



24-hour Crisis Intervention Hotline  
and ONLINE Crisis Counseling Service

# CONNECTIONS

Response of Suffolk County's E-Newsletter

October 2009

## In This Issue

- LIRR Campaign
- Response on Facebook
- Hear2Help new hours
- Fantasy Gala Fundraiser
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Symposium
- Volunteer Training
- Special Thanks!

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## Contact Us

**(631) 751-7500**

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Email:  
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## Letter from the Director:

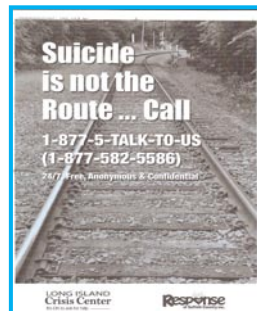
On September 10<sup>th</sup> our Response family was shaken with the very sad news of the death of one of our board members, Joseph Dunlop. Joe was a board member for over five years, and could be counted on to lend his finance expertise and generous spirit to board and finance committee meetings. We miss his ready smile, sense of humor and easy going manner – we miss his presence. We were fortunate for his involvement with Response for so many years.

The theme of loss is predominant on our hotline – and we hear more and more stories where coping with loss is the central theme. From the widow who is coping with her husband's suicide, to the single mom who has lost her job and health insurance, to the store owner who sold his business and is experiencing a loss of purpose – loss is the common thread. Our presence with these callers in the moment they reach out is the critical connection that can lessen feelings of isolation and hopelessness – and begin a forward-moving journey.

With the arrival of colorful leaves and a new season comes our Fall Training – young adults, parents, retirees – all are welcome. We listen in a unique way at Response, which is why our callers reach out to us. Perhaps you'll join us and help us say "hello" to those who most need to hear it.

*Meryl Cassidy*, Executive Director

## LIRR, Response of Suffolk County and Long Island Crisis Center Partner to Stop "Suicide by Train"



We are pleased to announce a new partnership that began on July 1st between Response of Suffolk County, the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR), and the Long Island Crisis Center (LICC). Spearheaded by the LIRR, this public campaign seeks to directly address a tragic problem that for years was a taboo topic - suicide by train.

Posters that include the number of a free suicide hotline set up by the LIRR - 877-582-5586, have been placed at its 124 stations. The poster features a set of train tracks and the message "Suicide is not the route". Calls to this hotline number go to either the Long Island Crisis Center based in Nassau County, or to our hotline at Response - both centers are staffed 24 hours a day. Through our combined efforts we hope to reach LIRR patrons who may be at risk of suicide and prevent future tragedies.

## Join Response on Facebook!

Ten Thousand Voices is Response's new outreach initiative on Facebook! We invite you to join our group and share our page with a friend! Tell them about Response of Suffolk County and invite them to invite *their* friends. With the knowledge and awareness of available community resources we can be better equipped to help a friend get help.



Our goal is Ten Thousand Facebook friends by 2010! Join our group and spread the word - Response of Suffolk County is here to help!

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## New Hours for Hear2Help!

Would you rather chat than talk? Many people going through a difficult time feel more comfortable speaking online than over the phone. That's why Hear2Help, Response's ONLINE crisis counseling program is here.

**The new hours for Hear2Help are now 5:00 pm - 11:00 pm Monday through Friday.**

Should you need to talk at a time when Hear2Help is not available, please consider calling our hotline at (631) 751-7500. All calls are confidential, free, and anonymous.

## Fictional Journey Provides Real Life Support to Hotline!

*Fantasy Gala Raises Funds & Awareness for Response of Suffolk County*

"Come on board the Enterprise, and join us on our mission..." So begins the Star Trek themed fantasy fundraiser in support of Response of Suffolk County. The imaginary trip requests the generosity of the "traveler's" heart and imagination as they embark on a fantasy mission in support of Response's programs. Contributions can be made at varying levels -- [read more!](#)

## Strategies for Suicide Prevention Symposium



The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual "Putting the Pieces Together: Strategies for Suicide Prevention symposium will be held on Friday, December 4, 2009. Come to our fall symposium and discover life saving answers!

