



# Ray of Hope

FALL 2022

WESTMORELAND COUNTY  
SUICIDE AWARENESS & PREVENTION TASK FORCE

**Our mission** is to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness and suicide and to increase awareness that suicide is a national public health problem for individuals across a lifespan.



## 16TH ANNUAL WALK!



On Saturday, September 10, 2022, the Ray of Hope Task Force hosted the 16th Annual Suicide Awareness & Prevention Walk at Twin Lakes Park in Greensburg, PA to remember the lives lost to suicide.

The event included a survivors' event facilitated by Dr. Sam Lonich, reading of the names lost to suicide, a dove release, raffle baskets, and of course, the walk. This year, over 400 people participated in this special event!

We would like to thank our wonderful volunteers and our walk chairperson, Sherry Anderson. Their passion and dedication makes this event possible. The Greater Latrobe Aevium Club helped stuff bags on Friday and the Seton Hill University students led our walk participants on Saturday. Our terrific DJ, Jeff Biddle from Perfection DJs Pittsburgh, provided awesome tunes, and Bob Polczynski from Memory Makers released the beautiful doves over Twin Lakes!

We would also like to thank our fantastic sponsors: Adelphoi, Beacon Health Options, Caregivers of Southwestern PA, Clarion Psychiatric Center, EMB Machining Services, Mental Health America of Southwestern PA, PHN Charitable Foundation, Southwood Psychiatric Hospital, St. Anthony's Club, Teamsters Local Union No. 30, The Marsili Family, The Tomko Family in Memory of Steve & Matt, Tony Angelo FOE #01188, Westmoreland Casemanagement and Supports, Westmoreland Community Action, and Westmoreland Drug & Alcohol Commission!

## WHAT WE DO

- Offer presentations on suicide awareness and prevention, including QPR Training (Question, Persuade, Refer)
- Hold the Ray of Hope Annual Walk
- Host a biennial conference and educational seminars
- Support the L.O.S.S. Support Group (Loved Ones Stolen by Suicide)
- Hold quarterly Task Force meetings

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# 16TH ANNUAL WALK PHOTOS







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# 16TH ANNUAL WALK PHOTOS





## COMMUNITY EVENT PHOTOS



Mon Valley Night Out Event



JPO Family FunFest



Westmoreland County Human Services  
Resource Fair



ParentWISE Family Funday Sundae



Greensburg Salem Back to School Bash



Disability Awareness Day

# ASIST TRAINING BROUGHT TO OUR AREA!

On August 25 & 26, 2022, fourteen participants attended ASIST Training. ASIST stands for Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training and is a two-day, intensive, interactive, and practice-dominated course designed to help caregivers recognize those in crisis and learn how to intervene and prevent the immediate risk of suicide.

With a value of \$2000 per attendee, participants were able to attend this impactful training at no cost thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Westmoreland County BH/DS/EI Office.

Conducted by Mary Brown and Govan Martin, founder of the [Suicide Prevention Alliance](#), participants learned how to:

- identify people who have thoughts of suicide.
- understand how beliefs and attitudes can affect suicide interventions.
- ask the Person at Risk about their thoughts of suicide.
- connect with the Person at Risk, listen to their story, and connect them with community and national resources.

## UPCOMING DATES FOR YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING (\$170 VALUE)



Provided by the PCCD Grant, the Westmoreland Intermediate Unit (WIU) is offering 8-hour **Youth Mental Health First Aid** certification training at **NO COST** to participants 18 years and older. Training sessions include a participant manual and lunch.

Youth Mental Health First Aid is a comprehensive training specifically designed to equip educators, family members, and caregivers with the skills and knowledge to identify, understand, and respond to the signs or risk factors of mental health concerns in youth. Just as CPR helps you assist an individual having a heart attack, Youth Mental Health First Aid helps you assist someone experiencing a mental health or substance use-related crisis.

All training sessions are held from 8 AM - 4 PM at the Westmoreland Intermediate Unit, 102 Equity Drive, Greensburg, PA 15601.

- October 13, 2022
- November 17, 2022
- January 12, 2023
- February 16, 2023
- March 16, 2023
- April 13, 2023
- May 18, 2023
- July 13, 2023



**To register for a session:**

Go to

<https://www.wiu7.org/apps/events/>

and search for

Youth Mental Health First Aid.



