



NEWSLETTER - December 2016

From the Board

Dear friends and colleagues,

It is amazing that 2016 is nearly over and it is some months now since you received the last BW newsletter. Somehow time seems to pass very quickly!

In this newsletter we highlight some of the events which Befrienders Kenya, Bloemfontein Befrienders (South Africa) and Sourire de Reda (Morocco) undertook as part of World Suicide Prevention Day.

We also present some news from Sri Lanka Sumithrayo, and note an exciting initiative involving BW and the maritime industry.

Hong Kong

Graduation ceremony of 7th Youth Programme.

Kenya

Befrienders Kenya marked the World Suicide Prevention Day for the 5th time in the country on 10th September 2016. The theme for this year was **Connect, Communicate and Care** and the venue was at a school in Nairobi City Centre. This came immediately after the launch of the Suicide Prevention Ribbon on the 9th September 2016 which was done in partnership with the Mental Health Department, Ministry of Health at the Mathari National Teaching and Referral Hospital.

Morocco

Sourire de Reda shared a message on their Fan Page

Bloemfontein, South Africa

Hosted an information session for 520 grade 1 -3 learners at a local primary school on Bullying.

Sri Lanka Sumithrayo

News from Mela.

Maritime Community

A pilot programme has been established with a shipping company in Singapore to provide emotional support to sea and land-based staff, initially with email communications. To be followed with a telephone service.

New Board Member

Dr Marion Gibson, a specialist in the psychological aspects of trauma, will join the Board in January 2017. Dr Gibson has extensive international experience as a trainer, researcher and lecturer. She was a founding member of the British Red Cross Psychological Support Team and has a long time involvement with Mission to Seafarers.

Update to BW web directory

Kristina Kolbe, a PhD student at the London School of Economics has accepted the task of validating and updating member centre information on the website. The work is targeted to be completed by the end of the year.

Articles for BW News

For the forthcoming editions of BW News we would like to provide the highlights of our member's recent major projects and special anniversaries. We will also provide further information about new members who have joined us recently. Please send the articles or information that you would like us to include to your Regional Co-ordinator and also to me personally at chair@befrienders.org

Please also do not hesitate to contact your Regional Co-ordinator or any member of the BW Board if you have any questions or comments.

With thanks and best wishes

Martin

Martin Taylor (Chair)

The Samaritans, Hong Kong

互勉計劃第7屆畢業生分享心得
友伴相扶持黑夜不孤單

【本報專訊】「友伴同行生命互勉計劃」畢業生分享會日前舉行，共有27名來自不同中學的學生成功畢業，並分享參與計劃的體會。計劃為期兩年，讓青少年學習管理情緒的技巧，並提高為他人提供情緒支援。計劃導師與導師協助學生處理情緒，並為學生提供專業輔導。學生表示，計劃讓他們更了解自己的情緒，並學會如何與他人溝通。計劃導師表示，計劃的目的是幫助學生建立支持網絡，並提高他們的自我效能感。計劃導師表示，計劃的成功在於學生的積極參與和導師的專業支持。計劃導師表示，計劃將繼續為學生提供支持，並幫助他們在未來的生活中取得成功。

Graduation ceremony of their 7th youth programme, the attached photo from the Sing Pao Newspaper including the graduation class, along with committee members and volunteers.

Befrienders Kenya marks World Suicide Prevention Day in Kenya with the Introduction of the Universal Suicide Prevention Awareness Ribbon

Befrienders Kenya in partnership with the Ministry of Health - Department of Mental Health launched the Suicide Prevention Awareness Ribbon. This was during the World Suicide Prevention Day national event held on 9th September, 2016 organized by the Ministry of Health at the Mathari National Teaching and Referral Hospital in Nairobi. This is also the largest psychiatric hospital in East Africa.



The two-toned ribbon which was initiated by the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) and launched globally indicates a candle flame which symbolises walking out of the darkness into the light and is in line with the candle lighting activity which is a tradition often associated with the day. In introducing the ribbon, Ms Merab Mulindi of Befrienders Kenya which is a member of IASP noted that, *“In uniting behind a shared universal ribbon, we hope to increase awareness of suicide prevention - the more we wear the ribbon, the more it will get known. The desire is for the suicide prevention awareness ribbon to become globally recognisable, much like other ribbons for other worthwhile causes.”*

The launching of the ribbon was carried out by the chief guest who represented the Chief Executive Office of the National Hospital Insurance Fund. He symbolically unveiled the Ribbon as Befrienders Kenya distributed ribbons to all the participants of the day.

The event had earlier begun with a procession which raised awareness on the event and the day as participants clad in the colourful orange T-shirts marched to the venue carrying a banner indicating the day and was led by the Kenya Prisons Band. The orange T-shirts were carefully selected to be in sync with the Ribbon and so were the venue decorations.



The event which brought together participants from various institutions and organizations saw various speakers emphasize on the importance of the theme. Participants took part in the traditional candle lighting ceremony where those that died by suicide, survivors of suicide attempts and those bereaved through suicide are remembered.



