



Free Suicide Bereavement Support Service Launched in Wexford

Monday 4th November 2024: HUGG is the national suicide bereavement charity dedicated to supporting adults bereaved by suicide. We provide information on how to cope with grief after a suicide, telephone support, events, advocacy, research and nationwide suicide bereavement support groups led by trained volunteers with a lived experience of suicide loss. The HUGG vision is that anyone bereaved by suicide can find hope and healing.

HUGG is launching its 19th dedicated suicide bereavement support group in Barntown, Co. Wexford. The monthly support group will meet on a Tuesday evening 7.30pm to 9.30pm and be facilitated by locally trained volunteers with a lived experience of suicide loss.

For every person who dies by suicide, up to 135 people are affected. In addition to grieving the loss of a loved one, a loss through suicide leaves many with heavy invisible burdens to carry including unanswered questions and feelings of regret, self-blame, guilt, shame, stigma, and more. **Suicide grief can feel extremely isolating.** For many people, a level of support outside of family and friends is needed.

Commenting on the launch of HUGG Wexford, Marie McKeon, HUGG Groups Manager said, *“From national statistics and our work with local services, we recognise that there is a need for a dedicated suicide bereavement support group in Wexford. Being in the company of others who have been bereaved by suicide can bring comfort, support and opportunities to learn ways to cope. HUGG Wexford support group is ideally located in Barntown making it easily accessible by car, train, and bus. We hope this support group will serve the local community and the wider surrounding towns and villages including those living in Bunclody, Enniscorthy, New Ross, and Blackwater.*

Dirk Vanderloop reflecting on why he trained as a HUGG Support Group volunteer stated, *“When my daughter, Amy, took her own life in 2009 those of us left behind were absolutely bereft. I had never sought emotional support from strangers before but soon realized that this grief was bigger than me. I tried individual counselling and a couple of support groups, but it didn't feel like they understood my pain and distress. I have come to believe that only those who have lost a loved one to suicide really ‘get it’. There's the grief that accompanies any death, but the stigma of suicide still lingers in society. Dealing with both at the same time is tricky. However, HUGG groups offer understanding and hope when it's needed most and*

T: (+353) 1 513 4048 E: info@HUGG.ie W: www.HUGG.ie

Healing Untold Grief Groups (HUGG), Company Registration No. 640420, Registered Charity No. 20204480, CHY (Revenue) No. 22421
Business Address: 13 Adelaide Road, Dublin, D02P950

Directors: Tom Rourke, Laura McDonnell, Catherine Brogan, David Varian, Ronnie O'Toole, Una Moore, Victoria Groom, Georgina O'Leary



cannot be found elsewhere. That is why, 15 years after Amy died, I have volunteered to help facilitate a new group in Wexford.”

To register your interest to join a HUGG Support Group please complete the form at <http://www.HUGG.ie/> and a member of the HUGG team will be in touch. Or you can email support@HUGG.ie or call 01 513 4048 (monitored answering machine). We know it is difficult to plan ahead and understand suicide bereavement support needs to be flexible. **Once registered with HUGG you can attend a support group as often, or as little, as you need.**

HUGG is a registered charity which relies on public donations to help fund our operations and volunteers to deliver our services, which are free of charge. You can support HUGG by donating online at www.HUGG.ie or by becoming a volunteer, to learn more contact volunteer@HUGG.ie

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For more information, please contact Arlene Hanratty: Tel: +(353) 86 271 4515 or Email: arlene@HUGG.ie

Note to editor:

History of HUGG: In January 2016, Fiona Tuomey CEO and founder of HUGG, lost her 11-year-old daughter Milly to suicide. Amid the pain, shock, and grief was a longing to meet others who had walked the same road, but were still living and functioning in the ‘real world’. This led to HUGG’s first suicide bereavement support group being setup in Dublin in 2017. HUGG Groups aim to bring members comfort, hope and in time healing. HUGG groups provide peer-to-peer suicide bereavement support to adults bereaved by suicide, regardless of the length of time since the death occurred.

HUGG focuses on “postvention” services, in recognition of the increased risk of suicidal ideation among the bereaved family and friends. Suicide postvention efforts refer to initiatives and activities designed specifically to promote healing and reduce the risk which occurs after a death by suicide.

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