# RAY OF HOPE SUMMER 2022 OUTREACH & TRAINING EVENTS

## Pride Events

06/25/22: Scottdale

06/25/22: Greensburg Pride Prom

**Disability Awareness Day** hosted by  
Representative Jason Silvas

07/07/22: Keystone Park

**Westmoreland County Human Services  
Resource Fair**

07/14/22: WCCC

**ParentWISE Family Funday Sundae** hosted by  
Wesley Family Services

07/17/22: Lynch Field Park

**QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) Training**

07/20/22: Seton Hill University

09/10/22: Beacon Health Options

**CSAY Night Out**

08/02/22: Mon Valley

08/03/22: Northmoreland

08/04/22: Hempfield

08/09/22: Mt. Pleasant

**Transition Age Advisory Group (TAAG)**

**Picnics**

06/28/22: Moraine State Park

07/26/22: Mingo Creek Park

08/09/22: Mammoth Park

**CSP Picnic**

07/21/22: New Stanton Park

**4th Annual OVN Fallen Heroes Run & Military  
Appreciation Event**

08/06/22: Z&M Harley Davidson

**DNP Health Fair**

08/16/22 & 08/17/2: RIDC Park

**PFLAG Greensburg Pride in the Park Picnic**

08/21/22: Hempfield Park

**Back to School Bash**

08/24/22: Greensburg Salem School District

**Back to School Night**

08/25/22: Derry Area Middle School

**ASIST Training**

08/25/22 & 08/26/22: WCCC

**Overdose Awareness Day**

08/31/22: Twin Lakes Park

**16th Annual Ray of Hope Walk**

09/10/22: Twin Lakes Park

**Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation's  
Family Funfest**

09/13/22: Twin Lakes Park

## CHECK OUT OUR NEW LENDING LIBRARY

If you are interested in reading any of the books listed below, please contact the Ray of Hope Coordinator, Lisa Goldberg at 724-875-2415 or by email at [egoldberg@mhaswpa.org](mailto:egoldberg@mhaswpa.org). Books can be signed out for a period of 30 days and must be picked up and returned at 409 Coulter Ave., Greensburg, PA 15601.

### Voices of Healing & Hope

Conversations on Grief after Suicide  
By Iris Bolton

### Still With Us

Voices of Sibling Suicide Loss  
Survivors  
Edited by Lena M. Q. Heilmann

### Do They Have Bad Days in Heaven

By Michelle Linn-Gust, Ph.D.

### Must Be the Witches in Heaven

An irreverent guide for knowing what to say after someone dies by suicide  
By Heidi Bryan

### Diary of a Broken Mind

A Mother's Story, A Son's Suicide, and the Haunting Lyrics He Left Behind  
By Anne Moss Rogers with Charles Rogers

### Emotionally Naked

A Teacher's Guide to Preventing Suicide and Recognizing Students at Risk  
By Anne Moss Rogers and Kimberly H. McManama O'Brien, Ph.D, LICSW

### Suicide The Forever Decision

By Paul G. Quinnett



## UPCOMING EVENTS

# LOSSteams Training

A LOSS Team is a group of suicide loss survivors, first responders, and community members who provide information about resources, as well as, offer comfort and hope to those impacted by the loss of a loved one to suicide as soon as possible following the death.

**October 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022**

**Location: Westmoreland County Community College,  
Youngwood Campus**

*This is a regional training offered at no cost to County Suicide Prevention Task Forces, Suicide Loss Survivors, First Responders, Mental Health Professionals, Suicide Prevention, Clergy, and Coroners.*



**Facilitated BY:**

**Frank Campbell, PhD, LCSW, CT**

Dr. Frank Campbell is internationally recognized for his efforts in Suicide Prevention. He has served as the President of the American Association of Suicidology and was awarded Social Worker of the Year for the state of Louisiana. Dr. Campbell developed the LOSSteams model and his documentaries have been aired throughout the world.

**Eventbrite Registration**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/lossteams-training-tickets-406847059507>

**Hosted by:**



**Ray of Hope**

**Westmoreland County Suicide Awareness & Prevention Task Force**

For more information: [egoldberg@mhaswpa.org](mailto:egoldberg@mhaswpa.org)

**Sponsored By:**

**Westmoreland County BH/DS/IE Office**

**Eventbrite Registration:**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/lossteams-training-tickets-406847059507>



## UPCOMING EVENTS

# 2022 Ray of Hope Annual Suicide Awareness & Prevention Conference

*"From Darkness to Light,  
Where Our Hope Takes Flight"*

## November 18, 2022

Location: WCCC, Youngwood Campus  
Student Achievement Center

Hosted By:

### Ray of Hope

**Westmoreland County Suicide Awareness & Prevention Task Force**

For complete Conference details click on  
the link below:

**Eventbrite Registration**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2022-ray-of-hope-annual-conference-tickets-422192859207>

For further info,

Contact Lisa Goldberg [egoldberg@mhaswpa.org](mailto:egoldberg@mhaswpa.org) or  
724.834.6351 Ex. 122

