

South East Regional Winner and State Champion:

Tara Holmes Ball



Tara Holmes Ball is a passionate and dedicated advocate for suicide prevention in children and adults. She is the founder of Connor's Climb, a fundraiser for suicide prevention, in honor of her son Connor who committed suicide in 2011. Tara volunteers for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and is on the Public Policy Committee of the NH Suicide Prevention Council. Additionally, she is a trained speaker for the National Alliance of Mental Illness – NH chapter (NAMI).

Through Connor's Climb, Tara has raised funds, which allow schools around New Hampshire access to suicide prevention programs. She has been a lead advocate to pass legislation in NH, which would require teachers to have ongoing suicide prevention training. That legislation did not pass; however Tara continues to be an advocate for youth suicide initiatives and prevention in the state.

Michael Morgan, Superintendent of Schools for SAU #16 stated, "Tara Ball is a passionate Champion for Children and she lives each day motivated by the knowledge and desire to honor Connor's memory by helping others to live their lives to the fullest. In these days when social - emotional learning and mental health issues confront educators every single day, I can't think of anyone who is more deserving of this recognition than Tara Holmes Ball."

Catherine Clermont, LEA Administrator for Cooperative Middle School in Stratham said, "Through Tara's support and the support of funding from the Connor's Climb Foundation, the middle school has trained nearly 2,000 students in suicide prevention. Students have learned how to ACT (Acknowledge, Care, Tell). Since the training has gone into place there have been countless stories of students reaching out to trusted adults to get help for themselves or a friend. The mission that Tara and the Connor's Climb Foundation have set out to achieve is working; they are helping to save lives."