

SCHOOLY IS OUT AFTER ONE YEAR

Learn why, and what to expect from the new 2016-17 system.

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EARLY COMMITMENTS AT AN ALL-TIME HIGH

Coaches and counselors don't like it. Students have mixed views.

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YOU CAN'T TRUMP THIS

Mrs. Gustitis worked with Presidential Candidate Donald Trump for almost 10 years.

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EDITORIAL: STRIPPING DOWN THE DRESS CODE

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WHEN A STUDENT FIGHTS CANCER

Junior Nick Calvaresi shares his life-changing story about fighting brain cancer.

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The BLACKFRIAR Chronicle

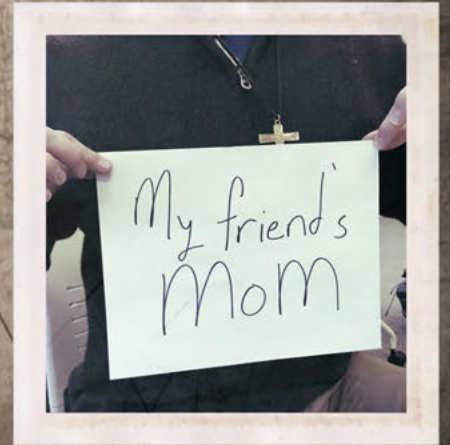
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A Light of Exposure



As a society, we aren't always honest with ourselves about suicide.

Justice Bennett '16 . Editor-in-Chief

*Defeated.
Disconnected.
Suffering.
Desperate.
Hopeless.*

* Andrew Miller stood in the middle of a forest attempting to hang himself on May 22, 2013.

Two years before, Andrew was a senior at Malvern and was headed to college on a full academic scholarship, but classes were never really his thing.

Andrew always loved working on extracurriculars, especially the arts and theatre. He said that not going to college was not really presented to him as an option at Malvern, but he wishes it had been.

Andrew never had a drink of alcohol or rip of a bong during high school, but

by the time he reached second semester of his freshman year at college, he was using drugs heavily.

"The first time I got high... one of the first thoughts in my head was 'my God I should really not ever not feel like this.'" Andrew said. "I was just a fan of feeling good, and I would do anything to feel good."

By his sophomore year he was addicted to cocaine and selling pot, pain

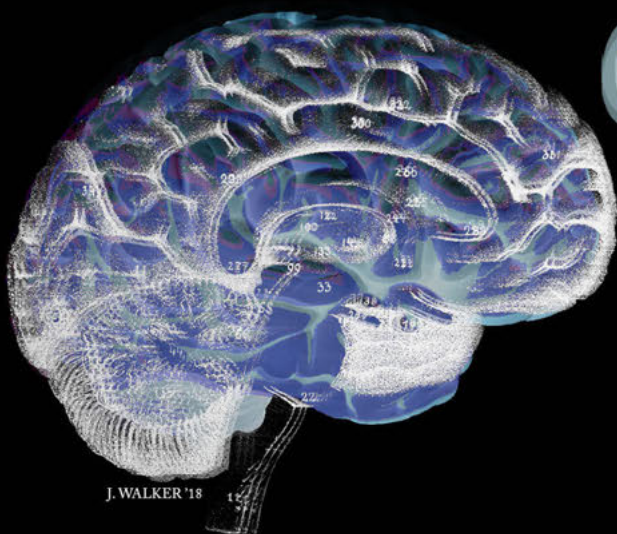
medications, ecstasy, and cocaine for some friends on his campus.

His education completely fell to the wayside.

His grades were not meeting the requirements for his academic scholarship, but he said the college never addressed his declining GPA, so his grades continued to falter. Ultimately, he finished his last semester at that college with a .7 grade point average.

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J. FAUNCE '16



J. WALKER '18

CONCUSSIONS GIVE MALVERN HEADACHES

Increased knowledge of the head injury has forced both trainers and athletes to become more aware of potential repercussions.

Michael Droogan '16
SPORTS EDITOR

Junior Cullen Pina unknowingly sustained a concussion before his soccer game on October 7, 2014 and continued to play for the next eight games.

It took three weeks for Pina to realize something was wrong.

