnership with Mega Health who provide a number of trainings focused on workplace mental health including tailored presentations for HR departments, lunch and learns, and Mental Health First Aid training. Lutherwood is offering space for this training in the Institute. Mega Health will also be providing Safe Talk workshops to the community in partnership with WRSPC.

A free SafeTALK workshop was delivered to interested participants following #308 Conversations in the summer. Twenty-three participants including MP Harold Albrecht and his wife Darlene were in attendance.

WRSPC has also been working with Victim Services to provide their volunteers further training and increased knowledge on trauma, psychological first aid and suicide bereavement. Safe Talk was also taught to the volunteers. A big thank you to WRSPC council members Joanna Sipos and Dena Moitoso for providing the training and working with the volunteers and to the staff and volunteers at Victim Services for being such great partners.

## World Suicide Prevention Day – September 10

Stormy weather descended upon Kitchener City Hall this year but that didn't stop people from coming out to support this annual event. A few things needed to be changed as the day progressed and the volunteer committee did a great job troubleshooting all day (e.g. the barbeque turned into desserts and as much of the butterfly release took place inside as possible). The afternoon saw twenty different community organizations sharing resources and knowledge in the rotunda. This was followed by music by Craig Cardiff. Originally planned to play on the outside stage, Craig didn't miss a beat and played inside the rotunda then moved upstairs and set a reflective mood for the butterfly release in a more intimate space. The mood of the weather seemed to mirror the feelings evoked by the butterfly release ... but then something magical happened. The butterflies flew into the grey sky bringing colour and beauty ... and hope.



Musician Craig Cardiff



This hope made its way into the presentation by local family physician Dr. Glen Pearce who challenged family physicians to get more training on suicide prevention and for patients to open up more and communicate with their family physicians so together they can tackle issues and arising concerns. WRSPC and the community is fortunate to have Dr. Pearce in our community dedicated to suicide prevention. He has been instrumental in bringing the accredited training for primary care providers last year and providing feedback and ideas.



In November, twenty-three people gathered for a full day strategy planning meeting with the Waterloo Region Suicide Prevention Council including council members, WRSPC alumni Kathy Payette, Tom Connolly, Pauline Potzold, Cathy McDonald-Reis and Public Health representative Stephanie Watson. With additional funding coming into the council and a heightened community awareness, the direction of the council and meaningful ways to use the funds were explored.



WRSPC Planning day



WRSPC was represented at the 6th Annual US/Canada Summit on Mental Health and Productivity – Making Suicide Prevention a Health and Safety Priority- in Denver in September. Presentations and discussion focused on making the business case for suicide prevention as a health and safety priority, success stories in workplace suicide prevention (including stories from Australia and construction

companies) and case studies from first responders. In attendance included first responders, Retired General Peter Chiarelli (32nd Vice Chief of Staff of the US Army) Colorado Governor Hickenlooper Colorado Senator Linda Newell, Director of EAP for the US Postal Service, NFL transition director, Living Works, QPR, and many key business partners in addition to mental health organizations. Tana facilitated an hour panel dedicated to promising practices in workplace interventions. Also there from Canada was co-host Bill Wilkerson, CEO Mental Health International and Jenn Ward and Ed Mantler from the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

### WRSPC hires administrative assistant!



Jenna Merrick

This has been on the council's wish list for some time. Beginning last October, Jenna Merrick is dedicating herself to the WRSPC as the administrative assistant for one day a week. If you are unable to reach Tana, you can connect with Jenna who will try to help you out. Welcome Jenna – we are so happy to have you on the team!  
jmerrick@lutherwood.ca

*Many of us have all consuming issues to deal with  
But we may keep them buried deep inside  
Feelings of guilt, embarrassment or low self esteem  
Sometimes, it is so overwhelming, we just hide*

*Suicide HAS to be talked about  
it is a topic that will not go away  
Everyone needs friends and family  
To care and listen to what you say*

*When you ask 'How are you doing?'"  
Mean it and stay around for the reply  
We all need to know that we matter in this world  
Makes a difference in whether we sink or fly*

*If you are having trouble finding any hope  
And you can't find purpose to continue on  
Please reach out to someone you trust  
Let her help you develop ideas to act upon*

*Seeing a doctor or therapist can make a difference  
They have studied and know how to help you  
Mental Illness can attack your sense of reality  
Re-wire your brain with their guidance, start anew*

*Please don't let go of HOPE.....*

Brenda McDonald

We hope this message finds you all well and that you had a good summer. By the time you receive this message World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) will have just passed. We hope you were able to organize or participate in this meaningful day in some way. Over the past few months CASP, like so many other organizations and communities across Canada, was busy getting ready for WSPD; planning events and preparing to launch a number of new initiatives and resources. CASP wanted to take this opportunity to review what we have been up to and the initiatives we launched September 10th. We hope that you will help share this information and these resources throughout your systems and networks so that together we can increase public awareness in Canada and enhance the capacity of families, communities, and workplaces to support those who are vulnerable, at risk of suicide or bereaved by suicide.

