

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
June 22, 2017

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Health Department Offers Free Youth Suicide Prevention and Wellness Training Program

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) has partnered with Sources of Strength, an evidence-based suicide, bullying, and substance use prevention program, to put on a training event in Bismarck.

Sources of Strength is the most widely researched and proven peer-to-peer and adult-to-youth mentoring program. “We train peer leaders in every social group across a school to spread what we call hope, help, and strength messages. There is nothing more powerful than young people modeling positive social behavior in their social network,” states Mark LoMurray, Sources of Strength’s founder and researcher.

Mark founded Sources of Strength in North Dakota after working for a local police department where he attended 30 teen funerals in less than three years – all due to suicide. As director of the Police Youth Bureau, Mark had a lot of experience with suicide crisis, but he felt that there was more he could do to prevent the problem. Sources of Strength is different from other suicide prevention programs because it is intended to catch students and give them the support they need before they become suicidal. The program gives each student the support, coping skills, and relationships they need to make it through the hard times. As Mark puts it, “None of us are making it through this life without going through rough times.”

Many schools across North Dakota have adopted Sources of Strength as it meets legislative teacher professional development mandates related to suicide, bullying, behavioral health, and resiliency. This summer, Sources of Strength in partnership with NDDoH is providing a free “Master Training” for school and youth program staff to gain advanced knowledge of the program and how to implement it in their schools! The training is set for July 31 through August 3 at the Comfort Inn in Bismarck. Those interested in getting Sources of Strength free of charge can contact North Dakota’s Sources of Strength coordinator, Cody Sletten at 701.428.2639 or contact Alison Traynor, Director of the ND Suicide Prevention Program at 701.328.4280.

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Please note: To access archived news releases and other information, visit the North Dakota Department of Health Press Room at www.health.nd.gov/news-media/news-releases. Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ndhealth or Twitter at twitter.com/nddoh.

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