

THE LIGHTHOUSE REPORT

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



www.erikaslighthouse.org



A Letter From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

At Erika's Lighthouse, we dream big. Almost twelve years ago we moved into the unknown territory of school-based mental health education. Fast forward to 2015, and in one year alone, this small grassroots organization is providing hope to 63,190 individuals.

I am thrilled to share with you that so many of our big dreams were actualized this year. For starters, we launched a new website. Not only is it gorgeous, but it is easy to navigate, intuitive across web platforms and is home to our free and innovative programs and resources. No matter if you are a struggling teen, a worried parent or a teacher in search of an effective and teen friendly way to address depression in your classroom – we have well organized webpages loaded with helpful videos, books, articles and downloads to walk you through your journey.

On the research front we are excited to have finally completed a pilot study of our high school curriculum *Real Teenagers Talking About Adolescent Depression*. The pilot concluded that the program demonstrated a clear and significant impact in the key areas of depression awareness and suicide prevention. Students revealed an increase in their knowledge of depression, an increase in their belief that adults can help and an increase in their willingness to seek help from an adult. To see the full report, go to www.erikaslighthouse.org.

But, what is most exciting is the extent to which our programs have grown. Since the organization's inception, we have dramatically expanded our reach over 4,000%! We now have 13 Teen Clubs and 23 Teen Panels in Chicago area high schools, and through our participation in regional, state and national conferences, our middle school and high school curricula are being taught in 107 schools and in 18 states. Did I mention we are a staff of five?

We are so grateful for the year we have had, not only the programming accomplishments, but the overwhelming support we have received from our donors. In 2015, we received 1,667 contributions, mostly from people like you! These donations allow us to continue the important work of providing the message that depression is common, serious and treatable. You are not alone. Thank you for believing in us in 2015.

Help us make dreams come true in 2016!

Heather Freed, LCSW
Executive Director

Our Mission

Erika's Lighthouse is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to educating and raising awareness about depression, encouraging good mental health, and breaking down the stigma that surrounds mental health issues.

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Donna Mermel, *Office Manager*
Madeline O'Hara, *Media Coordinator*
Kathryn West, *Intern*

OUR IMPACT

18 States

Teaching Erika's Lighthouse curricula:

California, Connecticut, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington & Wisconsin



63,190 total educated with 202 programs

60,494 teens educated

2,696 adults educated

92 communities served

124 schools served

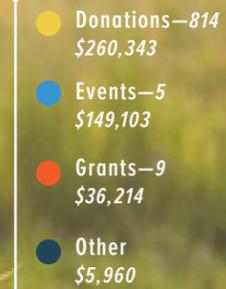
2015

IN NUMBERS

FINANCIALS



Income



Expenses



*Unaudited

Highlights



Nearly 300 participants walked to "Get Depression Out of the Dark" at the 12th Annual Rock & Rally Walkathon at New Trier High School – Northfield Campus.



Erika's Lighthouse attended the 20th annual Center for School Mental Health Conference in New Orleans and shared impressive results of the 2015 *Real Teenagers Talking About Adolescent Depression* high school curriculum pilot study.



Maine East High School Teen Club organized a "Don't Stress Before the Test" initiative by distributing hot chocolate to students before finals.



Team Erika's Lighthouse included 30 runners who ran a total of 424 miles in the Bank of America Chicago Marathon and Rock 'n' Roll Half Marathon/5K to make strides against stigma.



Glenbrook South High School Teen Panel presentation shared a message of hope to 8th grade students at Attea Middle School.



Thank you to the guests of Monte Carlo Night for "Betting on Erika's Lighthouse" at the Willis Tower Skydeck Chicago. A total of \$95,130 was raised in support of teen depression awareness programs.



Barrington High School Teen Club organized a "Leading the Way to Hope" footprint activity to reduce stigma and help raise awareness of student mental health support in their building.

Testimonials



We lost our 16-year-old son T.J. in 2010...We are so grateful to have found Erika's Lighthouse and its many resources...The materials are the best we have found anywhere—powerful and on-point...in our hearts we believe the knowledge we would have gleaned from Erika's Lighthouse may well have saved our son.

Steve & Wendy Sefcik, parents from Towaco, NJ



As a teen, Erika's Lighthouse gave me my first opportunity to be an agent of change and make a real difference in the lives of others. It was a very empowering experience to be able to learn about depression and to take what you learned and share it with others. The chain effect of the Erika's Lighthouse message is huge. I don't think we totally understand the true magnitude of its impact.

Mac Shannon, former Teen Panel and Teen Club Member at New Trier High School in Winnetka, IL



Being a teen who struggled with depression for a long time, Erika's Lighthouse was my beacon of hope in some of my darkest days and showed me that I was not alone, and that there was an abundance of people out there that could help me. They also provided me tools to talk to my parents about depression and help them understand what I am going through. As the current president of the Glenbrook South Club and Panel and an intern for the organization, Erika's Lighthouse has become a huge part of my life.

Tori Brown, Teen Panel and Teen Club President at Glenbrook South High School in Glenview, IL



We've been using the Erika's Lighthouse curriculum with our 8th grade students for almost 10 years. The most recent DVD and lesson plan update is fantastic! Students respond very well to the videos, activities and discussion sessions. The young teens I teach come away from this unit more knowledgeable about depression, and more empowered to act if they notice signs in themselves or in a friend.

Wendy Concklin, Health & Wellness Teacher at Northbrook Junior High in Northbrook, IL



P.O. Box 616
Winnetka, IL 60093

4TH ANNUAL LILLIAN C. MILLMAN



Mother's Day Event

— BENEFITING ERIKA'S LIGHTHOUSE —

AT SHELLE JEWELERS - 322 SKOKIE BLVD IN NORTHBROOK

SHOPPING, RAFFLE PRIZES, APPETIZERS, DRINKS & MUSIC

APRIL 30TH | 6-11PM | ADMISSION IS FREE