

The Community for Hope of Greater Oshkosh is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the prevention of suicide through education, intervention, and postvention. Following is a synopsis of the year highlighting events, activities, and initiatives for the time period of January 1, 2009, to October 31, 2009. They are aligned according to the strategic goals of the organization.

1. **Promote awareness/educate that suicide is a serious problem in our community, state and nation.** This would include presenting information to the public regarding suicide prevention strategies and increasing the understanding of risk and protective factors.

January 2009

Annual Art Contest awards and recognition in the Oshkosh Area Schools. Some participating schools had separate award ceremonies allowing CFH to promote the program and enforce the message *It's OK to Ask for Help*. General Member Sue Szabo presented at grade schools and middle schools; President Steve Sobojinski presented at St. Elizabeth Seton and Cabrini, and the Executive Director presented at ALPS (January 22) and Omro High School (all-school awards assembly on May 29).

February 2009

Guest Editorial written by Executive Director appeared in Oshkosh Northwestern addressing the stigma surrounding suicide.

April 15, 2009

Presentation at Leadership Oshkosh Human Services Day; Executive Director on panel with representatives from Christie Ann domestic violence shelter and Father Carr's Place2B. **Also meets strategic goal #5.**

April 18, 2009

Grief Symposium sponsored by Fox Valley Grief Network, in Appleton, WI; CFH hosted a booth providing literature and resources.

June 6, 2009

Don Merz staffed a booth at the US Bank Health Fair in Oshkosh. Miss Oshkosh, Chelsea Hammet, also assisted.

June 13-18, 2009

Participants in the Miss Wisconsin pageant held in Oshkosh wore the winning t-shirt from the annual art contest at various times throughout the week. **Also meets strategic goal #5**

July 4, 2009

CFH had entries in both the Oshkosh and Omro Fourth of July parades. Board Member Jenny Wesner coordinated the event which included CFH volunteers distributing information and a yellow Mustang (driven by Jenny's husband) was decorated in the Yellow Ribbon campaign theme. Chelsea Hammet, Miss Oshkosh, rode in the vehicle during the Omro parade.

July 20, 2009

President Kevin Mundell interviewed for the Oshkosh Community Media Services program, *Senior Savvy*. **Also meets strategic goal #2**

August 4, 2009

National Night Out; booths in Menasha were staffed by General Member Barry Busby and Executive Director; Oshkosh booth staffed by Board Member Jenny Wesner and SOS member Sandy Keppler.

August 19, 2009

Guest on Oshkosh Community Media Services program, *Oshkosh Today*, to promote community event and discuss warning signs of suicide/depression as well as access to services in the area.

August/September 2009

Distribution of CFH Yellow Ribbon folders to students in all public and private schools in Oshkosh, Winneconne, and Omro.

September 23, 2009

Guest speaker at the Menasha Rotary Club; discussed mission, goals, and programming of CFH.

October 2, 2009

Appeared on Bellin Hospital's cable television program, Healthy Views; discussed community-based suicide prevention strategies and ways to companion survivors of suicide loss. **Also meets strategic goal #6**

October 3, 2009

Living Well After 50; CFH hosted a booth at this annual health and wellness event held at the Sunnyview Expo Center. **Also meets strategic goal #2**

October 27, 2009

Interview with WEMI radio to be broadcast on Friday, October 30. Half-hour program discussing suicide warning signs, intervention, and access to services.

2. **Develop, implement, or facilitate suicide prevention strategies that address the needs of the various constituent groups within the community:** *elementary, middle and high school students in public as well as parochial schools; post-secondary school students at UW Oshkosh and FVTC; workers and employers; civic, social and service groups; church and faith-based groups; minorities (particularly our gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered, Hmong and Latino populations), and our mature citizens.*

Ongoing

Continuation of school liaison program that facilitated communication between schools and CFH; also distributes information to complement, enhance, or supplement existing school resources on suicide prevention education.

February 4 and March 8, 2009

Four-hour inservice training for Corrections Officers; sponsored by NWTC in Green Bay; included QPR training and identifying depression; officers attending were from throughout the state; competencies covered self-care for this at-risk population and integrated state/county policies on suicide prevention within the facilities where they are employed. (31)

February 18, 2009

Presentation at the WI Chiefs of Police Conference in Wisconsin Dells. Approximately 200 law enforcement administrators in attendance for a four-hour, plenary session on the subject of depression. QPR training was included. Departments were encouraged to develop suicide prevention strategies for prevention among law enforcement personnel, an identified risk group.

