

The Yellow Tulip Project



YTP Late Winter Newsletter

The focus of our late winter newsletter is on community. From day one, we have been so inspired by the incredible people who have reached out to us to be part of our efforts to smash the stigma around mental illness and to spread our message of hope. We are a small non-profit with big hearts and even bigger goals and know that we would not be where we are without our community of supporters and the people who believe in our mission. We're firm believers in The African Proverb "It takes a Village" and in this winter newsletter we want to highlight some of the people and organizations in our "YTP Village" that make doing what we do possible.

The Yellow Tulip Project Ambassadors



The YTP Ambassadors are the glue to our project. Like Dumbledore's Army in Harry Potter, the ambassadors are the network of students and individuals that really care and our working hard at bringing YTP to schools and communities. They drive from Massachusetts, Waterville, New Hampshire and around Portland on a monthly basis to share their success stories, learn from and inspire each other. The ambassadors are warriors. They're honest and willing to share their stories and help others at their schools feel less alone. Thanks for getting those helpline magnets up in the bathrooms and for creating those amazing Hope Boards! For more information on how to get involved with the YTP Ambassadors give us a shout!

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AFSP Maine Chapter



We've been partnering AFSP Maine Chapter for almost a year now and are so honored to be working together to help people know the signs, speak up, and support each other. In early February, AFSP Maine Chapter Co-Presidents Kelly and Matt Hoyt led a special training for our Ambassadors called "Talk Saves Lives". Even though it can feel awkward at times, knowing the signs and knowing how to talk to people who are having a hard time is so important. We're hoping to continue to co-host this program throughout the state so do reach out to us if you are interested in bringing this program to your community.

Be Well Portland



In early January, Santa in the form of Kat Cynewski of Be Well Portland entered our lives. Be Well Portland, a local event company, believes that a healthy lifestyle is all about balance; both physically and mentally. In their effort to give back to our wonderful community here in Maine, they have partnered with us for 2018! We are so touched that 10% of all event proceeds this year will be donated to The Yellow Tulip Project. We both believe that mental health and physical health go hand-in-hand and we will be co-hosting a few wellness activities this spring.

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MidCoast Community Alliance



We're so proud to connect with Jamie Dorr and the Midcoast Community Alliance, a passionate group of community members in the mid-coast area, that are working towards promoting mental health awareness and a suicide free community. In January we presented at their monthly meeting and found a roomful of folks that share our vision. Students at Morse High School planted a Yellow Tulip Hope Garden in the fall. In the spring, we look forward to developing a closer relationship with our new friends in mid-coast.

Save the Date

To kick off Mental Health Awareness in May we have some very special events planned. Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more information coming in the spring!

May 2 — I Am More: Facing Stigma Exhibition Opening at Speedwell Projects Gallery in Portland, ME.

May 6 — Second Annual Yellow Tulip Hope Day Celebration at Lincoln Park

May 12 — Be Well Event at Speedwell Projects Gallery

May 14 — Bayside Bowl: The Yellow Tulip Project Night

We're always happy to connect with individuals and organizations that like what we do and are interested in working together. Do reach out to learn more about how to bring YTP to your school or community.

Contact us at: info@theyellowtulipproject.org

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Yellow Tulip Ambassador Spotlight:

Meet Alison!

Hi, I'm Alison Ingalls and I am a junior at Cape Elizabeth High School. Last December, Julia Hansen came to our all day TEDx event and spoke on mental health. Her speech was titled, "Hope Happens". I had not yet reached my worst point during my mental health journey, but I was certainly struggling. Her words rang true to me and gave me strength. Julia explained her journey of losing her two best friends to suicide and the inspiration behind the Yellow Tulip Project. Her goal was to create a hopeful platform that would smash the stigma that surrounds mental illness.

In between when Julia came and spoke at my school and the present, I struggled greatly with my own mental health and suicidal ideation. I ended up in the ER and later Spring Harbor Hospital because I was not able to keep myself safe. Although this was an incredibly scary time in my life, The Yellow Tulip Project has taught me that mental health is something we must be open about like we are with physical injuries such as a broken bone.

Almost exactly a year later from when Julia came to speak at my school, she and the Yellow Tulip Project play a huge role in my life--I have taken an active role as a YTP Ambassador at my school and a member of the YTP Ambassador's Board. At Cape Elizabeth, we planted a Hope Garden in October and now have monthly meetings with a group of about 40 kids who are committed to smashing the stigma surrounding mental illness. We are creating a poster to hang outside the auditorium that asks students, "What makes you hopeful?" and allowing them to leave stickie notes with their responses.

I also had the honor of attending the Maine Principals Association Fall Conference, with Julia and her mom, where we spoke to a group of administrators from all over Maine who were eager to get their schools on board with this incredible project. Overall, I am incredibly lucky to play a role in this organization that is shedding light on such a crucial topic in a positive and hopeful way!

