

TSPN CALL TO ACTION

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 9
SEPTEMBER 2012

TENNESSEE SUICIDE PREVENTION NETWORK

PLEDGE TO PREVENT SUICIDE
Tennessee Suicide
Prevention Network **TSPN.ORG**

SUICIDE PREVENTION AWARENESS DAY EVENT SET FOR SEPTEMBER 12 IN NASHVILLE

The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network cordially invites you to our Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event, scheduled for 10:30 AM on Wednesday, September 12, at Trevecca Community Church, located at 335 Murfreesboro Pike in Nashville.

This event is the highlight of our annual Suicide Prevention Awareness Month observance, which is marked by educational, awareness, and memorial events across the state. This year's event will feature the presentation of a signed proclamation from the office of Governor Bill Haslam officially recognizing September as Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in Tennessee. Similar proclamations from cities and counties all over the state will also be presented. The latest "Love Never Dies" memorial quilt will also be presented during the proceedings.

Also, we will present the signatures for our ongoing "Pledge to Prevent Suicide" petition on Change.org. The pledge, hosted at Change.org (www.change.org/petitions/pledge-to-prevent-suicide-in-tennessee), is an opportunity for TSPN members and others to express their commitment to suicide prevention through educating themselves and others, and to their intent to share those ideals with family, friends, legislators, and community. As of press time, the petition has 1,300 signatures; we encourage you to sign the petition and spread the word about this project if you have not done so already.



Rachel Moore poses next to the quilt featuring her late husband Roman Scott Moore during last year's Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event, held September 14, 2011, at Trevecca Community Church (also the site of this year's proceedings). During the event, guests with loved ones featured on the new quilts received framed pictures of the panels they submitted (photo courtesy of Jennifer Harris).

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A special invitation has been extended to U.S. Surgeon General Regina Benjamin, in hopes that she will attend to promote the scheduled release of the updated National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. Invites have also been offered to Nashville mayor Karl Dean, and E. Douglas Varney, Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

A catered luncheon sponsored by Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital will immediately follow the ceremony's close. A business meeting of TSPN's Advisory Council will convene on the church grounds that afternoon.

RSVPs are required for this event for catering purposes; please submit these to the TSPN central office at tspn@tspn.org no later than 4 PM CDT on Wednesday, September 5.

We encourage you to forward this message and invite others who might be interested. We look forward to seeing all of you next month as we celebrate our successes, remember those we have lost, and look forward to a future of saving lives in Tennessee.

NATIONAL
SUICIDE
PREVENTION
LIFELINE
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

**Tennessee Suicide
Prevention Network**

"Saving Lives in Tennessee"

SUICIDE PREVENTION AWARENESS MONTH EVENT SUMMARY

The following is a brief listing of events planned across the state this September. Full details and contact information for these events is listed on the TSPN homepage (www.tspn.org).

- September 6, 6 PM: Decatur County Suicide Prevention 5K Run/Walk at the Decatur County Municipal Building, located at 535 Tennessee Avenue South in Parsons.
- September 6, 9 AM: Regional conference "Saving Lives in Southeast Tennessee" at the AIM Center, located at 472 West MLK Boulevard in Chattanooga.
- September 6, 6 PM: "Light of Hope" awareness/memorial event at Dogwood Park Pavilion, located at 30 East Broad Street in Cookeville.
- September 13, 5:30 PM: Middle Tennessee Suicide Prevention Awareness Month picnic/event at Centennial Park, located at 2500 West End in Nashville.
- September 16, 2 PM: Suicide Prevention Awareness Month picnic/walk at Warrior's Path State Park (Shelter 5, Duck Island) in Kingsport.
- September 18, 6 PM: "Never Alone" memorial event at Old Lebanon High School football stadium, located at 400 Harding Drive in Lebanon.
- September 20, 6 PM: "Never Alone" memorial event at Mt. Juliet Church of Christ, located at 1940 North Mt. Juliet Road.
- September 21, 9 AM: regional conference "Saving Lives in Rural West Tennessee" at the Jackson-Madison County Regional Health Department, located at 804 North Parkway in Jackson.
- September 22, 4 PM: Hickman-Perry County Suicide Prevention Awareness event at Jerry Dixon Memorial Walking Trail on Highway 100 in Centerville.
- September 26, 11 AM: Suicide Prevention Awareness Month conference/event at the Family Justice Center Auditorium, located at 400 Harriet Tubman Street in Knoxville (This event is being organized in partnership with the East Tennessee Council on Children and Youth.)
- September 28: Regional conference "Saving Lives in the Upper Cumberland" at Nashville State Community College's Cookeville campus, located at 1000 Neal Street.
- September 29, 9 AM: Wellness Walk at Fort Campbell, participants meet at Sportsman's Lodge, located at 6633 Sportsman's Lane, Fort Campbell.

