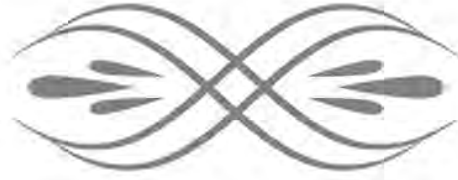




# CROWN JEWELS OF DALLAS

SUICIDE AND CRISIS CENTER  
OF NORTH TEXAS – HOPE AND HEALING

PHOTO Bret Redman  
WORDS Maggie Hayes



**T**he holidays are full of joy, love, fellowship and gifts. It's also a time of loss, sorrow, loneliness and grief. Margie Wright, director of the Suicide and Crisis Center of North Texas, shares some important information about the problem of suicide. Wright, whose agency was recently awarded the Excellence in Human Service Programming Award for 2013 for its work for her work in suicide prevention, shines as a true Crown Jewel of Dallas.

### **SOBERING STATISTICS**

In 2011, there were 2,822 deaths by suicide in Texas. Suicides by age were: Youths ages 10-14, 27 deaths; Youths ages 15-19, 149 deaths; Youths ages 20-24, 234 deaths; and Adults ages 50-59, 546 deaths. When it comes to gender, 574 suicide deaths were female; 2,248 were male. In Dallas County, there were 218 deaths at a rate of 9.1 per 100,000.

### **SUICIDES IN TEENS**

Teen suicides are not as high as those of adults; however there are many attempts. Every attempt deserves attention, as half of all of them are serious, legitimate attempts. We screen children as young as 10. We've had kids so depressed that they felt they needed to see someone. Regardless of how young a child is, don't lie to them about suicide of a loved one.

### **SUICIDE IN ADULTS**

Older adults are more successful in their suicide attempts. There has been a rise in suicides between the ages of 45 and 59. Those over the age of 60 have the highest rate of suicides. Most are familiar with firearms, have health problems or are in financial difficulties. Men are more likely to kill themselves than women, and men are more likely to use a gun, while women tend to take pills. There are a number of one-car accidents which are suicides.

### **THE SIGNS**

There's something wrong if someone talks about killing themselves. If someone says, 'Oh, they're just trying to get attention.' Wouldn't you hate to be wrong? Bullies are often victims of bullying, and a lot of them are suicide risks. People let you see what they want you to see, and they're very good at hiding their feelings. Children don't always give clear signals. Some red flags are: changing friends, dressing differently, being more moody, grades began to fall and substance abuse. It is important – and OK – to ask questions, to snoop. Suicide is the proverbial last straw.

### **HOPE**

Our whole point is to give people hope. I think we've begun to decrease the stigma. People have been scared to say the word "suicide." Our program Teens Can Survive has been growing by leaps and bounds. This is the second time Crystal Charity Ball has chosen us as a beneficiary, and we are very grateful for their support. We used to look for schools to participate; now they're calling us. I feel like we help a lot of people. For every suicide, there's someone left behind we can offer help and comfort. For every person who dies by suicide, there are six to 20 people left to deal with it.

### **THE COMMITMENT**

I was not looking for a job. I was semi-retired. I had planned to say home and garden and grow tomatoes. I got a call from a friend. I came down, talked with them and told them I'd give them a year. That was 14 years ago. I just fell in love with the cause. I believe what we do here is so needed and so unique. We can truly save lives every day!

### **HELP IS AVAILABLE**

We have a Survivor of Suicide program for people who've lost someone. It's not therapy; it is support. It has a therapeutic effect. People who have completed suicide have family members – a spouse, a child – and they are at risk of being a suicide. People in crisis need unconditional love and support. Good old-fashioned love is the best medicine. One person told me, 'This was the first place I came where I felt safe to say the word suicide.' Many credit us with saving their lives throughout program.

### **REACH OUT**

The Suicide and Crisis Center of North Texas operates a 24-hour hotline, staffed by 100 volunteers. If you need help or know someone who does, call 214-828-1000. You can also call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255). Learn more at [www.sccenter.org](http://www.sccenter.org).

# FASHION STARS FOR A CAUSE

PHOTOS Shana Anderson

These 12 beautiful and accomplished women have been selected as Fashion Stars for a Cause 2014 to represent Suicide and Crisis Center of North Texas; during the next three months their goal will be to help raise funds and awareness for this much needed cause. In the March issue of "Beverly Drive" you will learn more about these 12 dynamic women. Please join us in congratulating them.



Rhonda Marcus



Janée Hill



Regina Bruce



Carla Miller



Antonia Hubert



Alex Small



Britt Harless



Robin Brock



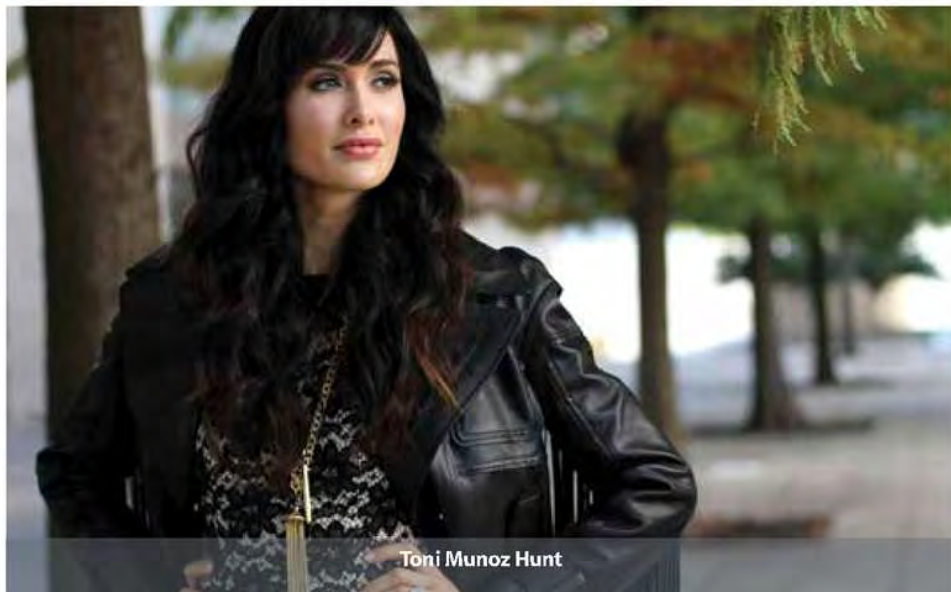
Ashley Burghardt



Hilary Kennedy



Cynthia Smoot



Toni Munoz Hunt