



# Connections

MARCH 2008

Suite D, 4808—51 Ave  
Red Deer, AB  
T4N 4H3  
P: 403-342-4966

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Calendar	2
Volunteer Positions	2
SIES Staff	3
Blueprint for Success	3
In the works...	3
Antidepressants and youth	4
How to Help	4
Self-Harm	4
ASIST Program	5
Adult Training	5
Community Resources	6

## About Us

Suicide Information & Education Services is a non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that Red Deer and the communities of Central

Alberta have access to education, information, and referral services related to suicide. We provide age-appropriate presentati-

ons for grades K-12, college students, and adult groups using a variety of mediums.

Please contact us to book a presentation.

## Board Members Needed

Suicide Information & Education Services is currently looking for volunteers to serve on our Board of Directors.

Our Board is responsible for providing leadership and strategic direction based on our mandate. The board also governs our affairs and helps us focus on the direction and growth of our agency.

Our Board currently meets once a month. The Board positions are for a two year term. Recognizing the fact that many people are busy with work and family, we try to ensure that meetings are kept on track, and are done within a reasonable time frame.

Our current Board members are all very dedicated professional people who

enjoy their role. We have two board members who drive in from out of town to attend meetings.

If you or someone you know are interested in becoming a board member, or for more information, please contact our office at [office@suicidehelp.ca](mailto:office@suicidehelp.ca) or 403-342-4966. Please ask for Laura Hillier, Executive Director.

## Suicide Statistics

Suicide affects a vast number of Canadians whether by knowing someone who has struggled with thoughts of suicide, attempted suicide, died by suicide or if they have had these thoughts themselves.

Canada has the highest suicide rate in the Western Hemisphere.

In Alberta, four people die

every three days by suicide.

World-wide someone dies by suicide every forty seconds and someone attempts suicide every three seconds.

Anorexic girls are twenty times more likely to attempt or die by suicide.

Native youth are six times more likely to attempt or die by suicide than non-

aboriginal youth.

Suicide rates among Inuit youth are among the highest in the world; eleven times the national average.

Suicide is the second leading cause of death of teenagers.

These are all reasons why our agency aims to increase public awareness about suicide.

## Schedule of Events

# MARCH 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24/31	25	26	27	28	29

- O Mar 1—Self-Injury Awareness Day
- O Mar 4—Youth presentations in Ponoka
- O Mar 5—Blueprint presentation to the Health Network
- O Mar 6- Olds Wellness Fair
- O Mar 6-7: ASIST Course
- O Mar 11—Youth presentations in Wetaskiwin
- O Mar 13- Blueprint presentation to AGM of Safe Communities
- O Mar 17—Youth presentations in Wetaskiwin
- O Mar 19—Youth presentations at Lindsay Thurber High School
- O Mar 20- Blueprint presentation to Mental Health Matters
- O Mar 21—office closed for Good Friday
- O Mar 24—office closed for Easter Monday
- O Mar 26- Blueprint presentation to the Sunrise Rotary

# Volunteer with us!

**S.A.V.E.**

**a life!**

**Suicide  
Awareness  
through  
Volunteer  
Efforts**

## “Volunteering grows community”

Suicide Information & Education Services is a great place to volunteer and make a difference in your community.

Volunteer with us . . . you might just S.A.V.E. a life. S.A.V.E. is how we refer to our volunteer program “Suicide Awareness through Volunteer Efforts”.

We have openings for various volunteering positions throughout our organization.

As an Administrative Volunteer, you help out a few hours a week with various tasks around the office. You maintain our brochure rack by ensuring it’s resources are up to date. You also search the internet for articles related to suicide and depression.

As an Event Volunteer, you help us with our annual fundraising events in January, March and September.

As a board member, you are able to volunteer your time

each month to assist our agency in decision making and managing our finances to ensure we are able to grow successfully.

If you are interested in any of these volunteer opportunities please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Jessica Ludwig, at 403-342-4966.

**“We make a living by what we do, but we make a life by what we give.”**

**-Winston Churchill-**

# Meet Our Staff & Board

We have had some changes in staff this year.

We have a new Office Administrator, Kelli Harding. Kelli's amazing organizational and problem-solving abilities have been a great asset to our agency.

We have a new Executive Director, Laura Hillier, as of June 2007. Since Laura's hire, she has made many positive changes to our organization.

Finally, our Youth Education/Volunteer Coordinator, Jessica Ludwig, is a new addition to our team

as of September 2007. Jessica has been instrumental in updating our youth programs, designing the layout for our newsletter and the development of SIES fundraising initiatives.

