



THE NEWSLETTER FOR CRISIS SERVICES

44 YEARS OF SERVICE TO ERIE COUNTY



FALL/WINTER 2012

Coming Together and Building Competent Communities for Suicide Prevention

In 2011, the New York State Office of the Mental Health Suicide Prevention Initiative was awarded a Garrett Lee Smith Grant. This three year grant was designed to build capacity in human service and educational systems in order to increase the detection of youth suicide risk, prevent suicide attempts and deaths, and respond to suicide events effectively. In simple terms, the grant was designed to initiate more discussion and planning in the area of youth suicide. As the New York State Center for Suicide Prevention took form in Albany, four New York State counties, Broome, Cayuga, Fulton and Erie, were contacted to be involved in the initial phase of the grant period. In Erie County, Crisis Services was asked to head up the development of an Erie County Coalition. In 2012, primarily through the efforts of Doug Fabian and Jessica Pirro of Crisis Services, the Coalition began to take form. As the New York State Center for Suicide Prevention encouraged new ways for creating effective strategies for suicide prevention, the face of the Erie County Coalition became non-traditional, including such organizations as Prevention Focus, Spectrum Human Services, The Erie County Medical Examiner's Office, Erie 1 BOCES, the Erie County Department of Mental Health and school districts such as Williamsville and Gowanda.

The name of our coalition is the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Erie County and our mission is to foster a community of hopefulness, safety and shared responsibility to prevent suicide and suicide attempts by increasing awareness, promoting resiliency and facilitating access to resources. The coalition is in the process of developing a network of trainers who will promote evidence-based and best practice methods for suicide prevention. Throughout 2012, the coalition worked diligently to form an infrastructure from which it will spawn new initiatives and support older programs that meet the new guidelines. Equally important to education and training, the coalition will become the "eyes and ears" regarding suicide issues in Erie County. The coalition's intent is not to supplant or replace existing programs but to collectively enhance their effectiveness. The coalition will interface with local media to ensure proper and sensitive reporting regarding stories about suicide. The coalition will also work toward ensuring that the Erie County community has available the most recent and accurate information related to suicide trends in our area.

One of the key partners on the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Erie County is the Erie County Medical Examiner's Office. The Medical Examiner's Office will play

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Upcoming Events



Saturday, April 27, 2013
Walk A Mile in Her Shoes

12 - 3 pm
 The international men's march to stop rape, sexual assault and gender violence. Walk will begin at Crisis Services' parking lot. More information will be posted on our website as it becomes available.

SAVE THE DATE!

Tuesday, October 1, 2013
7th Annual
MEN Who COOK

This year, our signature event returns to the Statler!



For more information on any of these events, call 834-2310 ext. 4467. You can also visit our website at www.crisisservices.org

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THE **SAFETY NET**

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*Douglas B. Fabian,
Executive Director*

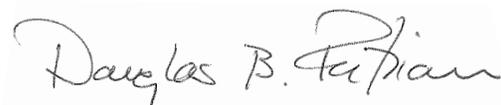
End of the Year Comments And What Next Year Bring?

Planners and organizers around the world are asking that very same question. *What will next year bring?* Here in the US we seem to be pre-occupied with the "Fiscal Cliff" and whether we will be able to move the economy in a positive direction and also have sufficient funds to care for those who need help the most. At Crisis Services,

we are thinking about next year and the year after. But, prior to skipping to next year, I think it is important to take inventory of this year. First, although our funding was threatened in several areas, we made it through without any major programmatic or financial losses. Second, our services and programs have kept pace with the community's needs. In many cases, we have demonstrated an excellent ability to help people during their worst moments. Third, we have added new services, new staff and new ideas all of which contribute toward making us a very strong and viable commodity in the Buffalo/Erie County community. Lastly, to use a cliché, we are stronger because of the problems we have had to endure on a daily basis.

