



## Agency Spotlight: Suicide Prevention Services

The national news, recently, was filled with stories about Kate Spade and Anthony Bourdain. While one was a designer and the other a celebrity chef who were “known” to thousands of people, it was the fact that each of them died by suicide that caught the public’s attention. I have worked in suicide prevention since the death of my mom in 1979. I knew how this was going to play out: outrage, shock, comments on their “perfect lives.” As I know, what is portrayed on the outside is not the entire package. Each day, we put on our public face. We laugh, we engage others, we go to work, etc. What that public face often hides is the anxiety, fear, and depression that we feel inside. I always chuckle at who has “the perfect life.” Outward symbols belie what is at the heart of who we are as people.

Suicide Prevention Services is 20 years old this year. Our services are broken into 3 areas, each with components under them:

**-PREVENTION & INTERVENTION** A depression hotline and a suicide prevention hotline staffed by well-trained paraprofessionals. SPS is a part of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and, as such, is one of 185 centers across the country answering calls. SPS offers counseling and also has contracts in the schools to work with children who are at risk. When we began, we were in the high schools. Within a few years, middle schools were added and, now, the elementary schools. We work with kids of all ages starting in kindergarten. We run groups for anxiety and depression (mainly middle school girls) as well as for Survivors of Suicide Attempts (adults only at this point). Educational workshops and trainings are also a part of the work that is done at SPS.

### **-POSTVENTION**

A support group for Survivors of Suicide Loss (SOS) as well as outreach teams for loss survivors is also part of the programming at SPS. INC was the provider of the initial \$10,000 grant 20 years ago and has continued to provide funding for our programs. For this, SPS is truly grateful. Statistically, suicide has risen

dramatically. There is never just one reason why someone ends their life. Suicide is multi-faceted. Asking the question, “Why” implies a single cause when that is simply not true. People who are diagnosed with depression, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder are at the highest risk for suicide. Alcohol and drug use add to this mix.

The warning signs have been written about over and over again. I want to add the following: if you think someone is acting unusual, seems withdrawn, for example, ask them to tell you about it. If they say, “Nothing’s wrong,” keep probing. Ask them about the pain in their life. Look them in the eye. Don’t try to top or match their story. Few of us really listen to someone. If you think they need further help from a professional, offer to make the call and offer to drive them there. The hospital emergency room is NOT the place to take them unless they have ingested something or harmed them self physically in some other way. SPS is a deterrent for hospitalization.

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## Thank You, Terry!

The INC Board and staff would like to express its sincere gratitude to Terry Lanthrum. Terry just finished his 3-year term as INC Board President. He will stay on the INC Board and serve as Blackberry Township Liaison as well as Blackberry Township 708 Board President. We thank him for his many years of service and leadership.



## New Brochures

We have updated our brochures with the funded agencies for FY2019. Please visit our website or [click here](#) to download your copy today!

## **INC Board Display**

The INC Board is proud to have its very own display board with information and resources available for any community events. If you are interested in having it at your next event, please contact us and we will be happy to coordinate with you.

### **Behavioral Health Services Resource & Referral Center is LIVE!**

As of August 6, 2018 Presence Mercy Medical Center has dedicated professionals on-call Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM – 11:30 PM to provide referrals for behavioral health and other related services.

Feel free to share their phone number, 844.569.5200, with anybody needing assistance finding community resources.

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### **Welcome Ken!**

We'd like to give a warm welcome to our incoming INC Board President, Ken Rojek. Ken has been on the INC Board since July 2013. He serves as the liaison to the Big Rock 708 Community Mental Health Board.

We are happy to have his leadership and expertise at the helm of the board!

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