

A SUPPORTIVE RESOURCE AND COMPASSIONATE VOICE FOR LIVES TOUCHED BY MENTAL ILLNESS AND SUICIDE

Impact Report



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Supporting Mental Health Advocacy and Suicide Prevention

Often, mental health and suicide are topics we don't learn much about until they impact our lives. The Kim Foundation proactively engages the community about mental health and suicide prevention to normalize the conversation and save lives, all while supporting loss survivors and advocating for systemic change.

Our mission is to serve as a supportive resource and compassionate voice for lives touched by mental illness and suicide. We envision a community free of suicide that embraces the importance of quality mental health services and prevention.

We focus much of our programming on youth because the earlier in life we can intervene, provide support and promote help-seeking behaviors, the better chance each individual will have at a longer, healthier life.





Our History



The Kim Foundation was founded in 2001 as a lasting memory of Larry Courtnage's daughter, Kim, who lived with mental illness and died by suicide. Larry vowed to continue building awareness around a topic that we still see far too much stigma around and to help other families avoid experiences that his family encountered through Kim's treatment and recovery process.

Since our inception, our priorities and initiatives have shifted and grown, but our commitment to supporting and promoting mental health and suicide prevention has always remained at the core of what we do. Our staff continues to grow based on the needs of the community, and we are committed to remaining relevant and accessible to meet the changing times in the future.

The Kim Foundation has played an active role in policy, outreach, education and funding in all components of mental health care in Nebraska, and we will continue serving as a strong voice for all lives impacted by mental illness and suicide.

Our Initiatives

The Kim Foundation works to increase awareness around mental health and suicide prevention in Nebraska and beyond, serving as a communication and connection link between individuals, organizations and communities.

We accomplish this with a comprehensive approach to our work that involves hosting inspiring, educational events, delivering engaging presentations and experiences to community members, leading awareness campaigns and more.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Kim Foundation delivers education and support to individuals, groups and events in and around the Omaha metro.

Delivering Education

The Kim Foundation's community presentations raise awareness and share resources about mental health and suicide prevention. Our **Encouraging Hope** presentations are available at no charge to any schools, entities, organizations, churches, service clubs or offices, covering a variety of topics aligned with our mission.

Our presentations help build awareness about mental health and suicide prevention facts, statistics and resources, as well as our initiatives. Our presenters offer a variety of engaging activities and always include a Q&A session. We tailor content to each group's size, age and specific needs.

Supporting Community Events

The Kim Foundation promotes mental health advocacy and suicide prevention at events throughout our community. Our booths are staffed by our team and passionate volunteers who provide engaging information, activities and merch at music, art and cultural festivals, mental health walks, conferences and more.



Building Awareness

We believe everyone can play a role in saving lives from suicide. **More Tomorrows** is our public awareness campaign focused on suicide prevention in the Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare area in Nebraska. The More Tomorrows campaign centers on empowering the community through education, engagement and a variety of outreach efforts to bring “more tomorrows.”

Our campaign website, MoreTomorrowsNE.org, provides statistics, advice and resources to save lives in our community by teaching visitors the warning signs, how to start the conversation and where to turn for help.

Suicide is a very real public health problem that affects individuals from all walks of life, and you never know who may need an encouraging affirmation. That's why The Kim Foundation asks our community to “**Chalk It Up for More Tomorrows**” with messages of hope throughout the Omaha metro every September during Suicide Prevention Week. Year after year, we are inspired by the numerous individuals and groups that help us spread these messages on sidewalks, driveways and parking lots across the city.

“

Our organization uses The Kim Foundation's website, resources and networking groups to help thousands of our students develop healthy relationships and coping skills for the many topics we address through educational theater.”

— Patricia Newman
Founder/Executive Director of RESPECT

Greetings!