TSPN REMEMBERS PATSY CRONK

It is with deep sorrow that we inform you that Patsy Cronk, a longtime TSPN member, was killed in an automobile accident in Cookeville on August 12. She was 67.

Ms. Cronk was an active member of TSPN's Upper Cumberland Region, a regular guest at regional meetings, and a frequent volunteer at local Network events. She worked as a Program Director at Plateau Mental Health Center following a long career in Putnam County government. She served on the Board of Directors of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and was President of its Cookeville chapter. She was also a board member of the Tennessee Mental Health Consumer's Association.

Services for Ms. Cronk were held at Crest Lawn Funeral Home in Cookeville on August 16, with burial following at Crest Lawn Memorial Cemetery next door.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to NAMI and sent care of Jodi Bartlett, PO Box 2345, Cookeville, TN, 38502.

Ms. Cronk was preceded in death by husband Morris Cronk and brother Charles K. Burgess. She is survived by a sister, two children, and five grandchildren, all of whom are in our thoughts and prayers at this time. Members are encouraged to visit the online memorial for Ms. Cronk at the Crest Lawn website (www.crestlawnmemorial.com) to leave a message for the family.



Photo courtesy of Crest Lawn Funeral Home.

“SAVING LIVES IN NORTHEAST TENNESSEE” HELD IN GRAY

Over 100 people attended “Saving Lives in Northeast Tennessee”, a suicide prevention conference staged by TSPN’s Northeast Region, on August 7 at Boone’s Creek Christian Church in Gray.

This conference is the first of several planned across Tennessee during the upcoming months (see page 2 for information on other regional events). The church where it was held is the regular meeting place for TSPN’s Northeast Region.

All the breakout sessions and lectures presented at this event were very well received by participants; these included:

- A presentation on suicide grief and loss by community advocate and suicide survivor Dana Cea
- An overview of the state’s suicide prevention movement by TSPN Executive Director Scott Ridgway
- A presentation on the experience of the mother as a suicide survivor, led by Cynthia W. Lynn, Ph.D., RN, Assistant Professor of Nursing, Carson-Newman College (also a suicide survivor)
- A report on VA suicide prevention initiatives for returning Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, courtesy of Pam Willis of the James H. Quillen VA Medical Center
- A summary of youth suicide risk and protective factors by Kandi Shearer of Youth Villages
- A presentation on suicide among older adults by Harold Leonard, MA, LPC-MHSP, Chair of TSPN’s Northeast Region
- Details on the East Tennessee State University Prevention through Education Awareness & Knowledge of Suicide (ETSU PEAKS), a federally funded suicide prevention project, by project supervisor Dr. Jameson Hirsch, East Tennessee State University
- A suicide prevention training session led by Christen Minnick of the Tennessee Department of Health’s Northeast Regional Health Office



Participants converse during a break in proceedings at “Saving Lives in Northeast Tennessee” as TSPN Northeast Regional Chair Harold Leonard (far right) looks on (Photo courtesy of Granger Brown).

TSPN would like to thank all our sponsors, speakers, and event organizers who helped make this event a success. We look forward to seeing our members in other regions at their respective local conferences in September.

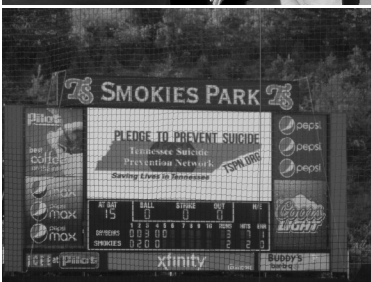
TSPN STAGES EXHIBITS AT LOCAL BASEBALL GAMES

TSPN’s Mid-Cumberland and East Tennessee Regions both staged highly popular exhibits at local Minor League baseball games over the summer.

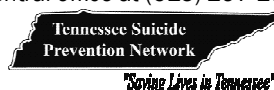
The Network was chosen as Charity of the Night for the Nashville Sounds home game on July 13. PSAs promotion suicide prevention awareness were made during the course of the game and featured on the scoreboard. Additionally, Mid-Cumberland regional members set up a prominently placed display table with TSPN brochures and handouts, along with giveaways from partner agencies: Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Centerstone, the Disability Law Advocacy Center, Family and Children’s Services, Mental Health America of Middle Tennessee, Monroe Harding, Rolling Hills Hospital, the Tennessee Lives Count (TLC) Project, United Healthcare, Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital, and Volunteer Behavioral Health Care Services. TSPN Executive Director Scott Ridgway personally helped operate the exhibit, alongside TLC Project Coordinator Michele Daniel and TLC Project Trainer Stephanie Chadwell for their assistance in operating the exhibit. We would also like to thank TSPN members Donna Finley of the Jason Foundation, Inc., and Thom Roberts of the Tennessee Council for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing for their help.

