



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

PUBLIC PETITION NO.

PE01725

### Name of petitioner

Ann Marie Coccozza on behalf of Families and Friends Affected by Murder & Suicide (FAMS)

### Petition title

Suicide awareness and support for young people

### Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to make suicide awareness education, information and training mandatory for all high school pupils, teachers, carers and parents and to provide specific ring-fenced funding for this training.

### Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition

I have raised these issues at meetings with Christina McKelvie MSP, Claire Adamson MSP and Linda Fabani MSP.

I have also raised these issues at meetings with the Depute Leader, North Lanarkshire Council (Councillor Paul Kelly) and the Depute Leader, South Lanarkshire Council (Councillor Maureen Chambers) as well as council officers at both councils.

I have raised these issues in writing with Nicole Sturgeon, First Minister and Claire Haughey MSP.

### Petition background information

#### **Background**

Between March 2018 & May 2018, four young adults living in North Lanarkshire took their own life. Daryl O'Rourke (16) Calum Dunne (16) Stephen Mearns (19) and Kyle Inglis (18).

Many of their young peers, friends, family, teachers and Communities were in deep grief and shock. They turned to local Charities, including FAMS, for support and guidance in terms of how to stop further suicides, how to identify signs of suicidal behaviours and how to speak to their children about suicide. They needed an opportunity for the outpouring of their grief and their voices heard. They needed information and they needed to be doing something constructive.

This Petition is dedicated to the memory of these young adults, who saw suicide as the

best option of relieving their pain. By ensuring that future young adults will have access to appropriate and robust mental health provision, the loss of these five young lives may not have been in vain.

### **Families and Friends Affected Murder & Suicide (FAMS)**

FAMS have been active on the coal face of many North & South Lanarkshire communities, including High Schools for over four years.

We have been unsuccessfully advocating that some of the focus and finances of Suicide Awareness Education, Information and Training should be directly aimed at schools, teachers, parents and carers.

FAMS are mainly self funded, yet at no cost whatsoever we continue to deliver FREE Suicide Awareness Education & Training to youth groups, volunteers, local businesses and general public. All training has been extremely well received.

FAMS were invited into High Schools in the area to offer one-to-one and group support for pupils. FAMS also organised a series of afternoon and evening meetings specifically for adults, they also connected with local Charities to join them.

Our experience is that parents are angry that there is a lack of information, support and services for children and young adults, experiencing the pressures of dealing with 21st Century pressures or with mental health issues.

FAMS believe that one of the routes to STOP young suicides is by taking a fresh approach to Education, Information and Training for all. It's clearly obvious that the current set up is not working.

We believe that should our Petition be granted, together with appropriate and robust provision for young adults who are struggling with the pressures of 21st Century life, or mental health issues, the Scottish Government will see a fast and sharp decline of young suicides.

As a vessel for families, friends and people to have their, shock, grief, anger and voices heard; FAMS started an on-line petition with 38degrees. We know that this helped Communities feel they were taking constructive and positive action, by collecting over 2000 signatures in just a few weeks.

**The families are wholeheartedly support this petition, they see it as a legacy to their children.**

#### **Unique web address**

<https://www.parliament.scot/GettingInvolved/Petitions/PE01725>

#### **Related information for petition**

**Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?**

**YES**

**How many signatures have you collected so far?**

0

**Closing date for collecting signatures online**

20 / 07 / 2018

30 / 07 / 2019

**Comments to stimulate online discussion**