# OP ED

**Time for a conversation about suicide?**

Every year, in Canada, nearly 3,900 people die as a result of suicide and many more attempt to end their lives. No part of society is immune to suicide. Suicide is a public health issue that affects us all. Suicide is one of the top ten causes of death in Canada and, among youth aged 15 – 24, it is the second leading cause of death next to accidents. The estimated financial cost of a suicide ranges from $433,000 to $4,131,000 per individual, depending on potential years of life lost, income level and effects on survivors. The emotional cost to the bereaved survivors of suicide is immeasurable. Did you know that the suicide of one person has the potential to significantly impact the lives 7 to 10 others and places them at higher risk of suicide themselves?

But it’s not all bad news. The good news is that the prevention of suicide is possible. While the causes of suicide are complex, we know that the promotion of good mental health, the prevention of mental illness and a reduction of stigma all contribute to mental wellness and the reduction of suicide and its consequences. We can all play a role in reducing suicides and we all have a collective responsibility to do so.

We must play a role in preventing suicide in our own communities. Suicide is an issue that is still surrounded by fear, shame and silence but by breaking the stigma and openly addressing the factors that contribute to suicide, we can all help to prevent it. By educating ourselves about the warning signs and recognizing risk factors, by agreeing to participate in a training program, by reaching out to a fellow human in need we can all prevent suicide.

We are convening a meeting in our community to discuss suicide prevention and what we can do locally and individually. We invite you to join us and take some time from your busy schedule to see what you can do to help and make yourself aware of what is happening in our own community on this important issue.

The meeting will be held on XXX at XXX. We look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,

**(name )**