

NEWSLETTER



Join us for food, resources,
and remembrance

September 14th
Registration: 9:00AM
Walk: 10:00AM

Lake Pacawa
1831 Maple Drive
Plover, WI 54467

*A walk for suicide prevention and
mental health awareness*

WALK FOR
HOPE
2024

In 2024 we have seen increasing pressures directly impact those in our community. The 18th Annual Walk for Hope on September 14th had a heavy sentiment in the air, but also one of hope.

With a whopping 325 walkers, we had a busy day sharing condolences, stories, and strength. This was a year of abundance, with a record number of resource tables, raffles, and same day registration participants.

We raised over \$13,000; the capital will go to continued support for the people of Portage County with outreach to those who need it most. An immense round of applause goes to everyone who makes this much needed event possible.

Prevent Suicide Portage County recognizes a call to action, a need to rally together, an uproar to change conversations about suicide. The Walk for Hope will continue to be a source of strength for those affected by suicide in Portage County.

OUR MISSION

To prevent suicide in Portage County by providing hope, creating awareness and facilitating change in the community to support mental health.

OUR VISION

A suicide-free Portage County.

FOLLOW US



suicidepreventionportagecounty.org



Prevent Suicide Portage County



@pococoalition

LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS

Survivors of Suicide Support Group

This group provides support for those who have lost a loved one to suicide. The group meets at Dunkin Donuts, 617 Division St. The group meets the 1st Monday of each month from 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM. For additional information or questions, contact Michelle Nelson at (715) 346-5401.

Mental Health Wellness Group

This group provides a diverse range of knowledge for those who seek encouragement, hope and support. The group meets on the 3rd Monday of every month at Midstate Independent Living Choices, 3262 Church St in Stevens Point Conference Room from 6:00 - 7:00 PM. It is free to attend and open to the public.

- October 21st- ADHD Awareness and Coping Strategies
- November 18th- Social Connections for Mental Wellness
- December 16th- NAMI Portage and Wood County Gathering at St. Paul Lutheran Church

NAMI Peer Support Group

Peer Support Groups for individuals living with mental illness. Our support groups are open to the public and led by trained facilitators who also deal with mental illness. This group meets on the 1st Thursday of the month at St. Paul Lutheran School, 1919 Wyatt, from 6:15-7:45 PM. Please use Door 3 to enter from the parking lot and follow the signs downstairs. An elevator is also available on the main level.

NAMI Family Support Group

Family Support Groups are for family members or friends with a loved one dealing with mental illness. This group meets on the 1st Monday of the month at St. Paul Lutheran School, 1919 Wyatt, from 6:30-8:00 PM. Please use Door 3 to enter from the parking lot and follow the signs downstairs. An elevator is also available on the main level. Contact Linda at 715-572-7135 or Paula at 715-544-2207 for more information or if you need transportation.

2024 PREVENT SUICIDE EVENTS

POINT AID

The first Annual Point Aid was a rockin' success! The UWSP Men's Rugby event had a handful of local bands thorough the day that brought a diverse crowd of college students, park enjoyers, and those who support the cause of mental health awareness. We can't wait to pair with these rowdy youngsters again in 2025!



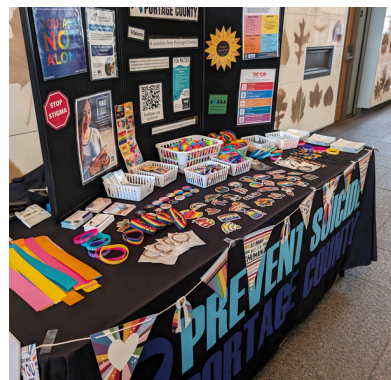
BE KIND TO YOUR MIND- Desiree Irmischer

In May, our community gathered for the "Be Kind to Your Mind" event, focused on mental health awareness. This year, the event took place at its new location, Steel King, and saw an amazing turnout. The event connected community members with essential mental health resources and local non-profits, providing valuable information and support. A big thank you to everyone who participated and helped make it a successful day of education and connection!