Merab Mulindi of Befrienders Kenya addresses the participants

The participants were introduced to the day and theme, introduced to International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) and Befrienders Kenya (BK) and taken through topics such as the importance of seeking help and warning signs of suicide. In addition to this, real life experiences of attempted suicide and bereavement through suicide were shared. One of the highlights of the forum was the sharing of the statement from the IASP President Prof Ella Arensman which was presented by Ms Merab Mulindi from Befrienders Kenya who also noted that Befrienders Kenya is a member of Befrienders Worldwide and also IASP and represents both organizations in Kenya and the region.



Participants at the Befrienders Kenya information desk during the World Suicide Prevention Day event

Sourire de Reda, Morocco



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Sourire de Reda
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L'Organisation Mondiale de la Santé estime que plus de 800 000 personnes se suicident chaque année. Parce que le suicide ne concerne pas seulement les adolescents, Sourire de Reda s'associe à la Journée Internationale de Prévention du Suicide.
Relier, communiquer, soutenir sont les 3 mots clés de la prévention.
Relier les uns et les autres pour éviter l'isolement.
Communiquer pour permettre à ceux qui souffrent de pouvoir s'exprimer.
Soutenir les personnes en détresse et leur famille pour mieux les entourer.

World Suicide Prevention Day
International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP)
Connect. Communicate. Care.
September 10, 2016

Translation of the text published on Facebook:

The World Health Organization estimates that over 800,000 people die by suicide each year. Because suicide concerns both adults and teens, Sourire de Reda takes part in the World Suicide Prevention Day.

Connect, Communicate and Care are key words of prevention.

Connect people to avoid isolation.

Communicate to help suffering people to express their pain.

Care people in distress and their family.

From a Press Release --- Sourire de Reda, Morocco

The following two conferences were held in Casablanca last month. Professor Brian Mishara (vice chair of BW) was one of the guest speakers

On the 11 of November at Cheikh Khalifa Hospital of Casablanca

Subject: "New research and best practice in suicide prévention and intervention"

Speakers:

Professor Brian Mishara, Professor of Psychology at the University of Québec, Montréal, Canada
Doctor Imane Kendili, Psychiatrist at Cheikh Khalifa Hospital of Casablanca
Meryeme Bouzidi Laraki, President of Sourire de Reda

On the 12 of November at the University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Casablanca

Subject: "Prevention and Intervention in situation of psychological crisis"

Speakers:

Professor Brian Mishara, Professor of Psychology at the University of Québec In Montréal
Professor Mohammed Agoub, Psychiatrist at Ibn Rochd Hospital of Casablanca
Meryeme Bouzidi Laraki, President of Sourire de Reda

Bloemfontein Befrienders (South Africa)

Hosted an information session on Bullying at Koot Niemand Primary School
Grade 1-3 learners = 520 learners.



Sri Lanka Sumithrayo

Our chairperson, Anura, ended his term in office and the present chairperson is Kumudini. Anura has been a wonderful friend and we have worked together for many years. He will continue to work in the same Centre as myself. He has transformed the SLS head office and been a source of great strength to all volunteers during difficult periods. He was a remarkable leader, juggling this responsibility along with his job which meant travelling overseas regularly and taking care of his family.

Kumudini, is young, energetic and a lovely, kind and caring volunteer. She used to work in the Colombo Centre, like myself. She left Colombo and joined the SLS Rural programme a couple of months after the sad passing away of her husband. She felt that giving of herself to the desperately poor in the villages would in turn help her to cope better. Later, she joined the Kohuwela Centre while still attached to the Rural Programme. She is one of our key Trainers in English and Sinhala. A real bonus as most of us can only train in English or Sinhala. Kumudini was in charge of Media before she took over as chairperson. The seminar we had on the 3rd of September was spearheaded by her and her team.

BW goes to Sea

In April this year Befrienders Worldwide (BW) was approached by Respond, the Irish trauma specialists, to pilot an email and telephone emotional support service to the seafarer community similar to that currently provided by over 500 Samaritan/ Befriender Centres worldwide.

The challenge:

“To deliver these services to the seafarer community, ashore & afloat, 24/7 In multiple languages”

Working with the owners of a fleet of 55 commercial vessels, BW sought input from Centres in New Zealand and Australia whose collaboration in recent years has delivered a regional VoIP & email network, across multiple time-zones, embracing ever improving digital communications.

An English language email service was established (in August) and will be joined by a Chinese language email service and an English language voice service by the end of this year.

The pilot will be assessed going into 2017, and with its anticipated success, additional languages to the email and voice services will be added with the support of Samaritan/ Befriender Centres in the Asia/Pacific area. Such support will be enabled through “free” digital infrastructure, which will encourage regional collaboration and development.

In addition to Centres in Wellington (New Zealand), Launceston and Subiaco (Australia), Samaritans of Hong Kong will be the first Asian Centre to trial supporting the services. Other Centres will be approached progressively during 2017.

Kevin Crombie (Regional Co-ordinator Australia/New Zealand) will be overseeing the programme during the pilot stages.

BW Trustees & Board members

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