



# Child & Family Services Third Level

Support in times of crisis, challenge, and life transition.



# update

SPRING 2019



Dear Friends:

This newsletter marks a sad milestone in the history of CFS/Third Level, as we wind down crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to our community through the hotline that Third Level has continuously operated since 1971. We are deeply grateful for the compassion

and grace that has been shown to people of our region by our staff and volunteers, who in recent years have fielded upward of 30,000 calls, texts, and walk-ins annually. Clearly there is a profound need for a listening ear when people are suffering. Third Level has ably met that need for nearly 50 years. In these pages are stories from the trenches, memories of the people who made our Crisis Center part of their lives, and appreciations from those whose futures were changed by their interaction with Third Level.

But times and circumstances change, and none of us are immune to those changes. So it was with heavy hearts that we made the difficult decision to cease operations of the Crisis Hotline as of April 30.

THE GOOD NEWS IS WHAT'S NOT GOING AWAY. Third Level continues to operate the Free Legal Aid Clinic, a partnership with the Grand Traverse-Leelanau-Antrim Bar Association and Legal Services of Northern Michigan, every Tuesday evening in Traverse City. Our crisis services and support for runaway and homeless youth continue in the good hands of our masters-degreed counselors who have huge hearts and a passion for serving this young population. Pete's Place continues to provide shelter for those youth who can't be at home. And we continue to educate and train people in crisis intervention and suicide prevention best practices.

These important services, in addition to foster care, adoption, trauma assessment and treatment, family preservation, and supervised visitation and exchange, provide our region with a solid foundation of support for children and families. We thank you so much for your support of this work.

Sincerely,

Gina Aranki

If you need crisis intervention, after April 30 please call your local Community Mental Health office or 911. If you need non-emergency information and referral assistance, please call 211.

## Third Level: Did You Know?

**Where did Third Level get its name? The name was taken from the empathic listening skills training model, referring to a level of communication where feelings are identified, linked to a source and where underlying currents and emotions are recognized.**

The Free Medical Clinic operated loosely under the auspices of Third Level in its early days. They organized as a separate agency in 1974 and were colocated with Third Level until 1985. The Free Medical Clinic is now known as the Traverse Health Clinic.

Oryana Food Co-Op found its first home with Third Level in 1973, sharing space with Third Level until the following year.

Among the Third Level archives is a document dated June 1971 written by North Country Salt. The document outlines the need for a community crisis center and proposes what the center might look like: "First", the proposal states, "we need to provide an environment that is non-judgmental and confidential, one where young people are involved in the decision making and one that provides support for young people looking for ways to turn on to life. And we see the need for providing

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Kids grow best in families! Be a foster parent. To learn how, call 231 946 8975.



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educational experiences for the whole community, not only concerning drugs but also about people and values and human feelings.”

Third Level joined the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Network on the day of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

Grand Traverse 911 transferred 366 calls to the Third Level Crisis Line in 2018.

Third Level first received funding to serve runaway and homeless youth in 1976. We met their needs for shelter by contracting with Child and Family Services for emergency care in licensed host homes until Pete’s Place Youth Shelter opened 2007.