"It wasn't like I was trying to hide, I just tripped warming up and everyone started laughing," Pina said. "My hands were in my pockets and my head flung back, but I didn't feel, 'Oh my God my head is killing me.' I didn't go home that night and say 'I feel funny.'"

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> A LIGHT OF EXPOSURE, 1

He was barely going to class, and when he was - he was usually high.

Andrew didn't want people to know about the drug and alcohol use, though. He wanted to keep the facade of the outgoing, wholesome, good kid that everyone knew him as back in high school. Not even his parents knew the true extent of his struggles.

"It's not that they were blind," Andrew said. "It's that I was blinding them."

Even in high school, before his challenges with drugs and alcohol, Andrew said he felt he was unable to develop meaningful relationships.

"Through high school - even before high school... I had felt like I couldn't be myself, like I couldn't be honest," he said.

He said that he saw a therapist during high school, but he did not work at therapy, and was able to convince his parents and others that he was OK.

The double life in college wore down on Andrew, and his drug use, specifically cocaine, was unsustainable.

"I couldn't continue to survive how I was because the drugs weren't really working anymore," he said. "Just physically it stops eventually, and you have to do so much just to feel OK."

He did not feel like he could tell anyone that he needed help.

"I felt completely alone," he said. "I felt like there was no way to connect to anyone, even if I had really wanted to."

Without help and the drugs wearing off, Andrew decided in April he would take his life, and on May 22, 2013 he set out into the woods, never intending to return.

"When I decided that I just wanted out, I really stopped battling... and just kind of gave myself over to feeling completely hopeless and alone," Andrew said.

Andrew did not show up for any of his work or school obligations that day, which was irresponsible, "even for me," he added.

His friends searched until they found him in the woods, attempting to kill himself.

"I was unable to complete that act," Andrew said. "I was vacant and sort of defeated [when my friends found me]... I was sort of stuck."

His friends took Andrew back to his house and called an ambulance and Andrew's parents. At the hospital, Andrew was put under a 24-hour watch period for three days. It was at the hospital that he spoke to his parents for the first time after his attempt.

"My parents came in and they were terribly upset but happy that I was existing, and basically said 'anything you need to do at this point, we'll be here,'" Andrew said. "At that point I told them everything that was going on."

The nurse of the hospital approached Andrew with an ultimatum: either admit himself to a psychiatric hospital with a special focus on drugs or she would have to forcefully do the same thing, which would result in it showing up permanently on his mental health record.

He chose the first option.

"It kind of felt like [an asylum]," he said. "There were people that I thought were just flat out crazy."

Andrew didn't really feel out of place

though.

"After about the first day I realized that I was there for a reason," he said. "Whether or not I felt like I belonged, I was there and that hadn't happened by accident."

When he left that facility, he went to an in-patient institution to help with his addiction.

Sure enough, Andrew has been sober since that nearly fatal day.

The stats and the factors

About one in six children seriously consider suicide and one in 12 attempt suicide, according to a 2013 CDC study.

According to the same study, the percentage of students who seriously consider suicide or make a plan for suicide decreased from 1991 to 2007, but has since started to increase.

Dr. Dana Romer, Director of the Adolescent Communication Institute at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg Public Policy Center believes that increase is due to the recession.

"If you look at suicide rates across all the ages in 2008 they all went up," Romer said. "The economy affects everyone."

Romer also believes there is some merit in the idea that suicide is less taboo than it used to be and that as a result, suicide rates are higher.

"Suicide has become more accepted as a solution for people... especially those with an incurable disease," Romer said, "and that probably filters down into people's mindsets in general that if you don't think life is worth living, suicide is an acceptable solution."

In the Greater Philadelphia Area, suicide has been in the headlines often recently, with six student suicides in 13 months at the University of Pennsylvania and Cayman Naib, the 13-year-old Shipley student who was found dead after hundreds joined in a four-day search.

In 2015, 60 Chester County residents died by suicide, which is the most in at least the last 25 years, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Health EpiQMS database.

Mrs. Tracy Behringer, Community Outreach and Education

Consultant of the Chester County Mental Health / Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities office, said that this number is probably lower than the real number.

"Suicide is often underreported," Behringer said. "Even though the information we have are confirmed suicide numbers, it's probably not all-inclusive."

