

November 8, 2010

Training is available to help prevent suicides

As members of the Elkhart County Suicide Prevention Coalition, we understand and recognize possible signs of suicidal thoughts or threats, but do you?

If a loved one or friend told you they were too overwhelmed to carry on, would you know what to do? Following the aftermath of an attempt or completed suicide, what would you do?

Recently, the ECSPC co-sponsored training with Connect, a suicide prevention program, on the reactions and aftermath following a suicide.

Local schools, mental health professionals and the Elkhart County Health Department were present. Designated as a National Best Practice Program, Connect is a tested community based program designed to increase the competence of individuals and communities to respond to suicidal events.

Connect promotes early recognition of mental illness, substance abuse and other risk factors that lead to suicidal behavior and teaches gatekeepers, service providers and/ or coalition members how to recognize, communicate, refer individuals at risk to appropriate resources.

Connect also offers training for individuals and community organizations to understand what resources exist and how to use local services when someone is at risk. There are several trainings available for anyone in our community to attend and, for a limited time, they are free.

We recognize that the suicide rates are lower this year in Elkhart County. It is in times like these that community members tend to disregard prevention and postvention efforts. In fact, this is a perfect opportunity to increase our awareness and join together to prevent more suicides.

If you are interested in attending Connect trainings or learning more about suicide prevention and/or postvention, please contact Misty Dillon, Connect project coordinator, at 261-3633 or at dillonm@ipfw.edu. information can also be found through the ECSPC website, www.elkhartsuicideprevention.org.

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