March 23, 2009

Presentation at the International Association of Police Chaplains regional conference in Germantown, WI. Competencies included self-care for attendees, identifying symptoms of depression, communication with the high-risk group of law enforcement officers they serve, access to services, and QPR training (75).

April 6, 2009

All staff inservice training at Winneconne High School. Coordinated by Sara Kaiser, counselor, and General Member of CFH; included skit performed by middle school students on subject of depression and communication.

May 11, 2009

Training for WI State Corrections Officer certification program. Attendees are seeking certification as jail officers; represented various sheriff's departments from throughout the state; competencies included self-care, warning signs of depression, access to services, and integration of state policies/practices for care of inmates.

May 26, 2009

Guest speaker at Winnebago County Caregiver Coalition at the Oshkosh Senior Center; presented information about CFH and services available to members of the coalition.

August 4, 2009

Attended networking session with representatives from Senior Living Communities in Oshkosh.

August 26, 2009

QPR training for command staff at Oshkosh Police Department. (15) **Also meets strategic goal #3**

September/October 2009

Assisted Kaukauna School District staff in implementing an intervention strategy and education plan in response to the death of four students in six months' time. This included integrating current services with available community services, providing technical assistance and referrals to local care providers, and facilitating a public forum held on October 6.

October 21, 2009

Guest speaker in Abnormal Psychology courses at FVTC in Appleton. Discussed signs, symptoms, intervention strategies, current trends, and resources for approximately 40 students in various programs including nursing, AODA specialist, and criminal justice. **Also meets strategic goal #1.**

3. Develop, implement or facilitate training opportunities that teach (a) what to look for regarding warning signs and risk factors associated with suicidal behavior, (b) how to intervene/be helpful to someone in distress, and (c) local resources. This would include Yellow Ribbon training and possibly gatekeeper training.

January 30, 2009

QPR training for staff at Fox Valley Technical College—Riverview Campus in Oshkosh. (10)

February 3, 2009

QPR training for Winnebago County staff members at Coughlin Building. (9)

February 19, 2009

QPR training for Winnebago County staff members at Neenah office of Human Services. (6)

February 27, 2009

QPR training for staff at Fox Valley Technical College—main campus in Appleton. (25)

September 8, 2009

QPR training open to the public at Wichmann-Fargo Funeral Home in Menasha. (42)

October 22, 2009

Kevin Mundell, president of CFH, became certified as a QPR trainer at a training session held in Wood County, WI. At the same training, the Executive Director became certified as a master trainer able to train others on how to teach QPR. CFH now has two people certified to teach QPR.

October 21, 2009

Board Member Jenny Wesner participated in Lourdes High School (Oshkosh) Respect Life Day; presented three, 30-minute sessions reaching all students at the high school.

November 12, 2009

Don Merz presented as part of NAMI Oshkosh's Family-to-Family program addressing warning signs and suicide. ***Also meets strategic goal #5***

4. **Promote efforts to reduce access to lethal means of self-harm.** *This could be included in all trainings and education opportunities and may pair CFH with police staff, safety experts, hospital staff, parent educators, poison experts and mental health providers, to name a few.*

Ongoing

Participation by the Executive Director in the state Suicide Prevention Initiative team; monthly meetings that bring together local suicide prevention coalitions from across the state to share resources and foster continuity.

Executive Director applied for membership in the newly formed steering committee for the Suicide Prevention Initiative team and was selected to serve a three-year term. (This term began after November 1, 2009.)

Continual awareness of lethal means restriction via all presentations made by Community for Hope. Gun locks available at any time CFH had a display or booth at public events (see strategic goal #1 for dates of events).

April 29 and 30, 2009

Inaugural state Suicide Prevention Summit. Attended this two-day event with CFH president, Kevin Mundell. Participated and facilitated in the small group sessions that addressed needs of local coalitions throughout the state. Keynote address by representatives of state-wide programs in Ohio and Tennessee provided models for Wisconsin to consider in developing a state-wide model for prevention. Executive Director participated in planning meetings for this inaugural event. ***Also meets strategic goal #5***

September 24 and 25, 2009

Attended statewide Crisis Intervention Conference to learn latest strategies for collaboration and minimizing acute crisis situations. Interfaced with crisis workers, social workers, law enforcement, veterans administration staff, and safety experts from throughout the state.