It is with great honor and pride that we offer you The Kim Foundation's inaugural impact report. This report highlights the meaningful, mission-driven work we have provided our community, as well as the growth and transition our organization has experienced in recent years. Our commitment to supporting those who have been impacted by mental illness and suicide remains steadfast, and our work in these areas has never been more necessary.

I am truly humbled by the evolution of our community's mindset toward mental health and suicide over the years and by the unwavering support of our community partners. The work we do cannot be successful without meaningful partnerships, and we are so fortunate to have such strong collaboration with those who share in our mission.

While we have experienced this evolution in our community, there is still much work to be done. Any individual in our area who needs mental health care should feel like they can seek the appropriate level of care at the right time, in a way that is responsive to their needs and life experiences. At The Kim Foundation, we look to a day where we don't lose anyone to suicide, and mental wellness is just as important as physical wellness.

To our partners who have helped us improve our community and save lives from suicide, we thank you and look forward to our continued partnership. To those of you just learning more about The Kim Foundation, we welcome you to join us in our fight and thank you for your interest and shared passion to help make our communities safer and healthier for all.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julia Hebenstreit", with a large, stylized circular flourish at the end.

Julia Hebenstreit, J.D.
Executive Director
March 2024

Our 2023 Accomplishments



SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

13 school districts served
69 schools served



COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

229 presentations delivered
12,972 presentation attendees



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

180 volunteers
889 volunteer hours
103 organizations participated in
Chalk It Up for More Tomorrows



EVENTS

54 community event booths
25,266 community event attendees engaged
623 attendees at A Time for Hope and Healing
386 attendees at the Nebraska School
Mental Health Conference
423 attendees at EmPOWER Youth Summit
76 corporate supporters

**More than 250,000
suicide prevention resources
were distributed to the public.**

Preventing Suicides Across the State

Suicide remains a significant public health problem in Nebraska. In 2023, The Kim Foundation published a comprehensive document to serve as a roadmap for our state in all aspects of suicide prevention through 2025.

While we led the creation of this plan, it could not have been accomplished without support and knowledge from focus group participants, the DHHS Division of Behavioral Health and other community partners, including Behavioral Health Regions, school districts, Department of Education, Educational Service Units, behavioral health providers, Nebraska State Suicide Prevention Coalition and Nebraska LOSS Teams.

The plan's strategies and recommendations require implementation and funding from the state and/or other partners, but many sections are relevant to anyone looking for information. Everyone can take part in saving lives from suicide, and by utilizing this plan, we hope that all Nebraskans will have the right tools to do so.

Read the plan at TheKimFoundation.org/State-Plan

A Collective Effort to Better Our Community

In addition to our many dedicated volunteers, we are thankful for the passionate individuals on our team and board who make it possible to better our community and connect others to life-saving information.

Our Team

Julia Hebenstreit, J.D.
Executive Director

Molly Verble, M.Ed.
Assistant Director

Kerri Armstrong
Office Manager

Molly Woodman
Outreach Coordinator

Sidney Howard
Outreach Coordinator

Ashlee Zaragoza
Outreach Coordinator

Board of Directors

Larry Courtnage
Board President & Chair

Kathy Courtnage
Board Vice Chair

Megan McMurry
Board Member

Vicki Witkovski
Board Member

Craig Wolf
Board Member

Mark Wolf
Board Member

Learn more and get involved at TheKimFoundation.org



Providing Hope for Survivors

The Kim Foundation, in partnership with the Nebraska State Suicide Prevention Coalition and Region 6, leads a **Local Outreach to Suicide Survivors (LOSS) Team** in the Omaha metro. The LOSS Team, based on a nationally recognized postvention effort, provides immediate support to survivors of suicide loss, offering resources, comfort and hope to newly bereaved families or friends.

Members of the LOSS Team, which consists of survivor volunteers (people who have experienced the suicide of a loved one) and mental health professionals, are activated by first response officials to the scene of the suicide. Team members follow-up with survivors to help coordinate services and support groups within the community.

