

Suicide Prevention Interview with Derek and Teri Efle (Interviewed by Julie Hestermann, CEN Network Board Member)

The 2023 theme of the network "It is Well With My Soul" opens the door to discussion surrounding many important topics. Suicide prevention is the focus of the network for July and August. The Christian Education Network will host QPR training on August 24th from 8:00 - 9:30 pm Eastern. This training will be presented by Derek and Teri Effe. Julie Hestermann, CEN board member, interviewed Derek and Teri to learn more about their involvement in suicide prevention training and to be able to share about the content of the upcoming webinar.

Derek and Teri Effe have spent more than thirty years combined working in Ministry and Substance Use prevention. They have a passion for helping communities grow and have healthy conversations and love nothing more than seeing families develop and thrive. Currently, Derek is a consultant and coach with PrairieFire Consulting and Teri is a Prevention Specialist with Region V Systems. They have one 22 year-old son, and are also the Nebraska parents to another 22 year-old son who came to live with them during his senior year of high school. Laughter and shenanigans are common occurrences in their home.

- **How did you begin work in the area of suicide prevention training?** Teri was recruited while still in her ministry role as a community QPR trainer through the Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention Grant. She didn't even know what she was signing up for...she just showed up for the day-long training and never looked back. Derek was trained as a part of his work with Nebraska Faith Partners through the Partnership for Success Grant in Lancaster County.
- **How long have you been involved in leading suicide prevention training?** Teri was trained about 8 years ago and Derek was trained 5 years ago
- **What does your work in this area look like?** We have worked as a part of two different suicide prevention grants, and both have had a youth focus, as the data for southeast Nebraska has historically been concerningly high in the 9-25 year old population, though that has been changing steadily since the pandemic. Our primary strategies have been to raise awareness about resources and how to access them and who can access them, training people to recognize the early warning signs of someone who might be struggling with thoughts of suicide, initiating Hope Squads in schools and Zero Suicide Academy among providers. Through the Faith Partners network we have launched QPR Week, where church partners around Lincoln and Lancaster county host QPR trainings for their congregations and the community at large to help build knowledge and skills and to reduce stigma. We have also been active with post-vention, supporting the development of LOSS Teams (Local outreach to suicide survivors).
- **Can you give our members an overview of how the webinar will look and some basic content that the webinar will include?** QPR is a 90 minute training that is similar to CPR, meant for regular people not in the mental health field to be equipped to render aid until the person experiencing the crisis can be connected to professional support. There are three sections: one where participants will learn to recognize when someone might be struggling with suicidal thoughts, second they onboard the brief intervention skill (question, persuade, refer) and third we go through a range of local and national resources for referral. I (Teri) have always said I think QPR is one of the most useful things I have ever learned in terms of being able to walk away from an hour and a half training session able to use a brand new skill.

Join us on August 24th for this important and informative webinar. Stay tuned for registration information

Suicide prevention resources:

- Suicide and Crisis Lifeline 988
- Crisis Text Line: Text "Talk" to 741-741
- www.talkheart2heart.org
- www.asfp.org