Erie County Anti-Stigma Coalition
Join the Conversation One Sheet

• 15 organizations have come together for one common goal: to change how people in our community view mental illness.

• The stigma associated with mental health issues too often creates barriers for people seeking and getting the help they need to lead healthier and more balanced lives.

• This campaign is designed to start a community conversation to educate the public on the real facts surrounding mental illness and to normalize the discussion in order to reduce or eliminate stigma in Erie County.

• The campaign, Join the Conversation, has been developed through grants and in-kind services from coalition members. We are now seeking funding to launch and carry out the five-year community-wide plan.

• One in 4 Americans are living with a diagnosable mental health condition.

• Even though virtually all mental health conditions are treatable, only 40% of people struggling with these issues seek professional assistance often due to stigma.

• Mental illness is a disease. As with any disease, prevention and early intervention and treatment saves lives.

• More than 90% of people who die by suicide were suffering from depression or some other diagnosable and treatable mental illness at the time of their death.

• One’s mental health directly impacts one’s physical health. Poor mental health affects a person’s ability to participate in the treatment and recovery of other co-occurring chronic diseases. These patients incur 30% more health-care costs than non-mental health patients.

• The economic impact alone, not to mention the human toll on individuals and families, is staggering costing the American workplace $80-100 billion annually.

• Major depressive disorder is the leading cause of disability in the U.S. for ages 15-44.

• Normalizing the conversation around mental health issues is the first step in helping those who suffer get help and creating a healthier community for all.

COALITION MEMBERS: BryLin Behavioral Health System • Children’s Mental Health Coalition of WNY • Community Partners of WNY • COMPEER of Buffalo • Crisis Services • Erie County Department of Mental Health • Erie County Office for People with Disabilities • Fellows Action Network • Fuerst Consulting Corporation • Jewish Family Service of Buffalo & Erie County • Mental Health Association of Erie County • Millennium Collaborative Care • The Peter and Elizabeth C. TOWER Foundation • Preventionfocus • Telesco Creative Group