We are also hoping that you will share with us and everyone else on the collaborative, any new initiatives that your organization has developed or is developing related to suicide prevention, intervention or postvention. By sharing with each other our respective plans, ideas and activities we can better support and inform each other, promote meaningful and effective partnerships, coordinate our efforts and reduce the fragmentation and duplication that has often existed within the suicide prevention community in Canada. We look forward to hearing what your organization/association has been doing or thinking about doing related to suicide prevention, intervention and postvention and identifying opportunities for us to work together on some of these undertakings. Together, in the spirit of collaboration, we are stronger.

So here is a list of our recent activities and accomplishments.

### **“Let’s Talk about Suicide” Video**

This fifteen minute video discusses how people can proactively talk to family, friends and coworkers about suicide. Keeping each other safer in times of trouble, how to identify someone who might be at risk, how to ask someone about thoughts of suicide and what to do. The video is available for viewing and can be downloaded from CASP’s website: [www.suicideprevention.ca](http://www.suicideprevention.ca).

### **Hope at Work**

CASP and Klinik have launched a new website: [www.hopeatwork.ca](http://www.hopeatwork.ca). The website has been designed to help workplaces become suicide safer and integrate suicide prevention and postvention into the workplace. The website also promotes psychologically safe, compassionate and trauma informed workplaces. The website includes a ten minute video on suicide safer workplaces which appears on the home page of the hope at work website. This video can also be viewed and downloaded from CASP’s new website. Hope at Work was launched in WSPD.

### **Thirty Minutes that Could Save a Life Webinar**

On WSPD CASP and Klinik offered a free thirty minute webcast called “Thirty Minutes that Could Save a Life”. Included in the webcast was the “Let’s Talk about Suicide” video and a ten minute video on Hope at Work. People were able to access the webcast at anytime on September 10 by going to [30minutestosavealife.com](http://30minutestosavealife.com). The webcast is available on the CASP website.

CASP Website and Social Media Presence

CASP recently launched its new website:

[www.suicideprevention.ca](http://www.suicideprevention.ca). This new website was only possible through the support of the Mental Health Commission

of Canada (MHCC). CASP is extremely grateful to the MHCC. Please have a look at our new site, complete with an interactive map of Canadian Distress Lines. In addition, we ask for your organizational support of our twitter presence: @CASP\_CA and our Facebook page: [https://www.facebook.com/CanadianAssociationforSuicidePrevention?ref=br\\_tf](https://www.facebook.com/CanadianAssociationforSuicidePrevention?ref=br_tf)

### **Media Engagement and Guidelines Repository**

In the wake of Robin Williams death, the CASP board and head office were tremendously busy responding to media inquiries. Please see our statement regarding this high profile death: <http://suicideprevention.ca/blog/>. In addition, we would like the NCSP to know that the CASP site has the largest collection of public awareness and media guidelines regarding suicide. We have collected Canadian, international and sector specific guidelines. Please use and share this valuable collection when engaging with the Media, or speaking publically about Suicide.

### **C.A.R.E.**

This resource is intended to help a person deal with a phone call they might receive at work from someone who discloses thoughts of suicide. This one page document is available on the CASP website: <http://suicideprevention.ca/preventing/>.

### **Virtual Suicide Prevention Conference**

CASP and the Mental Health Commission have partnered to plan this November’s virtual conference on suicide prevention. The conference will run from November 19th to 21st inclusive and consists of a series of webinars that will be offered throughout the day. To learn more about this event visit [www.caspconference.ca](http://www.caspconference.ca).

### **Stress and Suicide Prevention App**

CASP is lending its support to Klinik Community Health Centre to develop a new App which will be launched this fall. This web based App combines information on stress and tools/practices for coping with stress and de-stressing with information on coping with suicidal thoughts, a virtual hope box and suicide safety plan.

### **Suicide Bereavement Video**

CASP has begun work on producing a short video on suicide bereavement, specifically targeted for Survivors of Suicide Loss and those who support them. This video will be modeled on the Let’s Talk about Suicide video and is intended to speak directly to people newly bereaved by suicide. Our aim is to launch the video on World Suicide Survivors Day on November 22nd.

### **On Line Training for Physicians Health Care Providers**

CASP, in partnership with the MHCC and Klinik, continues to work on developing three new webcasts for physicians on suicide prevention, suicide postvention and trauma informed practices. Part of this process includes a national survey of physicians.