Meanwhile, members of the East Tennessee Region set up an exhibit at the Tennessee Smokies’ August 26 home game in Knoxville. The event included an exhibit with TSPN brochures and handouts, and promotion of the Network’s “Pledge to Prevent Suicide” campaign on the scoreboard. TSPN member Dottie Ford with the Cocke County Schools Coordinated School Health (CSH) office threw out the game’s first pitch. Other volunteers included Beth Haren, Rita McNabb, Roslyn Robinson, Anna Shugart, Anne Young, and Anne Young’s daughter Rosemary Young.

The Sounds and Smokies exhibits are part of the Network’s ongoing efforts to remove the stigma attached to suicide prevention and mental health issues. It is also intended to raise suicide prevention awareness among men aged 45-64—a population group which has seen rising suicide rates over the past few years. If you know of any other opportunities for exhibits at local sporting events, please contact the TSPN central office at (615) 297-1077 or tspn@tspn.org.



Above: volunteers at the stand beside the table they helped set up at the July 13 Nashville Sounds game. From left to right: Scott Ridgway, Michele Daniel, Stephanie Chadwell, and Thom Roberts. Below: the scoreboard at Smokies Park, which prominently featured TSPN information during the August 26 home game (top photo courtesy Scott Ridgway; bottom photo courtesy Anne Young).



RECORD NUMBER OF ARMY SUICIDES REPORTED IN JULY

July 2012 was the worst month on record for suicide among U.S. Army personnel, with 38 confirmed or suspected suicides reported that month.

The figure includes soldiers on both active and non-active duty as well as National Guard and Reserve personnel. Three of the active-duty personnel were deployed overseas at the time of their deaths.

As of July, the Army has confirmed 187 confirmed or suspected suicides. If current trends hold, this year's total number of deaths will surpass the previous record of 305 posted in 2010.

Army officials continue to lobby for funding for better mental health services for Army soldiers, especially those returning from combat deployments. U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta spoke before a Congressional committee last month on the subject, describing the current situation as an "epidemic" according to an August 16 CNN.com report on the latest figures.

"Suicide is the toughest enemy I have faced in my 37 years in the Army. And it's an enemy that's killing not just soldiers, but tens of thousands of Americans every year," Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, said in a written statement included in the CNN.com article. "That said, I do believe suicide is preventable. To combat it effectively will require sophisticated solutions aimed at helping individuals to build resiliency and strengthen their life coping skills... Ultimately, we want the mindset across our Force and society at large to be that behavioral health is a routine part of what we do and who we are as we strive to maintain our own physical and mental wellness," he said.

The CNN.com report noted that it has been approximately a year since the White House officially began sending out condolence letters to the families of service personnel who die by suicide, reversing a decades-old ban (see the August 2011 edition of the *TSPN Call to Action* for details).



Gregg Keeseling and his wife Janet were leaders in the campaign to change the White House condolence letter policy. After their son Army Spc. Chancellor Keeseling died while deployed to Iraq in 2009 and they did not receive a condolence letter, Mr. Keeseling submitted several letters to President Obama and the Army Chief of Staff encouraging re-evaluation of the policy. The policy was officially reversed on July 6, 2011.

This photo accompanied a November 25, 2009 *New York Times* article on the controversy (Photo courtesy of Tom Stratman for the *Times*).

REPORT: MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR AGING BOOMERS NEEDED



INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE
OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES

A report from the Institute of Medicine within the National Academy of Sciences estimates that at least 1 in 5 senior citizens suffers from mental illness or substance abuse, and that today's health care system is underprepared for the mental health needs of aging baby boomers.

The Institute estimates that at least 5.6 million Americans over the age of 65 have a mental health or substance abuse disorder—likely far more than that since this figure does not take into account certain types of mental illness. The most common types of illness are depression and mood disorders, along with disorders related to dementia. With the number of people over the age of 65 expected to double by 2030, the need for quality mental health care will only increase. Substance abuse among older adults is also a concern, since the next generation of seniors currently has higher rates of drug and alcohol abuse than was seen in prior cohorts. This generation is also more prone to suicide than previous groups of older adults, as noted in recent studies.

At the same time, the nation's health care system is lacking in physicians and other health care workers trained in or knowledgeable about the mental health of older adults. "There'll never be enough geriatric psychiatrists or geriatric medicine specialists to take care of this huge wave of people that are aging," said Dr. Paul D.S. Kirwin, president of the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry, in a July 10 NBCNews.com article on the Institute report.

