



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 10, 2020

CMHA Launches new ACTT for Life Program on World Suicide Prevention Day

Charlottetown, PEI – September 10 is World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) in Canada and around the world. It's a day to come together, offer comfort and support to those impacted by suicide, and to highlight important work that contributes to suicide-safer communities in PEI.

To mark this year's World Suicide Prevention Day 2020 (WSPD), the Canadian Mental Health Association/PEI Division (CMHA/PEI) is introducing a new program that prepares youth to have safe, hopeful conversations about mental health and suicide.

CMHA's Suicide Prevention and Life Promotions Manager, Pat Doyle, says, "This year's WSPD theme is "Working Together to Prevent Suicide". For the past three years, CMHA PEI has had the privilege of 'working together' with many amazing individuals and organizations to develop a new suicide awareness and response program for youth, entitled, "ACTT for Life" (ACTT= Ask. Care. Talk. Tell.)."

The ACTT for Life (ACTT) program is designed to empower youth with knowledge, skills and tools about mental health and suicide.

Doyle adds, "Studies tell us that when teens have a problem, they reach out to their friends first and to adults second. The aim of the ACTT for Life program is to equip youth to manage their own mental health and to be effective helpers to friends who may be experiencing mental health struggles or thoughts of suicide."

CMHA's trained ACTT facilitators use eye-catching visuals and learning tools, along with interactive discussions, activities and a 4-part ACTT for Life video series, all of which align with the Department of Education and Early Learning's (DEEL) Intermediate Health Curriculum.

This fall, as CMHA PEI marks its 20th anniversary of coordinating community-based suicide prevention and life promotion efforts, they're looking forward to 'working together' with their community partners at the Department of Education and Early Learning, the Public Schools Branch and other community organizations and to visiting Island classrooms.

To highlight WSPD 2020, CMHA encourages individuals, families and communities to find at least one way of connecting to the theme. For example - attending an event or training, connecting with someone who is struggling to cope, or lighting a tea-light or candle and displaying it in a window the evening of September 10 at 8:00 pm. This is a symbol of the collective light and hope for a suicide-safer community in PEI and around the world.

CMHA's Incoming President, Cecil Villard, agrees and adds, "All of these suicide prevention and life promotion efforts shine a light on this important issue, sending a message to those who are despairing – that there is help and there is hope."

For more information about WSPD activities or CMHA's Suicide Prevention and Life Promotions efforts, please visit their website at <https://pei.cmha.ca/home/suicide-prevention/>

Please see the ACTT for Life Program Trailer [here](#):

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