Well that’s it from us. We look forward to hearing from all of you on your suicide prevention, intervention and postvention activities. We plan to create and share an ongoing inventory to raise awareness of all that is happening in these areas of endeavour. If you are able to share your efforts with us, we will be pleased to support your initiatives and continue our collaboration.

Thanks for a part of this critical work!

For more information contact Tim Wall, Executive Director, CASP at [twall@klinik.mb.ca](mailto:twall@klinik.mb.ca)



## Fundraising

Wow! A number of fundraising events have taken place the last six months – all spearheaded by community members dedicated to making a difference. The WRSPC is so very thankful for their time and hard working efforts to make these events a success. The monies raised by these events is propelling us to be able to support more services in our community, provide additional suicide prevention training and provide more resources.



*WRSPC Financial Analyst and volunteer Hong Van and longtime community member Deb Emery*

The 11th Annual Daniel Tudisco Memorial Golf Tournament took place on literally the coldest day of August – it felt more like a late fall day. Despite that, golfers and volunteers alike were troopers bundling up and having a good time. Instead of cold watermelon being served, the tournament treated golfers to Bailey's and hot coffee at the putting contest! Thirty-two teams, another fifty people for dinner plus twenty-five volunteers made the day an incredible one. \$27,000 was raised that day!! A huge thank you to this committee for their tireless work and everyone for supporting it.



*Cheque presentation with committee chair Bob Valens and Treasurer Louise Tudisco*

### Unique Boutique Fashion Show

Following up the amazing spring fashion show, Unique Boutique owner Gosia Jurgiel decided to once again donate the proceeds of her fall fashion show to the WRSPC. Again, 200 people were treated to an amazing evening of fashion – both by models and at the onsite store. Thank you Gosia for empowering women to make a difference.

### Karim the Dream

On November 8th we held our 3rd Annual Karim the Dream Basketball Tournament. Three years ago a small group of friends approached the council looking for a place to donate proceeds of our basketball tournament. We were looking for a positive way to channel the grief we felt because of the loss of such a young vibrant individual. This event was designed to honor the memory of our good friend Karim and to help raise funds and awareness for the council. We had another very successful year and look forward to everything the future has to hold for this event!



*Volunteering and playing at Karim the Dream*

### Fresh Ayr Festival Donates Back To The Community

Following the announcement this spring that the Fresh Ayr Festival was unable to continue, due solely to a lack of volunteers to take on Board roles, the Board has started the official procedure to dissolve the corporation. Physical assets and supplies have been donated locally. In keeping with the Festival's objectives of supporting local history, heritage, performing arts, community spirit and support to the residents of North Dumfries and the Village of Ayr, the Board made donations of \$2,000 each to the following registered charitable groups:

- Ayr Paris Band
- Waterloo Region Suicide Prevention Council
- Family Counseling Centre of North Dumfries
- Friends of the Ayr Library
- Dunfield Theatre Cambridge



*Fresh Ayr cheque presentation*



The balance of funds, approximately \$15,000, will be donated to the Ayr Sesquicentennial Fund, after all financial obligations have been met, in order to ensure that the funds stay in the community and are accessible by all. The Sesquicentennial Fund accepts donations requests twice a year from local groups and organizations to support and encourage community activities and spirit.

### Tournament Proceeds To Be Used For Suicide Prevention Initiatives



*Bettina Snider, Marlene Brown and Tami Olsen presenting the cheque to Tana Nash*

The 1st Annual Mitchell Snider Memorial Golf Tournament, held on July 5th, raised a total of \$13,000. A generous donation from the Fresh Ayr Festival in Mitchell's memory brought the total donated to the Waterloo Region Suicide Prevention Council to \$15,000.

Some of these funds have been earmarked by WRSPC to fund several information and awareness course in our community over the next year. Courses will include: safeTALK, about three hours in duration, is a training that prepares anyone over the age of 16 to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources.

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)  
The ASIST workshop is for professionals and councillors who want to feel more comfortable, confident and competent in helping to prevent the immediate risk of suicide. Over one million caregivers have participated in this two-day, highly interactive, practical, practice-oriented workshop. Final dates and details will be available soon. Watch the Coming Events section of the Ayr News or the Community Email Blast for further information.

**Further Funding** – In addition to fundraising efforts, thanks to Elmira Maple Syrup and Fresh Ayr Festival organizations for their support; the numerous personal donations; in memory donations; and retirement donations we received the past six months.

### 30 Days of T.H.I.N.K.

The 30 Days of T.H.I.N.K. contest kicked off on November 1, 2014. The THINK initiative was created by the Social Media Committee, a sub committee of the WRPCPC, comprised of various community partners including the WRSPC.