Dr. Matthew Wintersteen of Thomas Jefferson University and Co-Chair of the Pennsylvania Against Youth Suicide Prevention

media were especially highlighted in the death of Madison Holleran at the University of Pennsylvania.

Social media use went from nearly nonexistent in 2004 to almost universal in 2010.

Social media, and most specifically Instagram, is host to a specific teenage culture that shows only the best of oneself - your best smile at a dance with your happy date, your best selfie, your best competition. Teens may not share their ugly pictures and saddest moments with people on Instagram.

In an interview with HuffPost Live, clinical psychologist Ramani Durvasula said, "We engage in social comparison, but [teenagers] are sort of comparing these ideal selves," he said. "It's a contest to see whose ideal life is better than the other person's."

Wintersteen thinks social media also plays a role with cyberbullying.

"You can go to your school right now, say something about somebody in front of your whole school in two seconds and you can't take it back really," Wintersteen said. "And then you have those idiots that chime in say 'well why don't you just kill yourself?'"

A survey of almost 2,000 middle school students published by the National Institute of Health, found that students who were cyberbullied were twice as likely to attempt suicide.

However, Wintersteen also pointed out there are several benefits of social media when it comes to youth suicide. "Social media can be really helpful because it gives you an opportunity to express how you feel," Wintersteen said. He also mentioned the ability for easier connection between many people who are suffering.

Romer, who studied the effect of social media and online discussion forums on youth suicide, found that social media platforms where most of the people students are talking to are friends and family are not risk factors, and provide a lot of support.

"We think that [support] counteracted the possible negative effect," Romer said.

Another study that analyzed chat rooms and social media effects on youth suicide published by the National Institute of Health is more conclusive about the effect of social media. "In sum, evidence is growing that social media can influence pro-suicide behavior," the study stated.

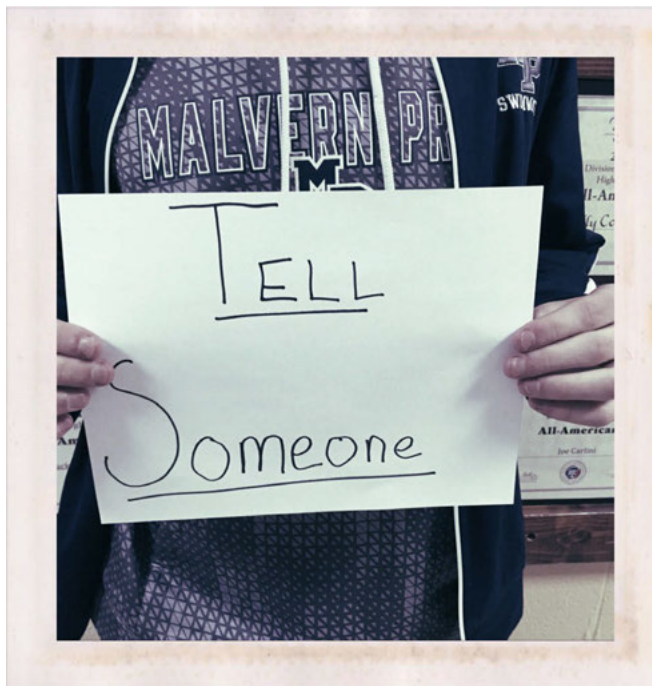
Romer said his 2011 study "advocated that organizations and the government should be more proactive in putting information online for people who are alienated... [and] who are going online and looking for support."

However, with the speed in which technology is changing Romer said "You've got to be constantly looking for ways to counteract."

In the end, social media presents new threats, and opportunities for preventative measure. Until there is more information and research done on the issue, the field remains inconclusive about the effect of social media on youth suicide rates.

Socioeconomic status

In the late 1990's, Professor Suniya Luthar set out to study trends of misbehavior in low-income families. As a comparison group for her study she used families from a private