30 for 30 telethon



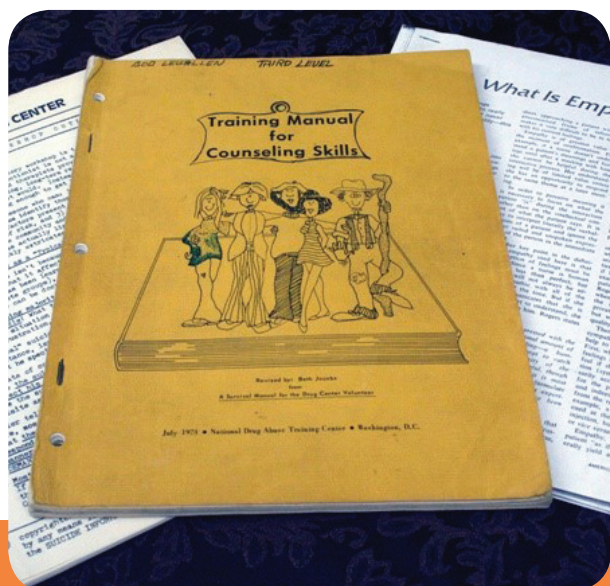
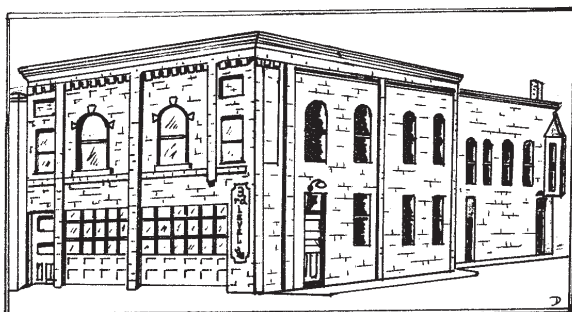
Third Level on West Front Street

CRISIS LINE:

941 - 2280

Residents of Antrim, Kalkaska and Leelanau Counties may call toll-free:

1-800-442-7315

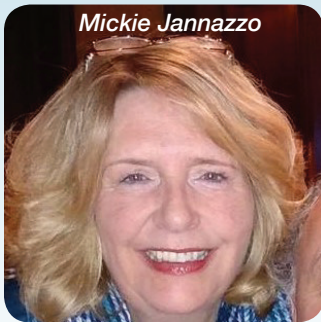


Third Level on Cass Street



## A Few Words from Past Crisis Staff

The crisis line has been staffed by many members of our community throughout the years. Here are some experiences as we reflect on Third Level's history.



Mickie Jannazzo

"It was a sunny Saturday of a Memorial Day weekend some years ago. I remember driving in for my day shift and saying to myself that I hope it's quiet, and then immediately telling myself to stop that thinking as the shift would be what it would be.

The shift was almost over. Patty and Michael, our IT staff were in the building doing their magic. **The phone rang. I heard a gunshot. The man on the line told me that it was a warning shot and he was planning to shoot himself with the next shot.** I had worked many years on the crisis line and had never heard a gun go off on the phone. I took a cleansing breath and moved in to understand this person. He shared about his military experience, his isolation, his flashbacks and feeling like he will never know peace. I grabbed Patty as she walked by the crisis unit, wrote her a quick note and she dropped what she was doing to assist. She called 911, stayed with me as I gathered identifying information as I could, fed it to her, which she then gave to the dispatcher. The caller was initially adamant that no one be sent out to assist him, so I wondered if I was going to be able to gain his trust. **He declared that I could not possibly care about him because I was being paid to do this job.** I thought about his comment for a moment, and told him that I consider myself a pretty smart person who could have done a lot of things with her life and career and I chose to do this work and I am right here right now and interested in helping him. **He started to connect with me from that moment on** and ultimately allowed the sheriff's deputy to approach and take him into protective custody.

Reflecting on this experience, I am certain that it was not random chance that Patty was in the building that day; we get gifts all the time as we go about our helping tasks. I am also certain that being honest and speaking one's heart is

central to success in working with people in emotional distress. It felt good to tell that guy that I choose this work even though I could have done many other things."

-Mickie Jannazzo, Director of Prevention and Youth Services. Mickie has been a part of Third Level Services for over 34 years.



Ann Ronayn

"I have worked at the crisis line twice. The first time was 2002 to 2008, then 2015 to today. The nature of crisis work is such that we connect with people who call or come in, and then we don't really hear how things go. I've talked to thousands of people, and I know very little about how things turned out. It's tough to do hard work without knowing the outcome.

