



### Colorado Springs Teen Creates Website to Help Battle Youth Suicide

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. - A Colorado Springs teen is using her own experience to help her peers struggling with suicidal thoughts by meeting teens where they are: online.

Macy Rae Klein is only 16 years old, finishing up her sophomore year of high school.

"My self-harm got increasingly worse as time went on, and a couple of my friends knew about it and were devastated by it," Klein said.

For Klein, her reasons are people to live for.

"At the time I had a box of 52 razor blades and inside the box, I wrote the names of all my friends, and I put that above all the blades so that every time I opened my box I would have to remove the names in order to get to what was underneath," Klein said.

That list and those people helped her stop self-harming. Now, she's helping others.

She's taken her reasons to a website to help those dealing with self-harm and suicidal thoughts.

"It's terrifying to talk about. You don't want people to be scared of you, you don't want your friends to leave you," Klein said. "It's hard."

Hoping to break the stigma, with community forums, resources and contact information to get help.

According to the El Paso County Health Department, suicide was the leading cause of death for kids ages 10 to 17 last year.

Since the start of 2017, several more teen suicides have been reported.

"This past school year, there's definitely been an increase of teen suicides," a dialectical behavioral therapist at the Family Care Center Doreen DeRoss said.

DeRoss specializes in DBT, dialectical behavioral therapy, proven to help people overcome suicidal thoughts.

She said a site like "Project Reasons" could help teens struggling to get the help they need.

"When it is peer to peer, there's a lot more truth for the person who needs the help," DeRoss said.

Klein said she wants her peers to know they are not alone.

"I just want to save lives really," Klein said. "It's the most important thing to me."

Klein launched the website in March and since then it's grown tremendously.

She said people are contacting her from not only across the country, but the Netherlands and South Korea as well.

People that have contacted her said they have taken the pledge to not commit suicide and to turn to the people in their lives for help.

Source: <http://www.krdo.com/news/colorado-springs/colorado-springs-teen-creates-website-to-help-battle-youth-suicide/502311247>

**Editor's Note:** I recently spent time visiting this site and found it exceptional. It features a remarkable video by Macy Rae Klein, as well as excellent information for both teens, parents, caregivers, and school counselors.

**You can find Macy Rae Klein's "Project Reasons" online at: <https://www.reasonenough.net/>**

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## **WHERE TO FIND HELP:**

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## **Free Educational Program:**

**“Teen Depression Awareness  
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**Available to Local Schools!**



For information about the DBSA Colorado Springs  
***Teen Depression Awareness and Suicide  
Prevention Program***  
and to schedule a presentation at your school,  
please contact  
DBSA Colorado Springs at 477-1515, or by  
email: [help@dbsacoloradosprings.org](mailto:help@dbsacoloradosprings.org)

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***“We’ve been there...  
...We can help.”***

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### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)  
of Colorado Springs

DBSA Colorado Springs does not discriminate on any inappropriate or illegal basis including, but not limited to: race, creed, economic status, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability (physical or mental handicap), veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

## ***Serving the Community since 1994***

Founded in 1994, the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance of Colorado Springs is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, all-volunteer organization, independent affiliate of DBSA, the nation's leading patient-directed organization focusing on the most prevalent mental illnesses.

***Our Mission: To improve the lives of people  
living with mood disorders.***

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On the web at: [www.DBSAColoradoSprings.org](http://www.DBSAColoradoSprings.org)

Phone: 719-477-1515

E-mail: [help@DBSAColoradoSprings.org](mailto:help@DBSAColoradoSprings.org)

**Editor:** Karen Fallahi

**We'd love to hear from you!**

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO ADDRESS ABOVE.  
DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER ITEMS:

**September 15, 2017**

*Views and opinions expressed are solely those of the authors,  
and not those of DBSA Colorado Springs.*

## Melissa's Story

I have had depression where I couldn't lift my head off my pillow in the morning. School be damned, I was tired, fully exhausted, but I hadn't slept. I would lie in bed watching the clock tick away the minutes, all 400 minutes. My mind just didn't stop. I tried counting sheep. I truly tried visualizing one fluffy sheep after another jumping over a fence. It took so much concentration to keep my mind focused on the form and shape of the sheep. ***That was the only sleep trick I knew about.***

This was before the internet. My Encyclopedia Britannica didn't address my insomnia. My mind would review what had happened that day. Every slight relived. Every disappointment revisited. Every nuance traced. I would begin worrying about what would happen tomorrow. I would get lost in the avalanching weight of my mistakes and laziness. Nothing restful would happen until about an hour before I needed to get up to get ready for school. That is when I would finally fall asleep. And then my alarm would go off and I would try and lift my head off the pillow.