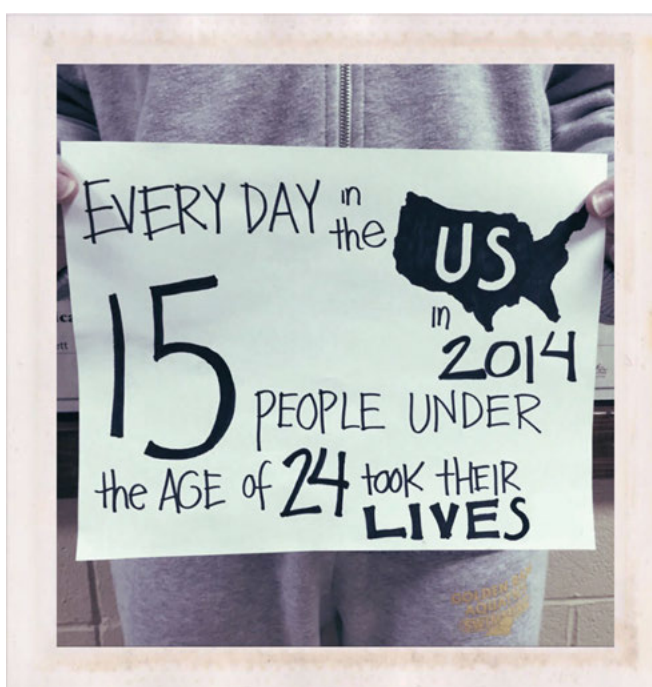


Initiative supports that claim. "To rule a death a suicide, you need really compelling evidence," Wintersteen said. "It's hard to get a real grasp of the number of suicides. It's probably underestimated, but we don't know by how much."

Social Media

The growth of social media - like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram - is another possible explanation for the increase of youth suicides since 2007.

The potential negative effects of social



1 in 6 children seriously consider suicide



Source: Center for Disease Control



1 in 12 children attempt suicide

help 610-280-3270 Chester County Crisis Services Hotline

school in an affluent suburb.

In her demographic of households with a median income of over \$150,000 per year, she found that more of those students had problems with substance abuse and depression than in the low-income families, especially in the male population.

The average household income of a Malvern family is estimated to be \$311,125, according to an optional, self-reported survey of current parents done by The Fidelum Group in 2015.

Two of the most proven risk factors of suicide are depression and substance abuse, according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

According to Luthar's study, 59 percent of suburban males self-reported using any illicit drugs compared to 39 percent of inner-city males.

By that same study, the percentage of suburban males who suffered from serious depression was five times that of the inner-city boys.

"The belief in the past was that those kids from your higher socio-economic families can't be suicidal, like 'look at all the benefits they all have? You're driving around in a Range Rover at 16 years old, how could you be depressed?'" Wintersteen said. "You have to look at what's behind all of this. There's a belief you have to be really good."

Wintersteen related the concept of socio-economic status effect on suicide rates to suicide rates for medical students. Medical students are one of the most at risk student populations, Wintersteen said.

"They're so used to doing really really well, but then you get put in the context of a lot of other people who also do really really well," Wintersteen said. "And suddenly you're not the best anymore and you spent your whole life being the best."

Wintersteen believes there can be that sort of culture on the Main Line of Philadelphia.

"There's a lot of pressure to do really well - some of that is self-imposed and some of which is other people," Wintersteen said.

However, Wintersteen doesn't believe that pressure is exclusive to wealthy suburbs. "For inner city kids there's a huge push... to make something for yourself."

Gender

In Hollywood, American boys are fed a perception of masculinity with stars like Vin Diesel, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, and Liam Neeson. Being a man means being bold, courageous, strong, and powerful.

In the music industry, American boys are enthralled by songs of difficult lives of drugs, alcohol, and sexual conquest.

According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, boys are four times more likely to commit suicide than girls, and our society's expectations of men to be "manly" could be the reason.

School Psychologist Dr. Dorothy Sayers said the difference in suicide rates for males versus females comes down to two things: impulsivity and method.

"Boys are much more aggressive in how they make an attempt and boys are more impulsive," Sayers said.

That aggression may come, in part, from all the downpour of imagery associating manliness with toughness and force.

Wintersteen believes it almost entirely a result of method, and not really impulse at all.

"High school is all about how you fit in and there is this interpersonal struggle like 'who do you hang out with?'" Wintersteen said. "I think girls get it just as much as guys get it, but at the end of the day it comes down to boys are more likely to use guns."

