



We're here to help!

Newsletter

August 2020

KJ's 5k for Mental Health & Animal Rescue Virtual Edition!

September is National Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month and National Recovery Month. Since 2017, the month of September has been the run-up to KJ's 5k for Mental Health and Animal Rescue, which usually takes place on the first Saturday of October in tribute to KJ Hamblin who died by suicide in early October of 2016. KJ's 5k was started by Shari Kennedy, KJ's mom, and his friend from work, Chris Campos, so that others might not have to face what they did. Since October of 2017, each year we have had approximately 300 people annually participate. This year we have been told by multiple authorities that large gatherings of this type are not safe. So at a time when CDC statistics show that mental illness symptoms across the country are up 30%, and local suicides have spiked, Portage Path was faced with potentially losing its one and only fundraiser for the year.

Not only is the need greater right now than ever before, some of our normal sponsors have reported decreased revenue, and unemployment has increased drastically, potentially limiting the donations we could receive. With that context, we decided to push forward with a virtual 5k. This year, anyone can register (<http://www.portagepath.com/kjs5k>) and participate on their own time, wherever they want from September 1 through October 4th. We will mail packets to participants starting mid-September, including t shirts, suicide prevention ribbons, and later in the month, a new, custom designed KJ's 5k Medal.

Because we will not be able to get together for KJ's 5k, we will have a special webcast on Friday, October 2 at Noon. A panel of experts will speak about suicide prevention, resources available, and how we all can help get this epidemic of suicide under control. Save the date! We will provide more information as we get closer to October 2.

Please join us in thanking our sponsors, including our NEW PRESENTING SPONSOR, Cleveland Electric Laboratories!



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Get in Touch

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KJ's 5k gets a boost from KJ's Campaign

To support KJ's 5k and Portage Path's mental health and addiction services, during the month of September we will be conducting KJ's Campaign, with a goal to raise \$75,000. With the state of our world today, Portage Path's services are needed more than ever. We meet people where they are and guide them to recovery, without regard to their ability to pay. The proceeds will save lives and enhance recovery for local people experiencing anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation and other behavioral health problems.

In our quest for continuous improvement and better recovery for local people in need, we have been blessed with the time, resources and talent of Bob and Regina Cooper & family, who have made the lead gift of \$20,000 toward KJ's Campaign in loving memory of their daughter, Kathryn Cooper, who they lost to the terrible disease of addiction in 2015 after a long fight.

Bob has been a tireless advocate for Portage Path since we met him in early 2018. Portage Path is deeply grateful for the Cooper's generous gift, which will help thousands of people receive better care. But we have been further blessed, because Bob has been busy raising additional investments in our innovative and effective programs from his friends and colleagues.

To date, Bob & Regina, along with those listed to the right have contributed over \$60,000 toward our goal of \$75,000, which we intend to raise by October 4th, the weekend following the end of National Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month and National Recovery Month.

Thanks to Bob & Regina, and all who have donated so far!



Robert & Regina Cooper

Donors to KJ's Campaign

(as of 8/31/2020)

Robert & Regina Cooper & Family, in loving memory of Kathryn Cooper

Dr. & Mrs. Robert Bell
Summit County Exec. Ilene Shapiro
Edward & Sheila Weidenfeld
Gary & Rhonda Didao
Harvey & Kim Nelson Philanthropic Fund
of the Jewish Community Board of
Akron
Sandra G. Marshall
Michael Allio
Akron Community Foundation
President's Fund
Bill & Trish Steere
Drs. Shefali & Sameer Mahesh
Richard Siess
Drs. George NewKome & Mary Jane
Saunders
Andre Thornton
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Craig Hassinger
The Maynard Family Foundation
Grace Wakulchik
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James Simon
Tyler Cooper
John D. Zoilo
Gary & Marian Kirr
Harrison Orendorf
John & Nancy Sharp
Eileen Berg/H. Peter Berg Fund
Scott & Tracy Yaeger
Eugene Calabria
Dr. Linda Subich
Gary Rickel
Michelle Polinko
Anne Jarrad
Dr. John Langell
Matthew Austerklein
Tim Able
Dr. David Custodio
Richard Fedorovich
Knight Foundation

COVID-19 Update

Portage Path is still offering services via telehealth (phone or video) as well as in-person appointments for those who need it and pass our front door screening.

All staff are required to wear masks and their temperatures are taken upon entry each morning. All touch points in the building are sanitized regularly.

To schedule an appointment, telehealth or in person, call us at 330-253-3100.

Don't forget about our online resources!



[Video Resources Library](#)



[Coping Skills Library](#)

Dr. Phil's Lighthouse

New Perspectives needed when faced with suicidal ideation:

According to state officials, the rate of suicide in the state of Ohio has increased during the year 2020. There are several theories about the cause of this rise. It is impossible to ignore the impact of COVID 19, however. The ripple effect of the pandemic is impacting nearly every segment of the population in key areas such as health care, employment, child care, and mental health.

It is important to recall the fact that often a completed suicide starts with a person's perceived options becoming smaller and smaller. Think of it as looking through a telescope and the view keeps getting more and more blurred to the point of darkness.

Recovery from this is based on the idea of considering new opportunities. That is, brainstorming new and unexplored options. Several of our clients have been able to find jobs in areas they had not considered in the past. Some have elected to take the time to finish a GED or college degree.

Therapy can help a person expand perspective and find choices they had previously not thought about. Mental Health services can help prevent suicidal behaviors by expanding the field of view of the person's telescope.