This awful cycle became my normal as a teen. My parents were dealing with their own struggles so they didn't know I wasn't sleeping. I am not sure what they would have done had they known.

When I did manage to get upright and walk through the motions of being a normal kid going to school, I felt like I was living in a real bubble. ***Like when you come down from the mountains and your ears don't pop and you can hear, but it all sounds muffled.***

I felt insulated and muffled from the world.

At times, I wasn't certain anyone could even see me. I found myself becoming very quiet, very still, and as small as I could become. After a while, I didn't want to be seen. I didn't want to see what I was missing. I didn't want to see what I could be doing. I didn't want to tally how far behind I was getting. I convinced myself that I was so far buried, that I couldn't fix it, there wasn't enough time.

I wish I had known there were others feeling like I did. I thought it was personal, like Melissa you are just lazy and unmotivated. No one spoke about mental illness or brain chemistry. Not no one spoke about it to me. No one spoke about it at all. I thought it was my own personal failing. I thought it was just me. I had no idea I was sick. It took several years for me to finally seek help. By that time, I was ***so close to giving up.*** I couldn't figure out life. Everywhere I looked, people made it look so easy. My friends got up and went to school and were succeeding. They were heading off to college and I was laying in my bed feeling heavy and muffled.

I certainly didn't want to tell anyone how I was feeling. Then they would want me to do things, and they didn't understand that I couldn't do things. It finally got to where most days, ***I just couldn't do things.***

I was so pleased to find that there is an actual "teen" group that meets weekly at DBSA. I love coming in to the "grown up" group and seeing all of the teens collecting and heading upstairs. I am so grateful that they are able to sit with and look into the eyes of someone who understands what living with depression and anxiety really feels like. ***It is incredibly powerful to not feel alone.***

*Melissa Rasmussen, DBSA Colorado Springs*



## Personal stories: Daniel

*Thankfully, I found myself some encouraging friends and family who eventually started asking if I was OK, which I wasn't but it opened a door to express how I was feeling.*

I struggled with depression from a very early age. Due to circumstances out of my control my world felt like it was coming out from underneath me, I was constantly bullied at school, I was shy so I could never express how I was feeling and I could never see an end. The only end I could see was ending myself. I dealt with Suicidal thoughts throughout my high school years.

Thankfully, I found myself some encouraging friends and family who eventually started asking if I was OK, which I wasn't but it opened a door to express how I was feeling. I later went to a health professional and got some practical advise along with spending more time around encouraging influences. Now I'm feeling more encouraged every day and aim to help others and show that there is a way out of the dark tunnel.

**Source:** <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/connect-with-others/personal-stories/story/daniel>

## The Initiative

## How Bipolar Disorder Affects Me

"I suffer with bipolar 2. I first suffered with mainly episodes of depression in high school. Then as a young adult I have noticed more manic episodes. I cannot help but notice that I cannot sleep sometimes with my "racing thoughts" I constantly am thinking. I have noticed that I can try and sit in the dark and breathe deeply. I also have those thoughts of "why did I have to have this" "why me" "will my daughter have the same life?"

What I have as an answer is this: I may have a mental illness but it is because I am supposed to. If not I would be unable to relate to some people. We all have what some call shortcomings. But sometimes the shortcomings are what will make us stronger."

Susan- 23 yrs old.

Source: <http://www.bpchildren.com/teen-talk>

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## Personal stories: Boyd

*I suggested everything I could think of at the time but the truth is you can't push a button and make everything okay but you can alleviate the tension... at least for another day.*

My dear friend Danni from the United States who suffers from Bipolar disorder 1 is so brave that no words can describe. She has endured so much. We spontaneously met each other online a few months ago and have even chatted on Skype a couple of times.

Our friendship fostered over the coming months constantly talking to one another on our phones over social media. Our conversations involved lots of funny and bantered commentary and intellectually stimulating facts, theories and pieces of history.

However, things were not always like that. In fact, a lot of the time we are talking about her issues with depression, family stress, low – self-esteem and unhealthy responses to conflict. Time difference made no impact in my willingness to help her, as it would be 3am in the morning here (Aus) and 1pm in the afternoon over there (USA).