The report advises increased training for doctors, nurses, and social workers on the subject of geriatric mental health so they can provide basic assistance and prevent any escalation of mental health and substance abuse crises until they can obtain the help of a specialist. The Institute also called for Medicare and Medicaid to examine their mental health coverage policies, for hospitals and other agencies to incorporate geriatric mental health education into their training and licensing programs, and for more federal funding for suitable training programs.

The full report, "The Mental Health and Substance Use Workforce for Older Adults: In Whose Hands?" is available for free download at the Institute of Medicine's report archive (<http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2012/The-Mental-Health-and-Substance-Use-Workforce-for-Older-Adults.aspx>).

TSPN REGIONAL CALENDAR

No December meetings are scheduled unless otherwise marked. Dates in **bold and in byzantine** indicate alternate meeting dates intended to accommodate state holidays or other previously scheduled events.

East Tennessee Region

monthly, 3rd Thursday, 12:00 PM
Mental Health Association of East Tennessee, Inc., 9050 Executive Park Drive, Suite 104-A, Knoxville, 37923
October 18 and November 15

Memphis/Shelby County Region

monthly, 3rd Tuesday, 11:30 AM
The Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, 1900 Union Avenue, Memphis, 38104
September 18, October 16, and November 20

Mid-Cumberland Region

monthly, 2nd Thursday, 9:30 AM
Goodwill Industries of Middle Tennessee, Inc., 937 Herman Street, Nashville, 37208
October 11, November 8, and December 13

Northeast Region

monthly, 4th Tuesday, 10:30 AM
Boone's Creek Christian Church, 305 Christian Church Road, Gray, 37615
September 25, October 23 and November 27

Rural West

monthly, 3rd Wednesday, 10:30 AM
Behavioral Health Initiatives, 36C Sandstone Circle, Jackson, 38305
October 17 and November 14

South Central

monthly, 2nd Monday, 11:00 AM
Conference Room A, South Central Regional Health Office, 1216 Trotwood Avenue, Columbia, 38401
October 15, November 5, and December 10

Southeast Region

monthly, 1st Thursday, 10:00 AM
Johnson Mental Health Center, 420 Bell Avenue, Chattanooga, 37405
October 4, November 1, and December 6

Upper Cumberland Region

monthly, 4th Thursday, 9:00 AM
Volunteer Behavioral Health Care Systems, 1200 Willow Avenue, Cookeville, 38502
October 18 and November 15

Intra-State Department Meetings

Third Floor Conference Room, Tennessee Department of Mental Health, Cordell Hull Building, 425 Fifth Avenue North, Nashville, 37243 (3:00 PM)
November 7

Advisory Council

September 12 (Suicide Prevention Awareness Day event at Trevecca Community Church, Nashville)
February 13, 2012 (Community Room, Metro Nashville Police Department Hermitage Precinct, 3701 James Kay Lane, Hermitage) (tentative)

Blount County Mental Health Awareness and Suicide Prevention Alliance

monthly, 1st Friday, 12:00 PM
Blount County Health Department Conference Room, 302 McGhee Street, Maryville, 37801
September 7, October 5, November 2, and December 7

Davidson County Suicide Prevention Task Force

monthly, 4th Wednesday, 3:00 PM
Metro Public Health Department, 201 23rd Avenue North, Nashville, 37203
September 26 and November 28

Giles County Suicide Prevention Task Force

quarterly, 3rd Monday, 1:30 PM
Giles County Career Center, 125 South Cedar Lane, Pulaski, 38478
September 17 and December 17

Hickman-Perry County Suicide Prevention Task Force

monthly, 4th Friday, 1:30 PM
Senior Care Building, Hickman Community Hospital, 135 East Swan Street, Centerville, 37033
September 28, October 26, and November 16

Montgomery-Houston-Humphreys-Stewart Suicide Prevention Task Force

monthly, 1st Tuesday, 9 AM
Behavioral HealthCare Center at Clarksville, 930 Professional Park Drive, Clarksville, 37040
October 2, November 6, and December 4

Rutherford County Suicide Prevention Coalition

monthly, 1st Tuesday, 6 PM
ITNOLAP Pallet & Crating, 651 Middle Tennessee Road, Murfreesboro, 37129
September 4, October 2, November 6, and December 4

ADVISORY COUNCIL CONTACT INFORMATION

If you are interested in getting involved with TSPN on a local level or have other questions, contact the chairperson of your region as indicated by the map provided below:

East Tennessee region

Anne Young, MS, CAS
(865) 216-9884

anneyoung@cornerstoneofrecovery.com

Memphis and Shelby County

Renee Brown
(901) 523-8990, extension 5873
renee.brown3@va.gov

Mid-Cumberland region

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(270) 519-2352

tspnmidcumberlandvolunteer@gmail.com

Northeast region

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Rural West region

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