Research has shown that through programs such as LOSS, survivors are more likely to seek emotional help and significantly less likely to attempt or die by suicide themselves.

“

The Kim Foundation's Metro Area LOSS Team is an integral partner with the Omaha Police Department in providing assistance, resources and an opportunity for hope in our community. Through this collaboration, we can provide the right type of support at the right time.”

— Officer Leigh Culver
Behavioral Health and Wellness
Unit, Omaha Police Department

PARTNERSHIPS

The Kim Foundation's partnerships strengthen suicide prevention in the Omaha metro and across the country.

Linking to Save Lives

Launched by Tom Karlin Foundation and The Kim Foundation, **Linked By Legacy** is an initiative to connect family foundations across the country with shared missions of suicide prevention. Our mission is to serve as a coalition of grassroots suicide prevention organizations working together to save lives through advocacy, education and collaboration. Membership is open to any 501(c)(3) organization that focuses on suicide prevention and was founded in legacy of a loved one.



Promoting Community Resilience

Established in 2016 and led by Region 6 Behavioral Health and The Kim Foundation, the **Metro Area Suicide Prevention Coalition (MASPC)** is a collaborative effort between multiple behavioral health organizations, school districts, churches, survivors, law enforcement agencies and community members.

Meeting monthly, MASPC aims to inspire our community in preventing suicide and promoting resilience through conversation, education, support and advocacy. Coalition work groups include Lethal Means Safety, Community Engagement, Youth Serving Organizations, School Systems and Professionals.

“

I was looking for support and direction after our school had experienced several deaths by suicide. In 2017, I received an email inviting me to a meeting sponsored by The Kim Foundation — it was the beginning of the Metro Area Suicide Prevention Coalition. I have been blessed to be surrounded by passionate individuals dedicated to providing support and knowledge that helps us educate our students, staff and families on suicide prevention and the importance of addressing mental health. I truly believe that The Kim Foundation has helped us save lives.”

— Kevin Rohlfs
Principal of Bellevue West High School



EVENTS

The Kim Foundation hosts several events throughout the year to educate and inspire a variety of audiences, including students, professionals and the general community.



Uplifting Hope and Healing

Our annual fundraiser, “A Time for Hope & Healing,” shines a light on the importance of mental health advocacy and suicide prevention. Each year, a national keynote speaker shares their story to help normalize the conversation for everyone. This event gathers corporate professionals, passionate community members and others involved in mental health advocacy to network, enjoy a meal and find inspiration and hope.

Empowering Youth

The **EmPOWER Youth Summit** brings high school students together for a day of hope-filled connections and education on mental wellness, self-care and other topics — with the goal that students leave feeling better equipped to advocate for themselves and others. Previous summits have drawn students from across the Omaha metro to learn from young speakers, including trauma survivors, mental health advocates and more.



Advocating for School Mental Health

The **Middle America School Mental Health Conference** and **Nebraska School Mental Health Conference** gather professionals from across the state and region to promote the need for strong mental health services in schools; to provide resources and training; and to advance early intervention and wraparound services for youth and families. This accredited continuing education activity is designed for licensed mental health providers, nurses, social workers, counselors, administrators and school personnel.

“

I've partnered with The Kim Foundation throughout the past 20 years as a clinician, educator and leader. One of my favorite initiatives that The Kim Foundation leads is the Nebraska School Mental Health Conference. It's an excellent example of how The Kim Foundation engages our community to increase awareness about mental health and suicide prevention. I truly value their outstanding, talented team.”

— Tim Hron
Chief Program Officer
at RADIUS

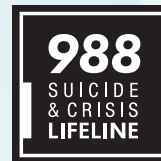
Each of us can play an important role in mental health advocacy and suicide prevention — find resources and get involved at **TheKimFoundation.org**.



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Visit us at
TheKimFoundation.org
or scan the QR code



Call or text 988 for
24/7 crisis support