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

This year PSPC, Portage County Health and Human Services paired with NAMI Portage & Wood County for the annual May Mental Health event, "Mental Health Matters, Stronger Together". This event had something for everyone with a combination of food, resources, and music, with a lived experience panel. It is amazing to see these powerful community organizations work together for a common goal!

POINT PRIDE



Point Pride is an event that has historically been a point of division for the Stevens Point community, but has seen a positive shift this year by their staggering attendance at UWSP. We were overwhelmed by the support and love of attendees. It is incredible to see people of Stevens Point show up as their authentic selves.

CELEBRATE PLOVER - Sammie Sackmann

Celebrate Plover was a huge success on July 27th. The beautiful summer weather helped the fun vibe of the event. With over 250 people stopping at our booth, there were some touching moments with individuals in our community. Shout out to Nicole Pliska for helping Sammie Sackmann and Michelle Nelson staff the booth! A big thanks goes out to everyone who wrote Messages of Hope last year to give to people in need of a reminder this year. It is wonderful that our community helps and supports one another.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Join us in raising awareness by wearing purple throughout the month.

The Family Crisis Center offers 24-hour support for victims fleeing domestic violence. Our advocates are here to help with safety planning, emotional support, and connecting you to resources.

We are always accepting donations of new, unexpired goods to help support survivors in need. Your contributions make a difference!



- Cleaning:**
Kleenex
Dish Soap & Sponges
Toilet Paper
Toilet Cleaner
Disinfecting Wipes/Spray
Bleach
Multipurpose cleaner
13 gallon Trash Bags
Aluminum Foil

- Seasonal:**
Tylenol, Ibuprofen
Alcohol free cold medicine
Pepto, Tums
Adult

- Food:**
Hamburger Helper
Coffee
Juice (boxes, frozen, etc.)
Ramen Noodles, Pasta
Granola/Protein Bars
Shelf stable side dishes

- Gift Cards:**
Local Grocery
Gas Station
Walmart
Walgreens

CURRENT HIGH
NEED ITEMS:

- Kleenex**
Laundry Detergent
Disinfecting wipes/spray
Gas Cards



- Personal Care:**
Full Sized Shampoo
Full Sized Conditioner
Full Sized Body Wash
Body Lotion
Floss

- Baby/Kids:**
Reusable water bottles
Packaged snacks
Juice

- Household:**
Comforters (Twin & Full Sizes Only)
New Towels
Duffels/Large Tote Bags
Adult Backpacks
Phone Chargers (USB-C or lightning)
Black sharpies
Reusable water bottles
Can Openers

- New Clothing Items:**
Gender neutral (All sizes, youth & adult)
- sweatshirts
- sweatpants
- Leggings
- Plain T-shirts
Women's Underwear &
Socks (all sizes)

LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS
Continued

Older Adult Support Group

A mental health support group that offers a safe space for older adults affected by anxiety, depression, stress or other mental health concerns. They meet monthly, to discuss mental health, hear from guest speakers, and find social support with each other. The 3rd Wednesday of every month at the Aging and Disability Resource Lincoln Center. Contact ADRC at 715-346-1401 or adrc@co.portage.wi.us with any questions .

Jump on the ADHD
bandwagon ...

... it has three-wheels,
constantly gets lost,
will probably lose
your luggage and the
wagon driver
definitely won't
remember your
name!

#ADHDAwarenessmonth



www.thrivingwithneurodiversity.com.au

Evergreen Community Initiatives
Warming Shelter Opens
November 1st
Donate & Volunteer

715.252.7860



Monetary donations are also highly valued, please make checks payable to The Family Crisis Center.

Donations can be dropped off 24/7 at: 1616 West River Drive, Stevens Point, WI

Or during business hours at: 101 Tower Road, Waupaca, WI AND 205 East Main St, Wautoma, WI

THANK YOU SEPTEMBER WORKGROUP

Mai Thao

In September, Suicide Prevention Month, we take part in raising awareness by planning a variety of events for the community. We organized a county wide activity Chalk the Walk, Have the Talk. People are invited to chalk their sidewalks and driveways with positive messages of hope. The group gathered decorations and supplies and put together a wonderful display for the Portage County library window. We decorated the Portage County library window using the theme of Chalk the Walk, Have the Talk. Besides those two activities, we distributed mental health placemats and crisis line stickers to local restaurants, coffee shops and organizations.