What about next year? In a very recent board meeting, following comments I made concerning the challenges that lie ahead for this organization, Scott Atwater, the incoming President for 2013 summarized things by saying "Well, what we then need to do, is what we currently do, in the best way we can do it!" Translation, we need to continue our efforts in the same vein but be mindful that we may need to adjust our practices in order to answer the service need and the expectations of our funding sources. When one is unsure (and no one really knows for sure!) as to the future course for this agency, the best practice is to lead with what you do best. And, what we do best is respond to people in crisis due to mental health concerns, domestic or family violence, a sexual assault, trauma, or a situation in which one finds themselves alone, abandoned and homeless. Unfortunately, the numbers of people representing these situations seem to be increasing. Fortunately, they will be met by an organization with well trained staff who will seek out the most effective resources to counter their problems. Our best laid plans for the future lie in the strength of our staff to carry out our agency mission daily, weekly, throughout the year and into the year ahead.

Thank you to staff, their supervisors and the board of directors who have served well by guiding Crisis Services through 2012. All the best for the Holidays and for the New Year!



Douglas B. Fabian,
Executive Director

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Crisis Services Hosts 3rd Annual Thanks-4-Giving Volunteer Appreciation Dinner



The Crisis Services conference room is filled with volunteers enjoying a Thanksgiving dinner prepared by staff.

More than 30 volunteers attended the 3rd Annual Thanks-4-Giving dinner held at Crisis Services on November 8th, 2012. A turkey dinner with all the trimmings was prepared by Crisis Services' staff as a way to say "thank you" to our devoted volunteers. Executive Director Douglas B. Fabian addressed the gathering, thanking them for their tireless contribution to the agency. The volunteers present for the evening's festivities work on the phones in our 24-hour hotline, as well as the Advocate Program, meeting with survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in area emergency rooms.

Crisis Services relies heavily on our volunteers to provide services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If you would like more information about becoming a volunteer, visit our website at www.crisisservices.org or call 834-3131.

Six Sigma Comes to Crisis Services

The Emergency Outreach and Trauma Response Program is in the process of going through a Six Sigma training, sponsored by the United Way. Six Sigma is a proven methodology for improving quality by reducing process defects. It was first introduced in the manufacturing arena, but has grown in popularity and is used in many corporate settings as well as in nonprofit and health care organizations. Six Sigma focuses on minimizing process variation, understanding and meeting customer expectations for quality, and using data to make

Coming Together and Building Competent Communities for Suicide Prevention, continued from page 1.

a very important role in sharing accurate data related to suicides in Erie County. Unfortunately, Erie County, similar to other areas of the state and country, has seen a sharp increase in youth suicide in the past few years. Data has suggested that suicide among older adolescents and young adults (15 to 24) tripled in 2011. The number of attempts, as you can imagine, remains unknown but we can safely say that this number has also increased. The coalition will be following these trends through 2012 and into 2013. Data that is quality driven and verifiable is imperative in helping to calculate the challenges before the coalition.

Our role at Crisis Services is one of leading the coordinated effort to prevent suicides in Erie County. Crisis Services will remain in the forefront of all the activities involving the coalition. Crisis Services will work with its coalition partners to bring about a multifaceted approach to suicide prevention. For instance, in April of 2013, the coalition, in partnership with WNED, will produce an evening of suicide prevention awareness. WNED will broadcast a film on suicide prevention for its Canadian and Western New York viewers. The broadcast will be followed by a question and answer session, with a live audience at WNED's studio. It has been said that WNED has the capacity to reach 3.1 million households. With the launching of such a special project, the coalition will have remarkably progressed in ways never before imagined. Stay tuned for additional reports on the coalition in upcoming newsletters in 2013.

informed decisions. As a response to ever-growing demand for the program's rapid and effective services, the Emergency Outreach Program is focusing on how to be more efficient and obtain positive end results quicker, while also maintaining or improving customer service. Five agency staff are attending, ranging from front-line workers, to program managers, to administrative staff. Training will wrap up in December, with an outcome report due in June, and the anticipation of Yellow Belt status for the trainees.