One moment that stands out is the time I spoke with a woman in June of 2016. She was hopeless and suicidal. She had a plan to overdose, and thought that she had enough pain meds to kill her. I don't remember how long we talked, except that it was quite a while. We talked about her having called instead of taking the pills, and how that suggested that some part of her didn't want to be dead. In the end, she decided to honor that part, no matter how small, and put off suicide until after she connected with a counselor (we don't ask people to promise not to kill themselves - ever). We made a safety plan and she put the pills away and went to bed. She called back at the end of December of the same year. She talked to Ryan, a different crisis line worker, and told him that she was doing an 'end of the year life review.' She told Ryan that she'd followed her safety plan, and had called the counselor the next day. **She said that her life had changed significantly, and that she believed that it was that conversation that got her started on changing it.** She didn't know my name, but she remembered the date close enough and gave enough details that we could tell who she talked to. Even though I'm pretty ok with not knowing what happens next, I was so glad to hear how it worked out.

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# thanks



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This year a mom and twelve year old daughter came in. It was a pretty complicated family situation. Our conversation centered on the daughter feeling suicidal. We moved through that and it felt pretty resolved. They both came in again with the younger sister and the dad. The family needed more support around family dynamics. I referred the older daughter for Youth Services counseling. Last week, the ten year old sister called, and **the first thing she said was that she was calling because 'all the people there are good to talk to.'**

"To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded."

-R.W. Emerson

-Ann Ronayne, Crisis Unit Counselor



Megan Morrissey

"Although this is a major loss to me on a personal level because Third Level's Crisis Line has been like a home for me, this loss will be felt by the community as well, even though the service will continue to be offered in other ways by other organizations. There was something so comforting to our community to know that someone local was

always available to answer the phone and be able to provide mental health first aid. I often think about what it meant to me that someone will always answer the phone. I used to drive by Third Level at night sometimes and see the light on and know that someone was there answering the phones and feel comforted. I knew that whichever one of my colleagues was working that night I could trust them with not just my life, but the lives of all of the people in our community, and with the lives of any and everyone who would possibly make a call and reach out for help.

I needed Third Level the same way the callers do. I needed a lighthouse, a port in the storm, something heavy, solid, always present and I received that in the form of all of the amazing men and women who have served the crisis line as staff and volunteers. I am proud of my brave coworkers because they do such amazing

work and they are so strong, and they have always supported each other and the callers with care, respect, and admiration.

I often talk about becoming the adult you needed when you were younger, and thankfully in my current role as a Youth Services Counselor I have gotten to be that person. But I would have never gotten there if it weren't for the countless hours on the crisis unit wading through the muck with others, being a person I needed when I had faced my own suicidal thoughts. I was equal parts terrified and excited about the training I received. **I frequently tell people that the training changed my life forever.** I know that I wouldn't be half the clinician I am without that training and those experiences answering the phones. I have always loved answering the question "So, what is it you do for a living?" Because I tell people I work for Third Level and it always gets a positive and or curious response. I'm proud of my work more so than any other accomplishment in my life.

I love Third Level, and I thank everyone who has ever worked for or volunteered there, and especially Mickie for being one of those people the community needs during the worst times in their lives. I thank you for repeatedly subjecting yourself to the pain and suffering of people who just needed someone to answer the phone and listen."

-Megan Morrissey, Youth Services Counselor and past Crisis Line Counselor



Rena Cole

"I was a new empty nester with some time on my hands that I was looking to fill when I came across the ad for Third Level volunteers. I thought about it for about a year before I decided to take the plunge. I remember going through the forty hour training and having the honor

of working alongside the paid staff. I always felt that everyone that was a part of this was so qualified for this work and I learned so much from each of them.

I volunteered for 30 years. During this time, we had a lot of regular callers as well as walk-ins that included us as a part of their support system. It was well-known in the community to call Third Level if you needed help. One



# volunteers

Thanks to  
Bill Marsh  
Automotive for their  
sponsorship of the  
newsletter

young woman that I remember well was dealing with a domestic violence situation in her home. I worked with her to create a safety plan and connect her with community resources. It felt good to know that I was there to help when she needed it."