Wintersteen referenced a study that

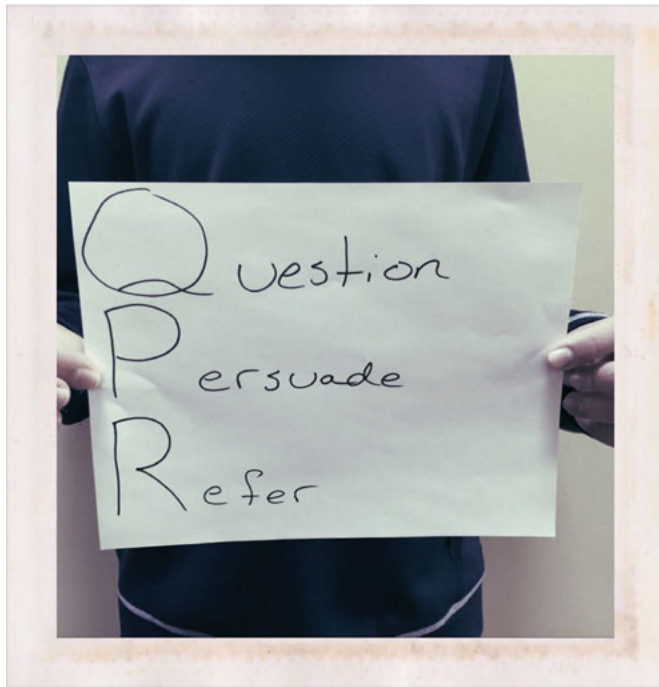
analyzed the difference between teenagers who were in the hospital after surviving a suicide attempt and teenagers who died from a suicide attempt. The main difference between the two was not socioeconomic status, race, or anything else except whether there was a gun in the house. According to that study, if there is a gun in a house with a child who attempts suicide, they are two and a half times more likely to be dead.

According to Wintersteen, 67-80% of suicides by firearm are from guns within the house. As a result, Wintersteen had a message for any parents who have a gun in the house and a kid who is struggling: "Ask yourselves the question 'how would you feel if your child shot themselves with your gun?'" he said.

With non-firearm methods such as suffocation or poison, more common among teenage girls, there is a time to regret an attempt and survive it by calling 9-1-1 or telling someone. But with a gun, there is no time to regret.

Help

On June 26, 2014, the state made a major step in youth suicide prevention with the passing of Act 71. Act 71 requires that all public schools adopt a youth suicide awareness and prevention program and provide ongoing professional development in youth suicide awareness and prevention for professional educators in buildings serving students in grades 6-12.



Starting with the current school year, every public school teacher in the state of Pennsylvania is required to have four hours of professional suicide awareness training every five years.

Malvern is not legally obligated to follow Act 71 because of its independent school status. Faculty and staff received a Crisis Management Suicide Policy and Procedures document which outlines the steps they should take if a student threatens harm to himself and/or others, according to Mrs. Neha Morrison, Director of Human Resources. Faculty and staff must read through this policy every year, however they do not train to the Act 71 standards.

Organizations such as The Chester County Suicide Prevention Task Force (CCSP) are a major source for professional development in youth suicide awareness.

According to Behringer of CCSP, the organization offers several free trainings at major public schools in the area that send students to Malvern - such as West Chester Area School District.

Behringer, who has been with CCSP since its inception in 2005, is a certified trainer of

QPR.

QPR or "Question, Persuade, Refer" is one of only 12 suicide prevention programs or interventions nationwide that have met the rigorous quality of research and dissemination requirements to be deemed "evidence-based."

Someone trained in QPR learns how to recognize the warning signs of suicide crisis, know how to offer hope, and how to get help and save a life.

"You can teach anyone... three basic steps to help someone in an emotional or psychological crisis," Behringer said.

The program, which lasts a little under two hours, can certify teachers, students or anyone to be an official gatekeeper. A gatekeeper is someone in a position to recognize a crisis and the warning signs that someone may be contemplating suicide.

On Thursday, January 14, 17 Malvern students, and two faculty members became gatekeepers in a coalition between *The Blackfriar Chronicle* and Peer Educators.

Beyond the county level, there is also the Pennsylvania Against Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative (PAYSPI). Dr. Matthew Wintersteen is the co-chair of the public/private collaborative organization.

PAYSPI is a network of people from the academic and clinical sides, but also survivors and government employees who all work to reduce youth suicide in Pennsylvania.

PAYSPI offers lots of resources for ACT 71 as well as an annual PSA contest for high school students based around youth suicide prevention.

