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Dear Friends,

For most of us, the new year means a new exciting beginning, making resolutions, or maybe a chance to change old habits. However, this time of year can be especially difficult for those struggling with depression and thoughts of self-harm. Suicide and depression know no barriers - it affects people of all ages, races, and income levels. Sadly, suicide is not a new phenomenon. However, in the wake of Covid and its many negative impacts there has been a sharp increase in suicide attempts by both teens and adults.

In the coming year, FSL will continue the critical work of building awareness about the resources available to help those struggling with suicidal thoughts or mental health concerns. Many people who complete suicide suffer from untreated or poorly treated depression. Suicide has devastating life-long ramifications for the family, loved ones, and friends left as survivors. Calling 988, the national suicide lifeline, or FSL's DASH 631-952-3333 – whether for yourself or someone else - you can make a difference and save a life.



Since people tend to be more isolated during the winter months, I urge you to take the time and effort to check in on those in your life. FSL's life-saving prevention education programs provide guidelines for how to help someone thinking of suicide; what and how to ask those difficult questions, and, most importantly, how to get immediate help.

Together, with your help, we are Restoring Hope and Rebuilding Lives in communities across Long Island. In the coming months, I look forward to the opportunity of sharing additional information about services and our 2023 Special Events. As always, we welcome individuals, businesses, and civic organizations to become involved in our mission. Reach out and learn more by contacting me at [restorehope@fsl-li.org](mailto:restorehope@fsl-li.org) or 631-470-6770. Please take a moment to follow us on social media and read our weekly eNews for the latest happenings.

As always, my deepest appreciation to all who have given of themselves to support our neighbors in need.

**Good wishes, health, and happiness to you and yours in the year ahead!**

Sincerely,  
Karen Boorshtein, LCSW  
President & CEO

### **These are a few of FSL's services designed to help through life's most critical challenges:**

**Dial 988** - The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a United States-based suicide prevention network of over 200+ crisis centers, including FSL, that provides 24/7 service via a toll-free hotline with the number 9-8-8. It is available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.

**DASH, FSL's Diagnostic, Assessment, and Stabilization Hub**, is a community-based crisis care facility for children (over 5 years old), teens, adults, and families. This program is available to Suffolk residents who struggle with severe mental health issues and/or substance use disorders. DASH services include Mobile Crisis Teams which provide outreach and may be dispatched to any location in Suffolk County. **DASH 24-hour hotline is 631-952-3333.**

As a direct result of the rise in suicides impacting Suffolk County, FSL had implemented the prevention program **Safe TALK (Tell Ask Listen Keep safe)**, in coordination with the NYS Office of Mental Health. Knowing the risk

factors for suicide and who is at risk can help reduce the suicide rate. Safe TALK is three-hour training offered to teens (15+) through seniors. It focuses on strategies to help people openly discuss suicide, suicidal thoughts and actions, and the importance of asking for help. For more information contact Donna Altonji, LCSW-R at [daltonji@fsl-li.org](mailto:daltonji@fsl-li.org) or 631-874-1359.

**Post-vention program, Joe's Project**, provides immediate support to those surviving a loss by suicide. Joe's Project is a specialty service within the agency **Community Crisis Action Team (C-CAT)**. The staff is comprised of master's level mental health workers with additional training from the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation. Post-ventions are with individuals, families, and groups impacted by suicide, often within days of the occurrence. Joe's Project staff assists in the complicated grief that frequently accompanies suicide. If anyone has been impacted by suicide and is seeking help the Joe's Program 24/7 hotline number is 1-888 FSL-CCAT (1-888-375-2228). There are also support programs for family members whose loved ones have died by accidental or intentional overdose.