



## Westmoreland County Suicide Awareness and Prevention Task Force

Dear Community Member,

The numbers are staggering. The suicide rate continues to rise, both in the US and in our own state of Pennsylvania. The news stories we hear are about homicides, but here in PA, nearly three times as many people die from suicide as homicide, and for every suicide, there are an estimated 25 attempts. When you hear someone say they have no hope...do not want to be here anymore...their family will be better off without them...are giving away their belongings; those are warning signs.

The Ray of Hope Task Force is dedicated to the prevention of suicide through community outreach and education. We educate about warning signs, how to intervene, and where to turn. We recognize that suicide is a national health problem across the lifespan, and work to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness and suicide. Our task force is a very active county organization made up of volunteers from various human services agencies, schools, and governmental offices as well as community members, some of whom have lost loved ones to suicide.

On September 8, 2018, in recognition of National Suicide Prevention Week, we are hosting our 12th Annual Ray of Hope Walk for Suicide Awareness and Prevention at Twin Lakes Park in Greensburg. The funds raised are used for community education and outreach, and support for Mental Health America's LOSS (Loved Ones Stolen by Suicide) Survivor's Group. This event is held to both raise awareness of the issue and to show support for the families and friends of those lost to suicide. We hold a survivors event prior to the walk for additional support, and together, we remember and honor each of those lives lost.

Again this year, we are offering the opportunity to be a corporate sponsor, and have your company's name listed on the walk t-shirts. In order to be listed, a minimum donation of \$200.00 is requested, and deadline to be listed on shirt is August 1. However, any donation is helpful, monetary or otherwise! Baskets, gift cards, or other items to raffle are also very much appreciated! I hope you will consider making a fully tax-deductible contribution to help us fight for this important cause.

For more details, you may contact me at [bcroft@mhaswpa.org](mailto:bcroft@mhaswpa.org) or (724) 834-6351 ext. 118.

Sincerely,

*Beth Croft*

Westmoreland County Suicide Awareness and Prevention Task Force Treasurer

\*If you are able to help, and would prefer to make a monetary contribution to our cause, checks should be made out to "MHA- Walk, and mailed to MHA-SWPA, 409 Coulter Ave., Suite 4, Greensburg, PA, 15601.

Mental Health America of Southwestern PA, fiduciary for the Ray of Hope: Westmoreland County Suicide Awareness and Prevention Task Force, is designated as a 501(c)(3) corporation by the Internal Revenue Service. All contributions to the Ray of Hope Task Force are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. The official registration and financial information of Mental Health America of Southwestern PA may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll free, within PA, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.