

## WATERLOO REGION SUICIDE PREVENTION COUNCIL

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

June 2011



171 King Street South  
Waterloo, ON N2J 1P7  
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[www.wrspc.ca](http://www.wrspc.ca)

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Mark your calendar for the WRSPC's upcoming events and fundraisers.

## Keeping You "In The Loop" with the Council's Activities

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bowl-A-Thon Fundraiser Raises Awareness, Money and Spirits!

Wow! What an incredible afternoon. On Saturday April 30, 24 teams came together to raise funds and awareness for suicide prevention in our Region. Dressed in boas, rock sunglasses, wigs and team shirts plus a special showing from the Royal Family compliments of the team from Our Lady of Fatima, these 120 passionate people showed that fun can be had while raising money for such a serious cause. Teams from the Waterloo Region District School Board, The Waterloo Catholic District School Board, Cambridge

Memorial Hospital, Grand River Hospital, Specialized Mental Health, Trellis, Lutherwood, Canadian Mental Health Association, Waterloo Regional Police, Self Help Alliance, Minds in Motion, University of Waterloo Health Studies and Gerontology, plus several personal teams all came out ready to bowl. Lisa Drew from 570 News kicked off the event, 15 volunteers made sure the day flowed smoothly, \$7,000 in donated prizes was given away and over \$20,000 was raised for suicide prevention initiatives in our



Conestoga College student Alex Cooke filming PSA's for the Council.

Region. Come out, join the fun and start the dialogue for suicide prevention in the Spring of 2012!

### Awareness Through Broadcasting

A student from Conestoga College in the Broadcasting program focused her internship project on the work of the Council. Alex Cooke developed three 5-second public service announcements for television to raise awareness on suicide and suicide prevention.



*In this picture, volunteers Gail, Julie and Louise at the WRSPC Bowl-a-thon.*

## The WRSPC Thanks You!

The Council extends thanks and gratitude to the many volunteers and organizations that contribute to the ongoing effort of suicide awareness and prevention.

### Laura Barker

A group of volunteers led by Laura Barker raised awareness for suicide through a cupcake sale outside of Price Chopper, at an elementary school and Grand River Hospital. In total, over \$1,700 was raised. This group would like to make it an annual event. Price Chopper provided in-kind donations to support the event.

### The Women of the Moose

Warm thanks to the Women of the Moose for their support and generous donation.

### Mariah's Mission

Look for beautiful yellow ribbons, bracelets and bumper stickers soon to come, all in the name of Mariah, who ended her life at the beginning of this year. Mariah's Mission as it is called, is to bring proper education about depression, suicide awareness and

prevention. Mariah was a brilliant talented beauty and she always believed that knowledge is powerful. "Let us empower ourselves with knowledge and make this Mariah's legacy of hope and change. Let's get powerful! " To date, over \$1600 has been raised for the Waterloo Region Suicide Prevention Council in honor of Mariah's Mission.

### Dawson & Associates

Thank you to Rob Dawson of Dawson & Associates for their generous donation of graphic design expertise, printing and development of promotional materials.

### Lisa Drew and 570 News

Lisa Drew, co-anchor of the 570 Morning News, conducted a 5-part series on suicide which has been aired twice. Lisa also came out to

the Bowl-A-Thon to contribute her energy and skills. Thanks to Lisa and the whole team at 570 News for their contribution to awareness and prevention efforts.

### Preston IODE

The Preston Chapter of the IODE contributed \$1000.00 for the training of Cambridge secondary school students in the suicide awareness program, safeTALK.

### Rotary Club of Kitchener Grand River

The Rotary Club of Kitchener Grand River contributed \$3000.00 for the training of KW secondary school students in the suicide awareness program, safeTALK.



## How Reliable is Teen Suicide Information on the Internet?

For many Canadians, the internet is used as a source for health-related information. The anonymity of the internet makes it an attractive option for seeking information on topics that may not be openly discussed. Many youth use the internet for searches on mental health issues and suicide.<sup>1</sup> For this reason, the quality of the information youth are accessing on these topics need to be high quality, up to date and consistent with the best available evidence.

Canadian researchers Magdalena Szumilas and Stan Kutcher of Dalhousie University performed an evaluation of the quality of information on the internet regarding youth suicide.<sup>2</sup> Knowing the current state of information available to Canadian youth on the topic of suicide can assist in the development of mental health promotion strategies, as well as areas that need further targeting to increase mental health awareness.

Szumilas and Kutcher looked at the top 20 hits for the search terms “youth suicide,” “teen suicide,” and

“adolescent suicide” across three major search engines: Google, Yahoo, and MSN. The quality of the websites were rated on a number of indicators such as the scope of the content; whether any authors or references were cited for the content; whether there were any recommendations to consult a health professional; and where to access immediate assistance if in crisis. Websites that met the quality indicator criteria were considered to be evidence-based.

The results showed that more than half of the content on youth suicide on popular Canadian websites was not supported by evidence. This is problematic if youth are seeking help and information from which they consider a trusted and reliable source. As previous research has shown that internet-users tend not to go past the first 10 ‘hits’ of a search,<sup>3</sup> authoritative professional organizations such as Canadian psychiatric, pediatric, and psychological associations need to raise their profile on the internet.



