



Suicide Prevention Community Council of Hamilton

The SPCCH hosted World Suicide Prevention Day in Hamilton Saturday September 10th. To highlight the community partnerships the event took place in three locations. Approximately 100 participants gathered at St. Joseph Healthcare Spiritual Gardens where they were greeted by Dr. David Higgins Chief of Staff, who offered his support and talked about the prevalence of suicidal behaviours and the importance of suicide prevention in our community.

The group donned blue T-shirts emblazoned with the word Hope and then walked a kilometre to the City Hall complete with a police escort.



Walkers brought with them a gently used pair of shoes that were placed on the stairs in the Council Chambers and Dr. Jennifer Brasch read the poem “*Empty Shoes*” in remembrance of those who have lost their lives to suicide.

Jill Dennison of The Schizophrenia Society of Hamilton shared a poignant video *Talking to Teachers* in which a mother, Peggy Guiler Delahunt, speaks about the importance of awareness regarding mental illness and suicide.

This segued into the announcement of a \$130,800 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The grant will be used to expand community partnerships and resources and provide suicide prevention training to 600 front-line workers, teachers, parents, volunteers and social services providers. See the Hamilton Spectator Article *Suicide Prevention group gets a boost*:
<http://www.thespec.com/news/local/article/592623--suicide-prevention-group-gets-boost>

Chief Glenn de Caire thanked the Foundation for their generosity and highlighted the need for suicide prevention training in Hamilton. Following the closing, participants were invited to Living Rock for a light lunch and community displays.

The SPCCH Education and Awareness Committee would like to thank the many volunteers and participants for making World Suicide Prevention Day 2011 a great success.