I remember when things got so bad for her she would not leave her room for an entire week, she would get cranky very easily and be highly critical of what anybody said and how they said it. She messaged me one night saying she felt like hurting herself. After hearing those words I became very conscious and aware, my mind froze for a bit and I knew that whatever I said next would need to be clear and non-judgmental. But how could

she trust me? How could she not perceive me as condescending or perhaps too objective? I thought some more and empathetically decided to tell her about my experience with depression from the past.

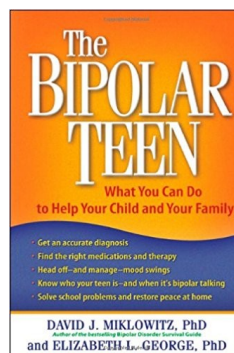
Now that we were both on (to some degree) the same page as each other, I helped her as best as I could. I thought about it logically like a step by step procedure... remove any dangerous objects from the room and make sure she had the suicide crisis team telephone number in America. I told her to leave the room - as a confining dim lit area will only promote a narrow mind. Finding a larger space would change her perception to begin thinking more openly.

I suggested holding some ice cubes in her hand as an alternative for wanting to experience extreme intensity, I suggested writing down your feelings on paper, I suggested going for a walk (although at the particular time it was late at night and dark), I suggested everything I could think of at the time but the truth is you can't push a button and make everything okay but you can alleviate the tension... at least for another day. She told me she felt better after leaving the room and holding some ice cubes.

Before I left her I made sure she contacted a friend or family member she could trust. Later, I set up a suicide safety plan (from the beyondblue Website) with her so when these feelings arose again she would be better prepared. We are still friends, talking to one another on a regular basis with her feelings much more in control.

Source: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/connect-with-others/personal-stories/story/a-story-from-boyd>

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## The Bipolar Teen: What You Can Do to Help Your Child and Your Family

by David J. Miklowitz, Ph.D. and Elizabeth L. George, Ph.D. (Guilford Press, 2007)

From the bestselling author of The Bipolar Disorder Survival Guide, The Bipolar Teen offers practical tools to manage chaos and relieve stress so the entire family can find stability and support. The book delivers strategies to spot the differences between normal teenage behavior and the telltale symptoms of mania and depression. This book is available for loan from the DBSA Colorado Springs Lending Library.

## The Initiative

## Natalie Farzaneh

Natalie Farzaneh's torment at the hands of her cyber-bullies reached such a pitch that at one stage she even considered taking her own life.

Though she never went through with it, Natalie did begin self-harming – scratching herself till she bled and quite literally tearing her own hair out.

It is all the more impressive then, that this once-chronically insecure and near-broken schoolgirl is now, at the age of 15, a motivational speaker and mentor, encouraging other victims to stand up to their tormentors.

But it took a long time before Natalie, from York, could even consider talking about her horrific experience of cyberbullying in public.

Her torment began in 2008, when she first signed up to Facebook and, a few months later, linked her online profile to Formspring, another social networking site.

The half-Iranian schoolgirl had already been suffering bullying at school from pupils making fun of her weight and her Middle Eastern looks. She was insulted, spat at and at times attacked in the corridor of her school.

"It was really awful, but at least when I got home it was over and I felt safe," said Natalie.

But when the bullying began to spread online she suddenly felt as if she had nowhere to hide.

"I got messages from people telling me to kill myself and saying that the world would be better off without me and that everybody hated me.

"Soon I was diagnosed with depression and anxiety. I lost all self esteem and became paranoid about people.

"I couldn't trust anyone because I found out that even some of the people who had been nice to me at a school had begun to send me abusive messages anonymously online," said Natalie.

"At one stage I even began to feel suicidal and I started to self harm. The problem with cyberbullying is that its done in the comfort of your own home and there's nowhere to escape to." It is ironic that Natalie's father, who fled Iran in the wake of the overthrow of the Shah in 1979, didn't suffer the sort of abuse and harassment experienced by his daughter.

"He was really shocked it was happening to me," she said. "He'd never had any problems when he came to this country and he was really angry that other children were doing this to me."

When a sixth grade former student came forward to say she had witnessed some of the physical bullying to which Natalie had been subjected, teachers at Easingwold Secondary School, in York, intervened to protect her and disciplined the offenders.