Crisis Services Hosts Elder Abuse Conference

Sexual violence in later life is all too often a taboo topic that we understand to be significantly under-reported. The 2011 NYS Elder Abuse Prevalence Study found that only 5% of elder abuse victims ever report it to law enforcement. Physical abuse, which included sexual abuse in the study, was the second most self-reported form of elder abuse.

Because of the difficulty of measuring and recognizing sexual violence later in life, Crisis Services hosted a conference on the prevention and proper handling of sexual violence cases in the 60 and over population on November 16, 2012 at the Hotel Lafayette. Organized by the Advocate and Sexual Assault Forensic Programs, the day-long event focused on best practices regarding elder sexual abuse detection, evidence collection, interviewing, prosecuting cases, elder care systems' response as well as elder sexual homicide. Almost 60 professionals attended, including law enforcement, sexual assault forensic nursing, rape crisis advocacy, as well as leaders and educators in elder care from community agencies, hospitals and other facilities.

Dr. Ann Burgess, an internationally recognized pioneer in the assessment and treatment of victims of trauma and abuse, was the primary speaker. She is Professor of Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing at Boston College Connell School of Nursing and Professor Emerita from the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Burgess co-founded one of the first hospital-based crisis intervention programs for rape victims at Boston City Hospital. She has worked with FBI Academy special agents to study serial offenders, and the links between child abuse, juvenile delinquency, and subsequent perpetration. She has testified as an expert witness in 29 states and has conducted research and published on the topics of rape trauma, child sexual abuse, child pornography, serial offenders, crime classification, post-traumatic stress, elder abuse, and mental disorders.

Along with Dr. Burgess, representatives from the District Attorney's Office, law enforcement, and elder care provided local expertise: Rosanne Johnson, Assistant District Attorney and Bureau Chief for the Erie County District Attorney's Office; Detective Michael Hockwater, Cheektowaga Police Dept; Stephen Manuele, Feldman Kieffer; LLP and Christina Fineburg, Director of Social Work for Catholic Health-McAuley Residence.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month Activities

To recognize October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Advocate Program organized several events and activities throughout the month, both inside and outside of Crisis Services.

Program staff designed lovely empowerment inspired t shirts (available for

purchase now!) The tree design matched the tree that we placed in the front hallway of the building and each week of the month we highlighted facts and myths about different underserved populations of domestic violence victims. Teen dating violence was the topic we chose to focus on raising community awareness around. To do this, we organized several presentations at local agencies that provide services to young adults and our staff provided snacks and conversations with the teens about how to recognize abuse and how to have healthy relationships. In keeping with this topic, at the monthly meeting, we hosted a screening of "No One Would Tell". On October 17, 2012 united with organizations all across NYS recognizing Shine the Light on Domestic Violence day, we went "Violet Against Violence" by wearing purple to signify our support of Domestic Violence Survivors. That day we also presented a local press conference featuring leaders from several local domestic violence providers including, Laura Grubbe from Child and Family Services' Haven House, Chief Scott Joslyn of the Erie County Sheriff's Office, Robyn Wiktorski-Reynolds of the Crisis Services' Advocate Program and Michael Chase, the Community Relations Chair of the Erie County Coalition Against Family Violence. We were honored to have Senator Tim Kennedy, as well as Crystal Rodriguez, head of the City of Buffalo's Commission on Citizens' Rights and Community Relations speak. Additionally, Erie County Commissioner of Public Advocacy, Sawrie Becker and the First Deputy Commissioner of Social Services, Judy Shanley presented. Here is a link to that press conference: <http://news.wbfo.org/post/shine-light-domestic-violence-day>.



Robyn Wiktorski-Reynolds on steps of City Hall for Shine the Light on Domestic Violence Day press conference.

