



## *St. Lawrence County Youth Bureau*

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **SLC Teen Ambassadors Trained to Help Peers: safeTALK Builds a Culture of Care**

**Canton, NY** — The St. Lawrence County Youth Bureau, in partnership with the St. Lawrence County Suicide Awareness Coalition, hosted a *LivingWorks safeTALK* workshop for eight Teen Ambassadors and community partners on Wednesday, August 27, 2025. The half-day training equipped participants to recognize warning signs, start caring conversations, and connect people to help.

Participants: Teshia White (SLC Veterans Dept.), Ken Taylor (SLC Youth Bureau), Kaitlyn Holmes (HC Williams HS), Anya Bansal (Potsdam Central, Youth Committee Chair), Olivia Rice & Easton Willard (Morristown Central), Jeffery Palma (Edwards-Knox), Tyree Hawkins (Madrid-Waddington), Stanley LaFave (Heuvelton), and Prudence Cutwa (Lisbon). Kat Manierre, Public Health Educator with SLC Public Health, served as a community resource during the session.

“Suicide is a leading cause of death among young people, and equipping our Teen Ambassadors with safeTALK skills ensures they are prepared to recognize warning signs, start conversations, and connect their peers to help,” said Alexa Backus Chase, Youth Bureau Director and safeTALK trainer. “Today’s training shows how youth are stepping up to build hope and resiliency in our communities.”

“safeTALK gave me the confidence to have these important conversations,” added Anya Bansal, Youth Committee Chair. “I’m excited to help expand the training throughout St. Lawrence County with our community’s support.”

As we mark Suicide Awareness Month in September, Teen Ambassadors will work with local schools to bring safeTALK to students and families. Youth who complete the training will be recognized as “*Mental Health Ambassadors*,” a peer-support role that helps reduce stigma and connect classmates with resources. Ambassadors are also currently voting on a Mental Health Ambassador logo that will appear on t-shirts for teen safeTALK attendees this year.

For information on hosting a *safeTALK* training for your school, organization, or community group, contact Alexa Backus Chase at [AChase@stlawco.gov](mailto:AChase@stlawco.gov) or (315) 379-9464.

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