Also meets strategic goal #5

5. **Foster ease of access to sources of help for those in need and promote linkages** *between community medical, mental health, human service, substance abuse providers and those persons in the community who need these services. This could include working with the medical community (hospitals: using brochures, doing safety planning) and doctors (training, brochures) and the Winnebago County crisis team (brochures, kits, resource guide, etc.)*

Ongoing

General Members Gretchen Koch and Mary Salzer regularly attend the Oshkosh Mental Health Task Force. Gretchen also serves as a conduit for the Fox Valley Mental health Emergency Preparedness Consortium. Mary attends the Collaboration in Oshkosh meetings.

General Members Mary Salzer, Barry Busby, and Dan Hinton attend the Winnebago County Tobacco Coalition meetings.

Regular updates to the Community for Hope website and social networking page of Facebook where Community for Hope has a site.

Participated in the planning of the first state-wide Suicide Prevention Summit held in April 2009.

Served as resource and provided technical assistance to the newly formed Community for Hope of Fox Cities. During Suicide Prevention Awareness week, this organization was promoted through newspaper articles featuring an interview with the Executive Director and members of the Appleton SOS group. The article subsequently ran in other local Gannett newspapers. An emphasis was on the need for developing caring communities who are educated in and comfortable with suicide prevention. The Executive Director continued to serve as a resource for CFH—Fox Cities which is now a recognized suicide prevention coalition in the state.

January 2009

Met with members of ROADS (Reaching Out Against Depression and Suicide) in Shawano, WI, to share resources and discuss possible cross-county training, fundraising for national speaker/presenter, and grant funding opportunities.

May 8, 2009

Attended training opportunity, Suicide and Depression Awareness conference, held at the Jewish Community Center in Milwaukee. Half-day presentation featured national speakers from the CDC addressing trends and updated statistical data.

October 27, 2009

Four-hour training program sponsored by Mercy Medical Center titled Suicide and Spirituality. Three members from Community for Hope, president Kevin Mundell, general member Susan Szabo, MD, and the Executive Director. The 50 people in attendance were all in chaplaincy or pastoral care. ***Also meets strategic goal #1 and #2***

March and September 2009

Suicide awareness education for the CIT (Critical Incident Team) training sponsored by NAMI of Fox Valley; statewide training held in Appleton, WI. All participants were law enforcement officers from throughout the state receiving certification in working with the mentally ill.

August 19, 2009

FVGN (Fox Valley Grief Network) meeting; CFH discussed the upcoming QPR training in collaboration with Wichman-Fargo Funeral Home in Appleton

October 2009

Collaborated with students in an Intro to Human Services course at UW-Oshkosh to assist CFH in updating the Mental Health Resource Guide and develop a database of organizations that CFH can approach with suicide prevention training opportunities.

6. Promote opportunities to address the needs of survivors of suicide.

Ongoing

Monthly SOS meetings in Appleton, Oshkosh, and Ripon. CFH provides the facilitators and other resources to support these groups. Annual holiday remembrance event held at all three sites in December.

Monthly participation in the training sessions offered by the AFSP (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention) for facilitators of group sessions; phone-in conference that shares current trends, reviews guidelines and best practices, and addresses participant concerns about facilitating.

Assisted and provided resources for other SOS groups as requested. This included helping the Dickinson County, MI, group with sustainability measures and their plans for an AFSP Out of the Darkness Walk in September. Executive Director was interviewed for local newspapers and was part of the program on the day of the event. On October 21, two members of the Appleton SOS group attended the SOS group in Two Rivers, WI, as guest speakers.

January 15, 2009

Transitioned new SOS facilitator(s) for the Oshkosh SOS group following six-month search for facilitator. Group welcomed Karen Schmit and Dr. Tom Altepeter.

September 10, 2009

Second annual event for Suicide Prevention Awareness Week; community-based event providing information on warning signs and prevention strategies as well as honoring loved ones lost to suicide; joined with state and national campaigns. Miss Oshkosh, Chelsea Hammet, was a keynote speaker. ***Also meets strategic goal #1***

September 30 and October 1, 2009

CFH co-sponsored a nationally known speaker on grief, Dr. Alan Wolfelt. Executive Director attended the planning meetings and assisted with coordination of the exhibitors booths for the evening event open to the public (225 people attended public event; 75 mental health professionals attended the specialized training on October 1). CFH had a presence in advertising, promotion, and publicity. Executive Director staffed the booth and distributed hundreds of pieces of literature as well as communicating training or support group information. Board Member Jenny Wesner attended the training on October 1. ***Also meets strategic goal #1 and #5***

To view the current set of strategic goals, visit the website, www.communityforhope.org

Respectfully submitted,
Mary VanHaute, Executive Director; 1/1/09 to 10/31/09