

EDITORIAL

From the Clinton (Iowa) Herald

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Continue Walk for the Hope

Congratulations to the MJL Foundation for their successful first annual Walk For Hope that was held in DeWitt on Sept. 8.

The Walk For Hope was an event held to increase awareness of depression and suicide prevention. On average one in eight people suffer from depression. Many times the depression goes untreated because of the stigma related to mental illness and the fear or shame that accompanies asking for help. It is OK to ask for help. There is no good reason to be embarrassed as many people suffer from the same feeling of helplessness and hopelessness. It is when these feelings go untreated that people of all ages think of and all too often give up and take their own lives.

Many of the participants in the Walk For Hope were survivors of suicide, meaning they have lost a friend, family member or other loved one to suicide. The walk provided a non-threatening opportunity for family members and friends to remember their lost loved one, to share their feelings of grief and to help each other to remember to never give up. Many survivors often struggle with feelings of guilt, feelings of doubt and with having many unanswered questions. At the walk there were no stigmas attached as to why the loved one might have committed suicide, there were no feelings of shame or fear that this is something that should not be talked about.

The walk showed just the opposite, that depression and suicide are real and it is OK to talk about it, that talking about it helps survivors to heal. I hope to see this event continue annually.

Laura Healless,

School Based Therapist, Bridgeview Community Mental Health Center, Clinton