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‘Stand Up to Suicide’: 13-county effort aims to train thousands across Ohio in suicide prevention

LEBANON, OH, August 27, 2019 – Ohio loses one person to suicide every five hours. That’s not OK, and several county behavioral health boards are trying to do something about it.

Throughout September, 13 county boards are joining forces for “Stand Up to Suicide”, a month-long effort to train as many people as possible in the prevention technique called QPR – Question, Persuade, and Refer. Boards representing Montgomery, Warren, Clinton, Clark, Greene, and Madison Counties are among those seeking groups and organizations to be trained.

“This may be the biggest effort of its kind across Ohio,” said Heather Wells, Engage 2.0 project coordinator for Southwest Ohio, who is leading the training effort. “It’s modeled on a program that the City of Louisville, Kentucky undertook not long ago. That ended with 2,200 people trained in QPR. We are eager to follow that example and match or exceed the amazing work done there.”

QPR incorporates three steps – question, persuade and refer – to help prevent someone from taking his or her own life. The QPR Institute likens the technique to CPR, or cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Both are emergency interventions to interrupt a crisis, stabilize a person, and direct them to the care needed.

The Miami Valley region has seen many suicides over the years. Life situations like losing a job, a divorce or loss of a family member are often catalysts for some to think of taking their lives, but mental health professionals also say traumatic events like the Dayton tornadoes or the shootings in the Oregon district can also bring thoughts of suicide. It’s important to learn ways of stepping in and move a person toward help.

Anyone wishing to have their group or organization trained can take these simple steps:

- Visit standuptosuicide.org to register.
- Enter name and other information as required.
- Check the box indicating interest in hosting a QPR training, finding one that’s scheduled in their area, or taking the training online
- Submit the form

“We’re really excited to be part of this,” said Colleen Chamberlain, executive director of MHRS. “Getting trained drives home the importance of knowing the signs that someone is thinking of harming themselves, and how a simple question can start a meaningful conversation. It’s powerful, positive and necessary.”

About MHRS

Mental Health Recovery Services of Warren & Clinton Counties (MHRS) is the local board of mental health and addiction services for residents of Warren and Clinton Counties. MHRS plans, funds and monitors services and programs for residents with mental health and addiction issues. The board contracts with agencies to provide services and programs that help individuals, families and others affected by mental illness and addiction. For more information, visit the MHRS website at mhrsonline.org.

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