



## **SUICIDE PREVENTION AND AWARENESS TASK GROUP MAY 10, 2022 MEETING MINUTES**

### **CALL TO ORDER**

This meeting was held via Zoom videoconference. Olga Viano called the meeting to order at 1:34pm.

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

The Suicide Prevention and Awareness Task Group Members in attendance were Olga Viano / New Lenox Community Park District, Dan Martin / Village of New Lenox, Marie Goulet / New Lenox School District #122, Mike Mecozzi / Trinity Services, Inc., Gia Washington / Sertoma Centre, Inc., Kevin Zwiers / Silver Oaks Behavioral Hospital, Jen Hahs / Rosecrance Health Network, Gloria Bodnar / Community Member, Kristy Bassett / Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital, Jen Beshansky / Lincoln-Way School District 210, Ariel Ruttenberg / New Lenox Police Department, Marianne Bithos / NAMI South Suburbs of Chicago, Holly Pierson, Lincoln-Way West High School and Carl Cicero / Metra PD.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes from the March 15, 2022 Task Group Meeting which had been disseminated via email to Task Group members were discussed. Mike Mecozzi made a motion to approve the minutes, and it was seconded by Gloria Bodnar. After no further discussion, the motion carried and the minutes were approved.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### ***“Mental Health First Aid” (MHFA)***

MHFA was held on Wednesday, April 13, 2022 from 8:30am to 4:30pm in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. A working lunch was provided to all attendees and instructors. 30 citizens registered for this class via Eventbrite. To date, 342 citizens have completed MHFA due to the partnership that we have with Sertoma Centre, Inc.

#### ***“safeTALK”***

“safeTALK” will be held on Thursday, May 12, 2022 from 9:00am to 1:00pm in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall. A working lunch will be included for all attendees and instructors. Currently, 28 citizens are registered for this class. This is the second time that Sertoma Centre, Inc. is teaching this class in New Lenox.

#### ***“Believe You Can 5K Run / Walk” (for Mental Health & Wellness)***

This event will be held on Saturday, May 21, 2022, 9:00am @ New Lenox Commons. Dan will continue to share the flier as well as a sponsor/donation letter. Tina Rauch was not able to attend our meeting today.

#### ***“A Pathway to Hope and Healing”***

“A Pathway to Hope and Healing” is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, September 21, 2022 at Lincoln-Way West High School. The planning team is proposing two breakout sessions that will be held from 4:00pm to 5:00pm. Then, there will be a keynote speaker from 5:00pm to 6:00pm. Then, there will be a break from

6:00pm to 6:30pm to allow time for food, raffles, and informational table visits. Lastly, the two breakout sessions will be repeated from 6:30pm to 7:30pm.

Linda Pacha will provide a breakout session entitled “*Learning to Live with Loss,*” which will be done at 4:00pm and then again at 6:30pm. Learning objectives include:

- Get a more practical understanding of grief stages and learn how skills obtained from past abrupt life changes can be used to work through grief.
- Identify choices after loss and reasons to keep pushing on.
- Understand the importance of forgiveness for healing and how to train your brain to stay positive.
- Gain tips for navigating grief and helping someone who is grieving.

Gia Washington will provide “*Question, Persuade and Refer*” training as a breakout session at 4:00pm and 6:30pm.

Linda Pacha will provide a keynote presentation entitled “*Suicide Prevention: Hindsight, Warning Signs, and Hope,*” at 5:00pm. Discussion points include:

- Linda will talk about her son’s story, share missed warning signs, and discuss the importance of kindness and compassion.
- Learn the risk factors and warning signs for suicide, including real-life examples.
- Obtain tips for helping someone who is struggling.

FYI - September 10, 2022 is World Suicide Prevention Day (this falls on a Saturday).

#### **Steering Committee Update (May 4, 2022 Meeting)**

Mike Mecozzi discussed the Collaborative Partner Organizations – Programs Survey, which was created in part, to fulfill Goal #4 from our 2022 Strategic Plan. Mike noted that some of our organizations have programs, classes, workshops, and other offerings that our Safe Community Coalition could host / sponsor. Mike reviewed and explained the “letter” to organizations, sample survey, and blank survey.

In addition, a discussion was held regarding our Collaborative Partner Organizations and how important engagement is. It was noted that there are 70 “Participating” Organizations and 103 Coalition Members. Everyone was encouraged to review of Coalition and Task Group Roster and encourage others to attend task group meetings, coalition meetings, and events.

The New Lenox Safe Community Coalition By-Laws were approved at the March 30, 2022 Coalition Meeting.

We continue to work on the 2022 Strategic Plan, Goal #4 (discussed above) in particular.

Information is continually compiled for the 2022 Annual Report, which will be published in January or February, 2023.

Dan thanked Mike Mecozzi for completing many of the Action Plans for recent activities and events. Dan encouraged others to volunteer to create an Action plan for the next event(s).

The next NLSCC quarterly newsletter will be the July, 2022 issue. Dan encouraged everyone to submit a 300 to 500-word article related to suicide prevention or something in the realm of behavioral health.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **“*Question, Persuade and Refer*” (QPR)**

The next “*Question, Persuade and Refer*” (QPR) will be during “*A Pathway to Hope and Healing*” tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, September 21, 2022 at Lincoln-Way West High School.

## **Illinois Suicide Prevention Alliance**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 18, 2022 from 10:00am to 1:00pm via WebEx. Contact Dan Martin if you wish to attend and he will provide the login information.

**New web pages for the DPH Suicide Prevention web page** <https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/prevention-wellness/suicide-prevention.html>

A Youth, Adolescent, and Young Adult Suicide Prevention subpage was created to serve as a landing page for content created by the ISPA Adolescent Suicide Prevention Ad Hoc Committee. The webpage includes a description of youth suicide, who is at risk, risk/protective factors, and warning signs.

<https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/prevention-wellness/suicide-prevention/youth-suicide-prevention.html>

How You Can Help Prevent Youth Suicide – a sub webpage with an overview of steps each of the following roles can take in suicide prevention: high schools, high school teachers, high school mental health providers, foster care providers, colleges and universities, and parents. <https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/prevention-wellness/suicide-prevention/youth-suicide-prevention/how-you-can-help.html>

Guidelines on Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention – a sub webpage to highlight suicide prevention-related documents to schools and others working with children, adolescents, and young adults.

<https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/prevention-wellness/suicide-prevention/youth-suicide-prevention/guidelines-on-youth-suicide-awareness-and-prevention.html>

## **GOOD OF THE ORDER / ORGANIZATION UPDATES**

None

## **NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting of the Suicide Prevention and Awareness Task Group will be **Tuesday, July 12, 2022 / 1:30pm** via Zoom videoconference.

*The next New Lenox Safe Community Coalition Meeting will be held on May 25, 2022 / 10:30am via Zoom videoconference.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 2:20pm.

### **Suicide Prevention and Awareness Task Group**

***“To reduce deaths and injuries related to suicide, through the development of educational programs, initiatives and strategies that address factors which lead to the attempt or completion of suicide.”***