Sponsored By Westmoreland County BH/DS/EI  
Office in partnership with Ray of Hope



**Eventbrite Registration:**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2022-ray-of-hope-annual-conference-tickets-422192859207>



# MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

## CRISIS RESOURCES

Westmoreland County Crisis Hotline	1-800-836-6010
Crisis Text Line	Text HOME to 741741
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	988 or 1-800-273-8255
Trevor Lifeline (LGBTQ)	1-866-488-7386
Trevor Project Text Line (LGBTQ)	Text START to 678678
Veteran's Crisis Line	1-800-273-8255 Press 1
Veteran's Crisis Line Chat/Text	Text 838255



## LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS

### Mental Health America of Southwestern PA (MHA-SWPA)

#### Virtual Support Groups

Contact Heather McLean at 724-433-1359 or [hmclean@mhaswpa.org](mailto:hmclean@mhaswpa.org) for more info.

- **Aging Up Support Group (transitional ages 18-26):** Meets 2nd Monday, 4-5 pm
- **LGBTQIA+ Support Group:** Meets 2nd Tuesday, 6-7 pm
- **Mental Health Support Group:** Meets 2nd Tuesday, 1-2 pm
- **The "Anyone" Support Group (for anyone wanting to talk):** Meets 1st Wed., 6-7 pm

#### In-Person Support Groups

**PLEASE NOTE: Please call first to see if the group is meeting in person or has been cancelled.**

- **MHA-SWPA Caring Ones Support Group:** For those supporting a loved one with a mental health illness. Meets 2nd Monday, 6-7:30 pm, Contact Heather McLean: 724-433-1359
- **MHA-SWPA Hope & Healing Support Group:** For those recovering from a past suicide attempt. Meets 1st & 3rd Monday, 6-7:30 pm, Contact Heather McLean: 724-433-1359
- **MHA-SWPA L.O.S.S. (Loved Ones Stolen by Suicide):** Informal open support group for those who have lost a loved one to suicide. Meets 1st Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 pm, Contact Beth Crofutt: 724-834-6351
- **NAMI Family Support Meetings:** Meets 2nd Tuesday, 7-8:30 pm, West Hempfield Presbyterian Church, 8 W. Hempfield Dr., Irwin, PA 15642, Contact Harriett Hetrick: 724-596-5071

#### Additional Resources

**Come, Talk Inc.:** Resource center for anyone affected by suicide. 321 Main Street, Irwin, PA 15642, Contact Amanda Morrison: Call/Text: 724-978-1330, [come.talk15642@gmail.com](mailto:come.talk15642@gmail.com)

**HOLDHOPE-Parents Supporting Parents:** Helping parents to support their teen or young adult child through a mental health challenge, Contact Deana Cline: Call 724-268-0094, [support@holdhope.info](mailto:support@holdhope.info). Website: <https://holdhope.info/>



# TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP LIST

## STEERING COMMITTEE

Heather McLean - Chair	Jessica Carns
Laurie Barnett Levine - Vice Chair	John Herrmann
Beth Crofutt - Treasurer	Samantha Kindelberger
Nina D'Antonio - Secretary	Gayle Pamerleau
Lisa Goldberg - Task Force Coordinator	Sue Soltis
Sherry Anderson - Walk Chair	Bobby Tanyer
Carla Colello	Clare Vail

## MEMBERS AT LARGE

Tony Aubrey	Sam Lonich	Sarah Saucier
Ronel Baccus	Julie Lovis	Katie Sheridan
Mike Blahovec	Rita McWilliams	Patrick Showman
Brandi Brukner	Joni Michalski	Sara Stenger
Shanea Clancy	Monica Minyon	Celeste Tempo
Rachel Cunningham	Amanda Morrison	Barb Tomko
Beth Deni	Stefany Munsch	Stephanie Turin
Karen Egler	Linda Parker	Lee Wagner
Cassie Ellson	Karen Peconi	Michele Wentzel
Nicole Gallagher	Bree Piper	Carol Winters
Ariel James	Jackie Rider	Richard Yaksic
Bill Kemerer	Maria Rock	Susan Yaksic

## CONTACT US

409 Coulter Avenue, Greensburg, PA 15601

Phone: 724-834-6351

Website: [www.rayofhopewestmoreland.org](http://www.rayofhopewestmoreland.org)

Membership Questions: Email Lisa Goldberg at [egoldberg@mhaswpa.org](mailto:egoldberg@mhaswpa.org)

Newsletter Suggestions: Email Sue Soltis at [ssoltis@wiu7.org](mailto:ssoltis@wiu7.org)