6th Annual Men Who Cook



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Crisis Services presented their **6th annual MEN WHO COOK** fundraising event on Tuesday, October 2, 2012 at the beautifully restored Golden Ballroom of the Statler Hotel. Guests enjoyed tasting the many culinary delights prepared by six area restaurants and twenty-one celebrity chefs, featuring such delicacies as “Buffaloed” Mac ‘n Cheese, Chicken Paprikash, Arancini with San Marzano Tomatoes, Chicken Enchiladas with Chili Cocoa Sauce, Cheese Blintzes with Raspberry Sauce, Jambalaya, Guacamole, Smoked Trout Crostini, Gazpacho Shots and Smoked BBQ Ribs. The fabulous food was washed down with plenty of Flying Bison beer and Premier wines, as well as a couple of different cocktails artfully mixed by Jon Karel of Vera Pizzeria. To see a video of the event, or to get these and many other recipes and find out more about our chefs, go to our website at www.crisisservices.org

\$26,000 was raised to support the crucial work of the programs of Crisis Services. During the evening, an awards presentation took place where The Michael B. Coppock Award, named in memory of a beloved staff member of Crisis Services who passed away four years ago, went to Susan Parker-Prusiecki, a Crisis Counselor in the 24-Hour Hotline. Also recognized were the Evans Police Department and the Buffalo Psychiatric Center as Community Partners of Excellence.

Scott Levin of WGRZ, Channel 2 served as emcee for the event.



Thanks to all of our amazing restaurants, celebrity chefs and sponsors that made it all possible!

Restaurants:

- The Left Bank
- Ilio DiPaolo's
- Redlinski Meats
- Auntie Rose Cookies
- The Buffalo Catering Company
- Buffalo State Campus House

MEN Who COOK

Celebrity Chefs & Servers:

- Dan Barrett, Anthony Billittier, Dennis Black, Brian Brault, Jim Casion, Ryan Casullo, Steve Cichon, John Craig, Tim Herzog, Jeff Hirschfeld, Jim Hofmeister, Jimmy Janowski, Ben Johnson, Jim Kuryak, David Mann, Paul Mazur, Hon. John Michalski, Hon. John O'Donnell, Jeff Pirrone, Aaron Podolefsky, Ted Schmidt, Fr. Paul Seil, John Simich, Chris Spicer and John Stevens.

Mark your calendars for Men Who Cook 2013 on October 1, 2013. Stay tuned for more info!

MEN WHO COOK 2012 Event Sponsors

Silver Plate Sponsor

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- Kory Memorial Golf Tournament

Bronze Plate

- First Niagara Bank
- TJ Maxx
- University Emergency Medical Services

Honorary Chefs

- Flying Bison Brewing Company
- John Rodgers
- D'Youville College
- FDR Medical Services PC
- Five Star Bank
- Kirisits & Associates

If you would like information on becoming a sponsor for this incredible event, please contact Judy Caraotta at 831-4467 or jcaraotta@crisisservices.org

OUR MISSION

Crisis Services is dedicated to promoting the health, safety, and well being of the community through prevention, education, immediate intervention and access to community wide resources 24 hours a day.



Please consider donating your old cell phone(s) to Crisis Services to help survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Call 834-2310, ext. 4467 for more information.

MEMORIAL & TRIBUTE GIFTS TO CRISIS SERVICES

Make a donation today in support of Crisis Services and those who depend on our critical services.

Remember a friend, loved one or family member for a birthday, anniversary or special celebration or to offer a meaningful expression of one's sympathy, love and respect at the time of death with a gift to the Crisis Services Foundation. Your gift today can help Crisis Services continue to provide excellent services and programs to individuals in need in our community, as it has since 1968. In order to treat and assist people in emotional crisis through a variety of therapeutic services, we need your ongoing generous support. Enclosed in this newsletter is a convenient envelope for your use, or you may charge (MasterCard, VISA or American Express) your donation online by visiting our secure website at:

www.crisisservices.org

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Read about Crisis Services and the new Suicide Prevention Coalition of Erie County. See front page.

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