



St. Lawrence County Youth Bureau

80 State Highway 310, Suite 4
Canton, NY 13617
315-379-9464

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact-Alexa Backus Chase- AChase@stlawco.gov
August 28, 2025

Youth Bureau and Suicide Awareness Coalition Offered SafeTALK Training for Teen Ambassadors

Canton, NY —The St. Lawrence County Youth Bureau, in partnership with the St. Lawrence County Suicide Awareness Coalition, offered *LivingWorks safeTALK* training on Wednesday to eight Youth Committee Teen Ambassadors.

SafeTALK is an internationally recognized half-day workshop that teaches participants to recognize and engage with individuals who may be experiencing thoughts of suicide and connect them with appropriate resources. The program helps youth and community members become "suicide alert helpers," building a stronger safety net across St. Lawrence County.

Teen Ambassadors and community representatives who completed the training included: Teshia White (SLC Veterans Dept.), Ken Taylor (SLC Youth Bureau), Kaitlyn Holmes (HC Williams High School), Anya Bansal (Potsdam Central, Youth Committee Chair), Olivia Rice and Easton Willard (Morristown Central), Jeffery Palma (Edwards-Knox), Tyree Hawkins (Madrid-Waddington), Stanley LaFave (Heuvelton), and Prudence Cutwa (Lisbon).

The training was supported by Kat Manierre, Public Health Educator with St. Lawrence County Public Health, who served as a community resource throughout the session.

Alexa Backus Chase, Director of the St. Lawrence County Youth Bureau and *safeTALK* trainer, emphasized the importance of empowering youth with these skills, "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. Today's training is another example of how youth are stepping up as leaders to build hope and resiliency in our communities."

"Thank you for offering the safeTALK training. It was incredibly helpful and gave me greater confidence in having these important conversations. I'm excited to continue supporting safeTALK and to help expand this training throughout St. Lawrence County with the support of our community," stated Anya Bansal, Youth Committee Chair.

Looking ahead, Teen Ambassadors plan to partner with local schools this year to expand access to safeTALK for students and families. Youth who complete the training would be recognized as **"Mental Health Ambassadors,"** a new peer-support role providing resources, encouragement, and leadership in schools across St. Lawrence County.



St. Lawrence County Youth Bureau

80 State Highway 310, Suite 4
Canton, NY 13617
315-379-9464

This initiative reflects the continued collaboration between the Youth Bureau and the Suicide Awareness Coalition to promote awareness, reduce stigma, and build a safer, more supportive environment for youth and families in St. Lawrence County.

For more information about bringing **safeTALK** training to your school, organization, or community group, please contact **Alexa Backus Chase**, at ACHase@stlawco.gov or (315) 379-9464.