-Rena Cole, 30 year volunteer



Preston and  
Ken Homa

"I came to Third Level around 2009 as director after working at the Goodwill Inn for eighteen years. One of the things that was important to me during my time at Third Level was ensuring a smooth transition of services during the merge with CFS. One thing that struck me as unique about Third Level was

that we were all trained to help on the crisis desk, including myself as director. We took about 26,000 calls a year while I was there and were an established resource for the community.

A significant moment for me during my five years with Third Level was the day the Warburtons came forward with a generous gift to create a runaway and homeless youth shelter in our area, now known as Pete's Place. To have a donor fulfill a need in our community at that level was exciting for our agency, and personally as a director."

-Ken Homa, past Director of Third Level



Mindy Binsfield

"It has been my privilege to volunteer for the Third Level Crisis Center for the past 6 1/2 years. In 2012, I undertook the rigorous training necessary to become a crisis counselor along with additional training in Suicide Prevention.

All of this enabled me to make a difference in people's lives by helping them be a part of their

own crisis resolution. It also helped me realize how grateful I am to have my health and the many resources I have that so many others do without.

The TL staff is a group of interesting and enjoyable professional crisis counselors, many with master's degrees, who all are loving and compassionate humans with a major goal in mind; to make a positive difference in people's lives.

I want to thank everyone I have had the opportunity to work with, especially Mickie Jannazzo and Kate Burton, for making my time at TL such a joy and so very worthwhile. Good Luck to each and everyone of you in your future endeavors."

-Mindy Binsfeld, Third Level Volunteer



## Edward Jones Local Branches Gives Back!

Child and Family Services was the lucky recipient this year of one of Edward Jones's giving programs, which occurs at their annual meeting for their northern Michigan branches. The branches donated over \$400 in gift cards and \$800 towards items for foster care emergency duffel bags, Youth Services pantry, and Pete's Place. In addition, thirty cases of canned vegetables and applesauce/fruit cups were donated by Burnette foods. Thanks so much for your generosity!

## VOLUNTEER IMPACT 2018



**520**  
volunteers



**7,820** hours



150 backpacks filled for the 2018-19 school year

Gift baskets filled for 22 high school graduates



970 wish lists filled through Paper Angels

Provided 19 Easter and 40 Thanksgiving meals



Volunteered 1,100+ hours at fundraising events to help support our work

Thank you for volunteering your time, skills, and experience.  
Thank you for making our community better for all of us.

# events

## Future Fittest on the 45th



The 4th offering of Future Fittest on the 45th Program (FFOT45th) is underway in our Gaylord location! FFOT45 has been developed to improve the overall physical and mental health of opportunity children and adolescents within, and around, Otsego community. The FFOT45th focuses on the

following areas: reducing the risk of chronic diseases that are most prevalent in America (e.g. cardiovascular disease, type II diabetes; childhood obesity); decreasing youth violence (including bullying); and increasing emotional and mental health factors (e.g. self-esteem, body image, confidence). The program combines therapy services with the coping skill of physical fitness in order to reach these important life goals for our community's youth. The program has had amazing success in building self-esteem and helping youth achieve their potential.

A recent participant had this to say: "The future fittest program has helped me in so many ways, not only has it boosted my self confidence it has helped me modify the way I look at myself and others. The people involved are so caring and good natured, that I can't even imagine looking at others or even myself the way I have before. Every time I attend the program I always achieve my goal and I come out a better me. Not only does the program give you confidence and make you rethink how you look at yourself, it completely reshaped my mental health in so many positive ways."

Contact Diana Volant, Behavioral Health Therapist, for more information at 989-448-8344.



### 3rd Annual Cheese Cup

You can help raise money for suicide prevention and CFS' Third Level program on June 8, 2019. In 2017 The Northern Angler lost a dear friend and former employee to suicide. Alex was known as "Cheese" at the shop and now this tournament bears the same name in his memory. Learn more and register at <https://thenorthernangler.com/pages/cheese-cup>



### Third Level Golf Classic

Join us for our 17th annual event on June 21st at Elmbrook Golf Course. All proceeds benefit Third Level programming.