Grant Smith is the Adult Program Coordinator and he has been with SIES since 2004. Grant is also an ASIST Trainer and Blueprint for Success Facilitator

Dawne Adkins is our Adult Program Assistant and she has been with SIES off and on for many years. Dawne and Grant work closely in customiz-

ing our Adult Education Programs, and Dawne is in the early stages of developing a program for Emergency Service Workers

Our board members include: Debbie Roth- Chairperson, Priscilla Albach- Director, Laurie Bullick- Director, Lynda Kelly- Secretary/Treasurer.

With this combination of new thoughts and effective past practices, we feel that Suicide Information & Education Services will grow to its highest potential.

*"Every three days in Alberta, an average of four people die by suicide—three are men."*

## THE BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS LAUNCHES

Suicide Information & Education Services is pleased to announce its newest adult program - Blueprint for Success. Every three days in Alberta an average of 4 people die by suicide - 3 are men.

The overall all objective of the Blueprint program is to reduce the number of deaths due to suicide in the male population in Central Alberta. The Blueprint program is targeted specifically at men in the trades and industrial sectors but is available to any business or organization. The major themes of the program are:

- To train employees to recognize symptoms of depression and suicide and to increase the likelihood of intervention.
- To promote health work environments
- To reduce stigma attached to suicide through safety meetings, community partnerships and education.
- To have employees trained to be more comfortable in talking about and accepting of others facing difficulties and challenges.

integrated into a PowerPoint presentation that promotes healthy living, knowledge, understanding and access to resources. The program can be delivered in 30 - 45 minutes and can be an integral part of the Occupational Health and Safety component of an organization or corporation.

Contact our office to book a presentation today.

This program consists of video clips

## In the Works . . .

The position of Youth Education/Volunteer Coordinator has recently been expanded which allows us to take on a few more projects.

We are currently working on new fundraising events for 2008.

The fundraising events we are currently planning are a "Toonie km" in recognition of World Suicide Prevention day on September 10th and a calendar to be printed for sale that has

inspirational quotes and pictures on it. The calendar should be ready for sale in Fall 2008.

We are also developing a program for Native youth. This will discuss issues specific to Native youth and, most importantly, what can be done, not only to help youth suffering with thoughts of suicide but also strategies to help the community as a whole so the prevalence of suicide can be reduced.

A new brochure has been designed and is ready to print. We hope to distribute the brochure to various agencies throughout Red Deer and Central Alberta.

Please contact our office if you wish to have some brochures sent to your organization for display. Please also contact us if you wish to make a donation to our agency fundraisers.

## Prescribing Antidepressants to Youth



Depression is affecting a growing number of youth, but there is controversy regarding treatment options.

It is the use of SSRIs (Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors) that has been under debate. Studies show that there is an increase in suicide related events in youth on SSRIs, but the risk is small and with careful monitoring can be reduced further.

Psychological treatments are an effective treatment for depression in youth, but the effects are smaller than SSRI prescription.

The big argument comes when debating if we should deny youth access to this treatment. How can we deny such a vulnerable group access to a proven successful treatment option? The fact is that we

can't, at least until there are studies proving that this treatment is more harmful to youth than going without treatment or until a better treatment is available.

For more information on this study, go to

[www.bmj.com/cgi/full/335/7623/750](http://www.bmj.com/cgi/full/335/7623/750)

**“It is important to listen, rather than judge them and state reasons why they shouldn't kill themselves”**

## How to help an Individual who is Suicidal

This can be a difficult issue to deal with. If you are noticing warning signs of suicide such as withdrawal from family and friends, and social activities, changes in behaviour, appearance or mood, alcohol/drug abuse, etc. then it is important to act on your instincts.

You must ask the person-at-risk as directly as possible, if they are feeling suicidal.

If they say yes, it is important to listen, rather than judge them and state reasons why they shouldn't kill themselves.

Let them open up to you. Once they do, listen and assess their risk in your head. If they have a plan and the means to carry out their plan, then they are at a very high risk and have obviously thought about this for awhile. In this situation,

it is important to get help immediately by calling 9-1-1.

Ask the person who they trust to talk to about this, other than you and you tell them who you trust. Then you can go together to speak with that trusted person. This provides someone to help watch the person-at-risk and to help you by having another person to talk to about this stressful situation.

## Self-Harm/Self-Mutilation

Self-harm is a way of expressing pain and distress. It is a way of communicating what can't be put into words and often people don't know why they do it. After self-harm, people report feeling better able to cope with life, temporarily.

This term is very broad, encompassing scratching, cutting, or burning skin, hitting themselves, overdosing, taking unintelligent risks, eating disorders, drug/alcohol abuse, or not looking after their own physical or emotional needs.

Self-harm tends to develop to numb out pain

from trauma, abuse, low self-esteem issues, and other stress and pain.