Winners of the 2016 competition will be announced on February 24, according to their website payspi.org.

Sayers, Behringer, and Wintersteen all had the same message when it comes to dealing with a friend who is depressed, has suicidal thoughts, or change in behavior: Tell someone.

"We don't recommend that adults or kids keep it to themselves," Mrs. Behringer said. "It's too much for an adult, let alone an adolescent."

Often times, students may confide in their friends after making them promise not to tell out of fear for potential consequences. Even in those cases, they all say a student absolutely needs to tell someone.

Wintersteen has seen students who knew about a suicidal friend and didn't say anything. "That student has a lot to carry," Wintersteen said. "You don't want to be that kid."

For a list of warning signs and available resources please refer to the additional graphics.

Losing a son

Brad Harkins, a member of the Malvern Class of 2004, came home from kindergarten with his best friend on May 15, 1992, like any other day.

Brad's mother Carol, now the co-chair of CCSP, had been out shopping when she got a call that her ninth-grade son Jim did not show up to his Downingtown Area School District school that day. She drove home and asked Brad to go up and check on Jim and see if he was ok and just decided to play hooky for the day.

He returned downstairs to report to his mother that his 15-year-old brother Jim was asleep, but Jim wasn't really sleeping.

Warning Signs

Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself.

Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or buying a gun.

Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live.

Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain.

Talking about being a burden to others.

Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs.

Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly.

Sleeping too little or too much.

Withdrawn or feeling isolated.

Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge.

Displaying extreme mood swings

Preoccupation with death.

Suddenly happier, calmer.

Loss of interest in things one cares about.

Visiting or calling people to say goodbye.

Making arrangements; setting one's affairs in order.

Giving things away, such as prized possessions.

Source: Suicide Awareness Voices of Education
National Suicide Prevention Hotline:
1-800-273-8255

Jim was a three-sport athlete and an absolute goofball, Carol said.

Jim was the type of kid that would wear a shirt and tie when his baseball team had to, but against societal norms, Jim was the type of kid to wear his shirt and tie with gym shorts.

"He was absolutely larger than life, funny, that kind of thing," Carol said. "But he was also very serious about what he wanted to achieve and was hard on himself."

Her favorite picture of Jim has him on the sideline of the soccer field with a Georgetown bucket hat on. Keep in mind, that was back before bucket hats re-entered the realm of "cool."

Jim succeeded on the baseball diamond, soccer field, basketball court, and in the classroom.

"He was always in a sport," Carol said. "He had just made the American Legion [baseball] team and was playing travel soccer."

During his freshman year, his grades started to slip a little bit and Carol started to become aware that he was drinking alcohol. His travel soccer team was breaking up. Most of Jim's friends had girlfriends at the time, and Jim was disappointed that his date to the freshman dance wasn't his girlfriend.

"They were really the normal teenage struggles," she said.

Now, it is evident that may not have been the case. Carol believes that Jim may have had slight undiagnosed ADD, and depression that he never voiced.

Carol's son Jim ended up shooting himself fatally the day of that freshman dance, with his father's handgun.

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610-918-2100
Valley Creek Crisis Center

help

1 (800) 273-8255

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

help

> A LIGHT OF EXPOSURE, 9

After seeing Jim, Carol told Brad that some terrible accident had happened with Jim and immediately called 9-1-1.

"I was just in like total shut down mode - like there, but not there," she said.

The first few days and weeks were tough for the Harkins.

"For a long time, you just feel like you're in an alternate reality," she said.

Carol couldn't eat or sleep for the first few weeks, and the grief was actually physically painful. She was almost just totally shut down, and the only thing that lifted her out of it was that she had another son and daughter that she really had to be present and care for.

Carol said there was an abundance of love and support from the community after Jim's death. There wasn't even enough room at their parish St. Philip and James for everyone to join in the funeral service.

"It was amazing to me, the support that we received," Carol said.

She didn't feel that there was any external stigma and no one really said anything insensitive, but she felt a stigma anyway.

"You still just feel like 'well, what's wrong with us?'" she said.

Carol eventually had to explain to Brad and her then-middle school daughter that Jim had taken his own life.

They all went to group counseling sessions and really got involved with a group called Compassionate Friends. The Compassionate Friends is an organization that helps provide grief support after the death of a child.