(Continued)

By increasing their presence and accessibility, there is more opportunity for evidenced-based information to counterbalance the abundance of misinformation currently available to young information seekers.

Consider these websites for further information:

Waterloo Region Suicide Prevention Council  
<http://www.wrspc.ca>

Centre for Suicide Prevention  
<http://www.suicideinfo.ca>

Kids Help Phone  
<http://www.kidshelpphone.ca>

Mind Your Mind  
 This is a place for youth and emerging adults to access info, resources and tools during tough times.  
<http://www.mindyourmind.ca>

Canadian Mental Health Association  
<http://www.cmha.ca>

It Gets Better  
<http://www.itgetsbetter.ca>

Your Life Counts  
<http://www.yourlifecounts.org>

## Youth Talk "Live"

Beautiful Minds and Youth Talk (both programs part of CMHA Grand River) hosted Youth Talk "LIVE" on April 27, 2011 at Bingeman's targeting the youth. Several musical groups performed, and the youth organizing committee offered a range of workshops geared to raise awareness for mental health and suicide and reduce mental health stigma. Over 350 secondary school students, school staff and community service providers attended this wonderful day of learning, sharing and supporting.

## What Can You Do To Help?

### DONATE FUNDS

The Waterloo Region Suicide Prevention Council does not receive any government funding and relies on donations from community members to carry on the work. Please send your donations to WRSPC, c/o 171 King Street S., Waterloo ON N2J 1P7 (Tax receipts available).

### DONATE SKILLS

Let us know what your skills and interests are. Become a member and contribute your expertise to one of the working committees. Contact Tana Nash at [tana2@execulink.ca](mailto:tana2@execulink.ca) or 519-744-7645 Ext. 310 for more information and to become a member.

### DONATE TIME

Join us for events as a participant or volunteer your time to help out. Contact Tana Nash at [tana2@execulink.ca](mailto:tana2@execulink.ca) or 519-744-7645 Ext. 310.

## WRSPC Suicide Prevention Strategy

On Thursday September 15, at 8:00am the WRSPC will launch its strategic update to the community. This event will take place at Lutherwood on Benjamin Road in Waterloo.

### Sources

<sup>1</sup>Rideout, V. (2002). Generation Rx.com: what are young people really doing online? *Marking Health Services*, 22, 26-30.

<sup>2</sup>Szumilas, M. & Kutcher, S. (2009). Teen suicide information on the internet: A systematic analysis of quality. *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 54, 596-604.

<sup>3</sup>Morahan-Martin, J. M. (2004). How internet users find, evaluate, and use online health information: a cross-cultural review. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking*, 7, 497-510.



## COMING EVENTS

**September 10, 2011**

### World Suicide Prevention Day Service of Remembrance & Butterfly Release

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the Kuntz House (171 King Street South) between 12:00pm and 1:30pm with a light lunch served. At 2:00pm, the service of remembrance and butterfly release will be held in Waterloo Town Square just a short walk away. At 7:00pm enjoy free entertainment at a "Life to Live" Trinity United Church, Elmira.

**September 16, 2011**

### Tabu Music Festival

On September 16, 2011 the WRSPC is partnering with Carrie Humphries of 'TABU' for a music festival to raise awareness for suicide (from 12:00pm-10:00pm). TABU's music festivals have been very successful. This year, TABU is focusing on suicide and is taking the lead in organizing the public event. It will be held in Waterloo Town Square.

## Photographs from Recent Events!

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bowl-A-Thon Fundraiser



The wonderful volunteers and council members behind the scenes at this year's Bowl-a-thon.



Best costume award goes to the Royal Family from Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School.



**August 11, 2011**

### The 8th Annual Daniel Tudisco Memorial Golf Tournament

Great golf, fun games, food, prizes & silent auction.

**\* Mark your calendar \***

**Thursday, August 11, 2011.**

Registration deadline is July 14, 2011

[DTMgolftourney@hotmail.com](mailto:DTMgolftourney@hotmail.com)

## Work Toward our Canadian National Strategy for Suicide Prevention



You can help by signing the on-line e-petition for a national strategy, developed by the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP). CASP members have been lobbying for a long time for a national strategy to be implemented. They believe the Canadian government must acknowledge that the rates of suicide in this

country are too high. If you also believe that issues surrounding suicides in this country need to be addressed, tell the government they must take action by signing the e-petition at <http://nspscnd.epetitions.net>



On June 15, the Canadian Propane Association invited David Chilton, author of *The Wealthy Barber* to be the keynote speaker at their annual conference held in Guelph. After his engaging presentation, David Chilton graciously donated his speaker fee to the WRSPC recognizing the need to raise funds for further suicide awareness and education. Featured above are sponsors Trish Gogas from Factor Gas Liquids, David Chilton, Tana Nash from the WRSPC and sponsor David Palmer from NGL Supply. Following the cheque presentation, Tana was also able to address the 250 business owners and raise the level of awareness around suicide prevention and the need for dialogue and action.