Register at [TLgolfclassic@eventbrite.com](mailto:TLgolfclassic@eventbrite.com) or call 231-946-8975.



### Tee Up Fore Kids - Jack Otto Classic

It is our 29th year for this great event! Monday, September 9 at the Kingsley Club. Save the date!



*"Philanthropy should help in the now and in the future. Our children are our future, and there is a cost to society if we don't do something now."*

- Alan Newton, Monthly Donor & Regular Volunteer



## Live Your Values and Reduce Your Taxes

My name is Christine.

My name is Christine. I volunteer at Child and Family Services of Northwestern Michigan. I spend my volunteer hours supporting the gifted mental health professionals who lead CFS's **Children's Trauma Assessment Center**. What I have learned through this opportunity has changed my life.

I am retired, I live alone and have a limited budget. I am also over 70, when most of us begin to reflect on the meaning and purpose of our life and to make decisions about living our remaining years as fully as possible.

**I found a significant way to make a financial difference for CFS, and here are a few suggestions on how you can do it too:**

- At the age of 70.5, the Federal Government requires us to begin making a **yearly taxed** withdrawal (Required Minimum Distribution - RMD) from our tax-deferred IRA savings.
- The taxed distribution is designed to become larger every year we continue to live. Thus, the taxes we will pay on our previously sheltered savings also increase.
- Did you know that you can make charitable contributions TAX-FREE to non-profit organizations using your IRA?
- These donations are tax-free not only to you but are also given tax-free to the organizations you choose.
- They take nothing away from your yearly or monthly budget, and they meet the requirements for your yearly RMD.
- They also offer you the opportunity to give more than your budget might otherwise allow by using pre-tax dollars.
- **JOIN ME IN PUTTING YOUR MONEY WHERE YOUR HEART IS** and dedicate it to a community legacy in which abuse and neglect are replaced by shared values of safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for children and families.

Call Linda Sommerville at 231-946-8975 or contact your financial advisor to discover how simple this tax-free donation will be for you to honor.

### *Priorities*

*"A hundred years from now,  
it will not matter what my bank account was,  
the sort of house I lived in,  
or the kind of car I drove...  
but the world may be different because  
I was important in the life of a child."*

- Forest Witcraft

## OUR MISSION

*Our services support the safety and well-being of children, youth, adults, and families in times of crisis, challenge, and life transition.*

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Third Level

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# grateful

## Thank You Teri!

Teri Hedrich, our volunteer relations specialist extraordinaire, retired at the end of 2018, after 45 years of working with and managing volunteers. She brought her professional big city experience with her to CFS in 2008, and grew the volunteer program to help support the work of our organization. Teri somehow made this job look easy, as she clearly enjoys people and served as the enthusiastic link between our amazing volunteers and several incredible campaigns including the Golden Fowler DreamRoom Classic and Paper Angels.

She is looking forward to longer trips with Al, her husband, in their RV and traveling back to Austria and Europe where they have many friends and family. Teri has offered to stay connected to CFS as a future volunteer and as a special friend! Teri, we will miss you immensely but we are happy for you (and Al) as you begin this new retirement journey together!



Teri helped transition our new Volunteer and Donor Relations Specialist--Kendra Luta, who jumped right into meeting our awesome volunteers. Kendra has been a volunteer manager at Grass River Natural Area, and has been a member of NMAVA (Northern Michigan Association of Volunteer Administrators) for several years. Kendra looks forward to meeting any of you who might be interested in learning more about how you can help make a difference!

**Want to learn more about  
different ways you can help  
children and families?  
Contact us at 231-946-8975  
or [cfs@cfs3L.org](mailto:cfs@cfs3L.org).**

**DID YOU  
KNOW?**  
**520 volunteers**  
contributed  
**7820 hours** to the  
work of CFS  
last year.