Naturally, she tried to be strong and protect her children from seeing her cry. She also believes that her children did the same thing for her. Their family grief counseling sessions and time with The Compassionate Friends were their ways to express their feelings and move along in the grieving process.

"The grieving process really doesn't stop," Brad said. "It kind of just dwindles, and you can cope with it throughout time."

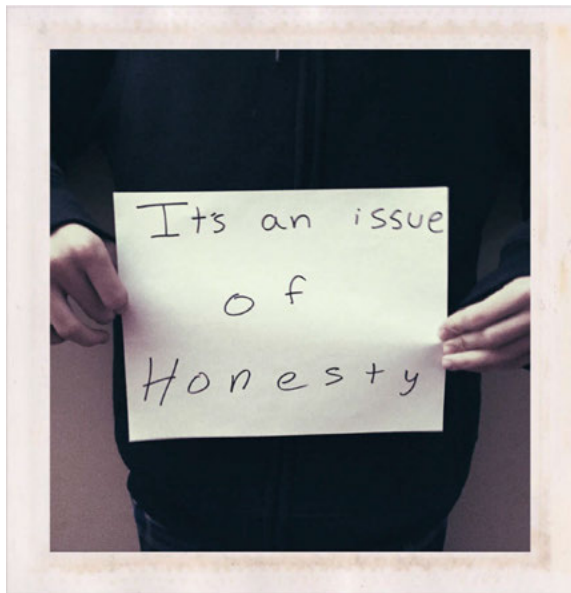
Carol went back to school at Immaculata University the fall after her son's death, and by "no coincidence" majored in psychology.

She later became a peer facilitator in The Compassionate Friends, joined CCSP five years ago, and is now one of the co-chair of the organization.

Carol finds her work very rewarding now. "[Giving back] is really the only way to make sense of everything," she said.

As for Jim's brother Brad, he said that selective memory has successfully blocked out most of his knowledge from his traumatic experience back in 1992. Brad joined Malvern's Class of 2004 in seventh grade.

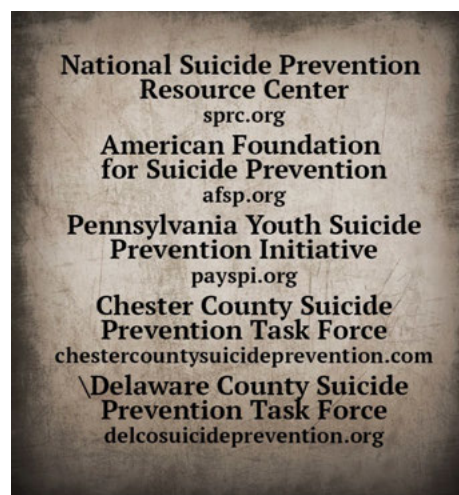
Carol decided to send Brad to Malvern in



part because she wanted him in a smaller, more supportive environment after everything he had been through.

Brad found that care in some members of the community. Brad, now a Penn State University graduate, happily works as accountant at a local Malvern firm.

According to Brad, there is a scholarship established in Jim's name at Great Valley High School for a student who lost someone close to them over the past year.



The Life After

Strengthened.

Connecting.

Improving.

Better-than-ever.

Working hard.

Andrew has now started to put his life back on track.

"Now that I am choosing not to cover up who I really am, I have to find out what life as me is going to be like," Andrew said.

Although Andrew never finished his bachelor's degree, he now happily works in a coffee shop and in retail to support himself.

"I love it because I get to talk to people all day... [and] help solve problems," Andrew said. "I am challenged and I get a lot of different experiences per day."

Andrew is starting to develop some meaningful relationships and said he currently has a great therapist that he meets with twice a week.

His life still isn't perfect, but he would never contemplate doing what he did again.

Andrew is now 2 years and 8 months sober, but that hasn't come without difficulties.

"It's like going into your closet, taking a lighter and burning anything that you've ever worn. Then stripping off the clothes on your back and lighting them up. It's like being completely naked," Andrew said. "You have to basically start sewing. You get some fabric from some 40-year-old alcoholic, who is your sponsor, and he gives you the basics. Then you go to your family and they give you some needles. Then you go to some meetings and you get some thread, and eventually you just start sewing until you have something halfway decent to wear."

