

The Elkhart Truth

July 10, 2011

Suicide Prevention

Connections could save someone's life

Recently, I had emergency surgery and realized just how “connected” I am. Initially, I had contacted my husband from the doctor’s office to meet me at the hospital. As we waited in the hospital for details, we made a couple of phone calls to ensure that our children had a place to be. Within 30 minutes a friend showed up saying “I hear you’re dealing with a crisis. Would you like me to stay awhile?” Wow! What caring! Later before surgery, our pastor arrived to pray with us. After surgery, I was astounded to see an additional group of people waiting all concerned about me. We hadn’t called these people, but they cared and came.

As I reflect back on this moment, I realize what a better place our world could be if we all cared a little more. I so often take for granted that I am loved and cared for, forgetting not everyone has that blessing.

In the first 6 months of 2011, we have had seven individuals die by suicide in Elkhart County. How many of these individuals were lacking in connections? How many of them had no local family or church connection? How many of them needed someone to reach out and say “I care.” or “How is your day going?” Is it possible that these individuals might have made a different choice if someone had reached out? I would like to think so.

The Elkhart County Suicide Prevention Coalition’s goal is to reduce the number of suicides in our community. On September 2, 2011, we will gather for our Annual Walk to help promote suicide prevention and awareness. We ask that you join us and connect with others to offer hope to those struggling with mental health issues or challenges. For further information, please go to our website www.elkhartsuicideprevention.org.

Barb Welty

Elkhart County Suicide Prevention Coalition