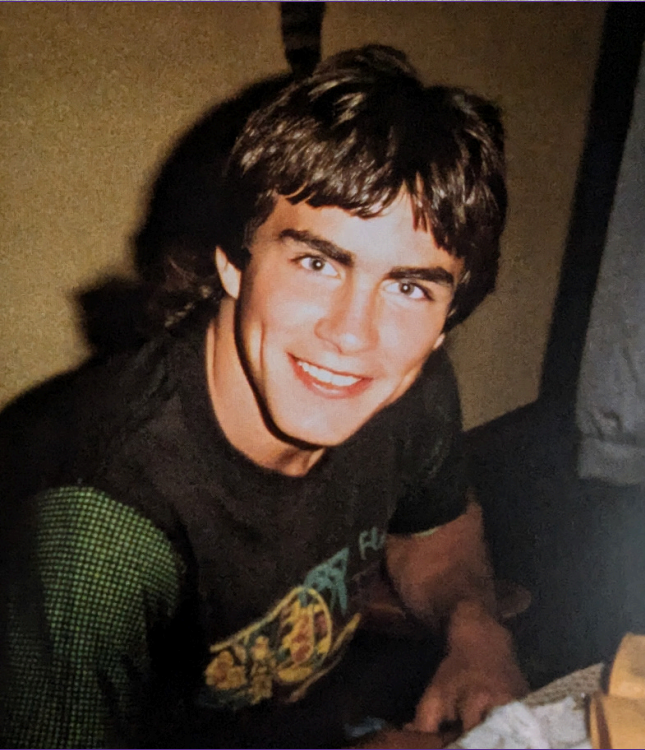
Walk for Hope

Ranae Kramer (Bryar Drexler's Mom)

My daughter invited me to help out with the 2024 Walk for Hope and I have to admit, I wasn't sure what it would be like. I lost my brother in 1991 to suicide; he was only 20 years old. It was a day that I wish I could go back in time and redo. Maybe I could've changed his thoughts, maybe I could have seen the signs that I now know I missed. I wasn't expecting to have as many tears at the walk as I did. I think it is an awesome idea to read off the names of loved ones and give a moment of silence for them. Thank you for that! 💜 In some ways, it brought me a little peace after all these years. I also appreciate all the resources that were readily available to everyone, I wish that we had these around in 1991. I have a pink crocheted butterfly from the Walk for Hope that I have clipped on my purse and every time I look at it, I remember my brother. No one truly can understand what it is like to have a sibling die from suicide unless, unfortunately, you have lived through it, too. I want to express my appreciation for the Prevent Suicide Portage County coalition because they give a breath of hope to those who have been affected by suicide. Putting on community events like the Walk for Hope truly does give people hope to continue on in honor of those we have lost.



Chalk Art from pacelli Middle School



Gary Nelson (12/7/1970 - 7/22/1991)

COALITION MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: KARISSA SCOTT

My name is Karissa. I was born and raised in Plover and have strong family ties here. I enjoy a variety of outdoor activities, canning salsa, pickling pickles, baking, cooking, and highly enjoy finding deals! I enjoy flowers and look forward to planting them every spring. Flowers hold positive energy that does well for the soul. I enjoy live music, beautiful scents of candles burning, and much more- all things that contribute positively in supporting my mental wellness. Family and Friends are very important to me and it lights my fire the connections and time that we spend together. The laughs, the experiences, dancing in the kitchen, the tears, the support, the memories, and much more are something I'm always thankful and grateful for. I long for all to have consistent meaning and purpose within their lives as life ebbs and flows and try to assist in this effort. I have experienced loss by suicide both personally and professionally. There is hope, there is purpose and meaning, even if it's so unclear at the moment. You belong. I ask that you connect with someone today, ask them about their day, ask them if there is any help they are in need of, listen, and positively be present and encouraging. **Keep smiling and being kind, Thank you.**