He still gets cravings, but he just tries to think about where it would take him. "I think about the long-road it would pitch me on that I would probably not return from," Andrew said.

Andrew, now without the demons of his double-life, is starting to develop some honesty in his relationships, especially with his parents.

"My parents and I have never been closer... just because I don't lie to them," he said, "which I know maybe sounds a little bit obvious, but to me it's like a total revelation."

For Andrew, that honesty about feelings and personal struggles is really at the center of it all.

Thanks to the experts who consulted on this story.

Dr. Dorothy Sayers
School Psychologist

Dr. Matthew Wintersteen
Thomas Jefferson Hospital
Co-Chair of Pennsylvania Against Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative

Dr. Dan Romer
Director of the Adolescent Communication Institute of the Annenberg Public Policy Center

Mrs. Tracy Behringer
Community Outreach Liaison
Chester County Mental Health / Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities Office

Ms. Carol Harkins
Co-Chair of Chester County Suicide Prevention Task Force

"Shame dies in the light of exposure. Fear of who we are starts to dim in the light of exposure," Andrew said. "Obviously that's incredibly painful and difficult, so for me to say, 'just do it,' like I'm in some sort of terrifying Nike advertisement is not realistic. But I think at its core... it's an issue of honesty."

As a society, we aren't always honest with ourselves about suicide. It can be difficult, gut-wrenching, tense, and emotional, so we avoid honest conversations about warning signs and ways to help. But every day in the U.S. in 2014, 15 people under the age of 24 took their own life, according to the American Association of Suicidology.

Andrew was and is far from alone.

"It seems daunting almost to say this affects everyone, but in reality, that unites us more than anything," Andrew said. "It tells us that there are people who have been through the same things. It tells us that there are people that we can talk to that understand these incomprehensible things." ✨

**Andrew Miller is a pseudonym, or fake name, for the real source. The source is anonymous to protect family and friends who may not be ready to speak about the experience yet.*

This story was developed in the senior elective Journalism & Media Literacy class, Fall 2015.

help

1 (855) 889-7827

Delaware County Crisis Connections Team

> COLLEGE COUNSELING, 3

In total, Harkness had to write 40 recommendations this year for students. The process of writing these recommendations can take months.

"I started writing the second week in September... most of them were done by November 1," he said.

Harkness was new to the Malvern counseling department this year. Now that he has got the sense of how everything goes, he has made some different plans for next year.

"I think next year will be different because I'll start writing some of those recommendations over the summer this year," he said.

For the College Counseling Department, there is one recurring factor that helps keep everyone organized.

"We are lucky to have Naviance, a system that really works," Harkness said.

Naviance keeps each person organized in a different way, but in general it is very helpful to the Counseling Department.

According to Naviance's website, "The Naviance college and career readiness platform offers a variety of solutions that

enable students and families to collaborate more effectively with counselors and teachers and allow school administrators to optimize student potential and learning outcomes."

"I like Naviance because it shows me on the back end what you have done as an applicant, I can see when you have submitted your applications... but I can also see each of the pieces submitted from our office," Harkness said.

The Counseling Department also supplements Naviance's organizational tools with their own method: blue slips.

"Our own process, the blue slip process, also works quite well because it actually makes students kind of tune in to each of those schools and what are they asking for," Harkness said.

The blue slip process is a process in which each student fills out a short form for the college(s) they are applying to, what kind of admission (rolling, early action, etc.), and who wrote their teacher recommendations.

This whole process of applying to college also has an affect on the student's day and work load.

"The end of the first quarter was approaching at the same

time of my application deadline and it's hard to get all the work done on both ends in time," senior Evan Tate said.

On top of the work that college counselors do, they also meet individually with students to help them through the process and make the choice easier.

"My counselor actually ended up recommending my top choice to me," senior Joe Markferding said.

But along with counselors, students spend significant time up late at night completing work for their college applications.

"It was New Year's Day and it was about 11 o'clock and I remembered I had to finish my Delaware application so I finished it in about an hour and submitted it," senior Chris Abbott said.

The College Counseling Department has their own ways to stay organized and focused, but how do the students do it?

"Watching Netflix and listening to music helps me focus. My dad is also on top of me to make sure I get all of my work finished," Tate said.