30 Days of T.H.I.N.K. is a contest for students to promote positive use of social media. The goal is to get students THINKing™ about how they use social media and to be responsible and respectful online.

The 30 Days of T.H.I.N.K. contest ran for 4 weeks during the month of November coinciding with National Crime Prevention Week, Bullying Awareness Week and Random Act of Kindness Day. Each week reflected a theme related to T.H.I.N.K.:

Week 1 - THINK FIRST

Week 2 - THINK KINDNESS

Week 3 - THINK RESPECT

Week 4 - THINK SUPPORT

Several amazing submissions were entered using Twitter, Facebook and Instagram under the hashtag, #30DaysofTHINK.

Prizes were awarded at random each Friday for submissions posted throughout that week.



*The Elgin St. P.S. grade 2 French immersion class*

WRSPC and Lutherwood partnered to donate a 16 gb iPad mini. The Elgin St. P.S. grade 2 French immersion class was the lucky recipient of the prize!

The hope is that the message of the contest was reached community wide and beyond! Let's continue to work together to promote positive use of social media, kindness, respect and to be aware of supports in the community like the WRSPC!

Please feel free to search #30DaysofTHINK and check out the submissions throughout the contest.

*We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.*

*Winston Churchill*

*Thank You Volunteers!*

# Why???

## Suicide Let's Talk About It

### Presentations and Displays

WRSPC has attended a number of events and spoken at numerous presentations.

In addition to the following list, Tana Nash had the opportunity to meet face to face with individuals dedicated to suicide prevention in Thunder Bay including CAMH, 211, Thunder Bay Children's Centre, Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) and Scott Chisholm while promoting a youth mental health on line library for professionals across Canada. Following Thunder Bay, Tana had the opportunity to present to several locations across the province of Saskatchewan and learn from Ranch Ehrlo, an organization dedicated to youth mental health.



#### **You might have seen WRSPC at the following events:**

Heroes are Human for First Responders,  
WLU – Walk for Life, Karim the Dream basketball fundraiser,  
Daniel Tudisco Memorial Golf Tournament, Unique Boutique  
Fashion Show, Renison College – mental health fair

#### **Or heard us speak at the following locations:**

Grand River Unitarian Church  
Lutherwood Counselling – MSW Interns  
Impact – Region of Waterloo Public Health Youth Engagement  
Leaders  
SJAM Grade 11 class  
Ontario Teacher's Federation Conference  
MP Frank Vilatterri - #308 Conversations for Guelph  
CASP Conference  
Grand River Collegiate – Peer Leaders  
Training for Victim Services Volunteers

### Tana Nash wins President's Award!

Tana Nash awarded the CASP President's Award for outstanding service to the people of Canada for advancing the work of suicide prevention. This service award was given by the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP) President Renee Ouimet virtually from Ottawa to Tana Nash. The award is granted to an individual for outstanding

leadership in suicide prevention, intervention or postvention at the community, regional or national level in Canada. CASP President Renee Ouimet said "Tana was selected for her outstanding contribution to partnership building, development of educational tools and networking to enhance suicide prevention regionally, provincially, nationally and internationally. Tana's boundless energy and commitment inspires collaboration and as such, she is an unequalled positive force for change."



### Support Groups

#### **Children & Teen's Bereavement Support Groups by Interfaith Community Counselling Centre**

Ages 5-9 – a five week support group for children bereaved by suicide. Starting Mondays January 12.

Ages 10-16 – a five week support group for youth bereaved by suicide. Starting Thursdays January 15.

Call 519-662-3092 or [interfaith@golden.net](mailto:interfaith@golden.net) to register.

#### **Free Monthly Peer Led Support Group**

Side by Side support group for those 18 and up bereaved by suicide. – 4th Wednesday of every month. Come once, come every month – you choose. Call 519-662-3092 or [interfaith@golden.net](mailto:interfaith@golden.net) to register. Once you are registered, location will be disclosed and you can come whenever you like.

#### **"Why?" Support after Suicide Loss**

Nine week closed suicide support group led by professionals.

#### **Cambridge**

Group begins January 22  
Thursdays, 6:30 – 8:30  
Lutherwood Family  
Counselling  
35 Dickson St., Cambridge  
For more info or to register,  
Call Joan at 519-622-1670  
ext 1213

7 Or [jstuart@lutherwood.ca](mailto:jstuart@lutherwood.ca)

#### **Waterloo**

Group begins January 13  
Tuesdays, 7:00 -9:00  
Shalom Counselling Services  
9 Avondale St. S., Waterloo  
For more info or to register,  
Call Paula or Sue, 519-886-  
9690

**Suicide Information and Awareness is Important - You Are Not Alone**  
**[www.wrspc.ca](http://www.wrspc.ca)**