Women most commonly self-harm although male statistics are on the rise.

If you know of someone who self-mutilates, you can seek help from family, friends and professionals. The first step is to deal with the trauma/pain that is causing the emotions they are trying to numb out.

**March 1st is Self-Injury Awareness Day.**

# ASIST Training Programs

ASIST stands for “Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training”. This two day course gives participants the opportunity to explore their experiences with and attitudes about suicide. It is the most widely used suicide intervention training program in the world. Participants will have an opportunity to better understand the needs of a

person at risk of suicide and learn how to use suicide first-aid to meet those needs.

ASIST prepares caregivers of all backgrounds to provide suicide first-aid to persons at risk of suicide. Intervention attitudes, knowledge, skills and resources are presented in two days of practical training, conducted in

both small and large groups.

The next sessions are:  
March 6-7

April 24-25

May 29-30

June 19-20

The cost is \$130 per person (no lunch provided). Call 342-4966 to register.



## Adult Programs

Suicide Information & Education Services is pleased to offer customized programs for adults ranging from 1.5hrs - 6hrs in length depending on your needs.

Call us to discuss costs and dates; we make every effort to accommodate evening and weekend requests in addition to week day requests.

Whether you are a parent group, work group, support group, college students, etc. we can customize a program for you.

Presentations always include recognizing the warning signs of suicide and increase in content as the length of the session increases. We look forward to working with you!

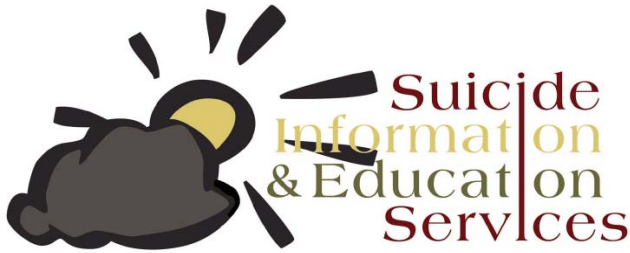
## Commonly Asked Questions

We will be starting a FAQ's section in our newsletter starting next issue. Please fax or email your questions to us and they will be answered in the following issue.

Fax: 403-342-4154

Email: [office@suicidehelp.ca](mailto:office@suicidehelp.ca)

**To remove your email from our mailing list, please email [office@suicidehelp.ca](mailto:office@suicidehelp.ca)**



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**Suicide Information & Education Services is a non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that Red Deer and the communities of Central Alberta have access to information, education, and referral services related to suicide.**

**We provide age-appropriate presentations for youth Grades K-12, college students and adult groups using a variety of mediums including puppets, music, PowerPoint, interaction and discussion.**

**For more information or to book a presentation, please contact our office.**

**[www.suicidehelp.ca](http://www.suicidehelp.ca)**

## Community Resources/Websites

### 24 Hour Lines:

Alberta Help Line	1-877-303-2642
Red Deer Crisis Line (call collect)	403-340-1120
Kid's Help Phone	1-800-668-6868
Red Deer Regional Hospital Emergency	403-343-4448
Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-387-5437
Central Alberta Women's Shelter	403-346-5643
Native Youth Crisis Hotline	1-877-209-1266
49th Street Youth Shelter	403-341-3190

Mental Health Clinic (Walk-in)	403-340-5466
Parkland Family Counselling	403-340-8995
Canadian Mental Health	403-342-2266
Suicide Information & Education Services	403-342-4966
Red Deer Native Friendship Centre	403-340-0020
AADAC (Alberta Drug & Alcohol Commission)	403-340-5274
Central Alberta AIDS Network Society	403-346-8858

### Red Deer College

Counselling Services	403-343-4064
Student Support	403-343-4096
Family Services of Central Alberta	403-343-6400
People's Place Shelter (5pm-9pm)	403-342-4722

<http://suicideandmentalhealthassociationinternational.org>

[www.canadian-health-network.ca](http://www.canadian-health-network.ca)

[www.coolnurse.com/suicide.htm](http://www.coolnurse.com/suicide.htm)

[www.suicidehelp.ca](http://www.suicidehelp.ca)

[www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca)

[www.suicidal.com](http://www.suicidal.com)

[www.nihm.nih.gov/index.shtml](http://www.nihm.nih.gov/index.shtml)

[www.facetheissue.com](http://www.facetheissue.com)

[www.youthone.com](http://www.youthone.com)

[www.kidshealth.org/](http://www.kidshealth.org/)

[www.zoot2.com](http://www.zoot2.com)

[www.youthsuicide.com](http://www.youthsuicide.com)

[www.gurl.com](http://www.gurl.com)

[www.metanoia.org/suicide](http://www.metanoia.org/suicide)