Designed for school personnel, social workers, psychologists, veterans, emergency responders, survivors, and medical personnel, the conference will offer workshops on a wide selection of topics including, clinical trends in treatment, cyber bullying, suicide clusters, grieving/surviving a loss to suicide, responsible memorials, and safeTALK, a suicide alertness program that teaches you to recognize individuals with thoughts of suicide and how to connect them to appropriate resources.

Hosted by the Suicide Prevention Committee of Long Island and New York State's Office of Mental Health, the full-day symposium begins at 8 a.m. at the Hilton Hotel on Broad Hollow Road in Melville, NY. Registration is \$55 in advance, \$60 at the door (space permitting). Last year's conference was sold out – please register early! For a registration form, [click here](#). To Register by phone, call 516-679-0080.

## Response Seeks Volunteers to Answer the Call!

Response is offering a free volunteer telephone counselor training program in conjunction with the nationwide "United We Serve" initiative. Part one of the training will be held on **Saturday, October 17th and Sunday, October 18th, from 9:30 am - 4:00 pm, and continues on Saturday, October 24th and Sunday, October 25th**. Training will take place at the Wang Center on the campus of Stony Brook University, and all sessions must be attended. No experience is necessary, only a sincere willingness to learn and grow, and the ability to make a six-month commitment of 4 hours a week is required.

The "United We Serve" initiative was conceived as a way to directly involve Americans in meeting the growing social needs resulting from the economic downturn. While any kind of volunteer service is encouraged, the effort focuses on four key areas -- education, health, energy and the environment, and community renewal.

Those interested in attending the next training program can [click here](#) to fill out an online application form. Or request a volunteer application by calling the hotline at 631-751-7500.

## Did you know...

... New York offers financial assistance grants for grandparent caregivers. For more information call the National Committee of Grandparents for Children's Rights: Long Island Kinship Connection at 631-444-3160 or visit [nysnavigator.org](http://nysnavigator.org)

## Shop For A Cause - Benefit Bash

**Macy's** nationwide, and **Lord & Taylor, Garden City** are each offering a special day of savings this fall to benefit Response of Suffolk County!

**Shop for a Cause** is Macy's national charity shopping day and will be held on Saturday, October 17, 2009. Lord & Taylor's **Benefit Bash** charity day, will be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2009.

When you purchase a \$5 tax-deductable ticket for either charity day, you will be eligible to take advantage of special discounts, opportunities to win great prizes, and enjoy a day full of exciting events and fabulous fashion! Best of all, Response keeps 100% of the proceeds of every ticket we sell! If you would like to purchase tickets to either of these worthwhile events, please call Lisa Maldonado at 631-751-7620. *Start your holiday shopping early and make a difference for Response!*

## Special Thanks....!

...to NYS Assemblyman **Patricia Eddington** for securing a \$10,000 grant in support of Response's Hear2Help online crisis counseling program! We are happy to accept the grant on behalf of the callers who seek support through Hear2Help. Thank You!



## Up-Coming Events

October 2009- **FREE Volunteer Training Program** – Train to become the caring voice on the other end of the phone! For more information, visit us at [www.ResponseHotline.org](http://www.ResponseHotline.org).

December 5th - **Putting the Pieces Together: Strategies for Suicide Prevention Symposium** – 8:30 am – 3:30 pm at the Huntington Hilton Hotel, Melville, NY.

RESPONSE of Suffolk County is a nationally accredited, community-based agency that provides a free, confidential and anonymous hotline available to anyone who needs to talk. Response's services also include an online crisis counseling program, a community education program, as well as a current computerized information and referral database connecting callers with the most appropriate community resources to meet their needs.