But that still left the problem of the cyberbullying. Natalie complained about the abuse on Formspring and her linked Facebook page through Facebook's reporting mechanism, but received no response.

"It was very disappointing," she said. "Facebook should have done more. I'm not sure that cyberbullying can ever be stopped completely. But at least people can be made aware of the problem."

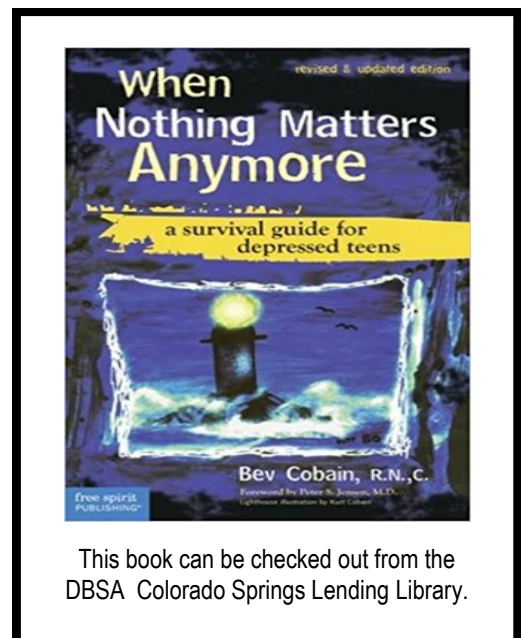
It was to this end that Natalie began to get involved in youth work and signed up to the CyberMentoring programme run by the Beatbullying charity.

Helping others to deal with online bullying helped Natalie regain her own sense of self-esteem and confidence.

Now she even takes part in motivation speaking events at the school and conducts assemblies and citizenship classes.

"It was when I got involved in youth work that I started getting my self-confidence back. Other people could see what I was doing and they began to respect me as well and the bullying stopped."

**Source:** <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/facebook/8885876/Cyberbullying-victims-speak-out-they-were-anonymous-so-they-thought-they-could-get-away-with-it.html>



This book can be checked out from the DBSA Colorado Springs Lending Library.

## The Initiative

## The Beginning

He whispered to her one day, Depression did.  
She was just reading in her room when  
He creeped up and whispered in her ear,  
"No one loves you."  
She tried to shake it off.

He hit her one day, Depression did.  
She was just sitting in her room when  
He took his fist and hit her in the heart.  
"No one cares about you," He whispered.  
So hurt by this, she went to bed early.

He fooled her one day, Depression did.  
She was lying under her blankets when  
He lied down next to her.  
"No one loves or cares about you, but I do," he whispered.  
She sunk farther inside her blankets.

He visited her every day now, Depression did.  
Telling her his secrets and hitting her in the heart.  
She felt suffocated, like she was drowning in sadness,  
But she let him in again and again.

Blackrose 7 (Published: January 25, 2017)

Source: Depression Poems by Teens, <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/the-beginning-3>



## Personal stories: Adam

*The most important thing of all is to make sure they are safe because just telling them what to do or trying to convince them will not work because their mind is in another world.*

Hello I'm Adam. I was first diagnosed with a mental illness at the age of 14. I have not personally helped someone that is suicidal, but with personal experience I can give insight to how to help someone that is suicidal. The most important thing for me was family that was supportive and understanding. The fear when someone is suicidal they think people will think you're weak or a bad person and tell them to get over it. For me I was not suicidal but had suicidal thoughts. I reached out for help when i was struggling.

My advice would be tell them you care and say to them that they are special and unique and that they will get through it, even if they think they won't. The most important thing of all is to make sure they are safe because just telling them what to do or trying to convince them will not work because their mind is in another world. The problem with people that are suicidal is that it is very hard to identify. The important thing to remember is that whether you ask for help or not as a person that is suicidal you should never ignore or take it less serious because it's a unpredictable situation.

Source: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/connect-with-others/personal-stories/a-story-from-adam>

## For All Those People

This is for all those people  
Who hide in the dark,  
For those who feel hopeless,  
For those with a broken heart.

This is for every child and teen  
Who are trying to flee from their fears,  
For those who cry themselves to sleep,  
For those who drown in their tears.

This is for people who hide their scars  
Upon their wrists and their thighs.  
I want to remind each of you  
There is a reason you're alive.

You are here for a purpose;  
You are needed in this place.  
You are special, you are beautiful.  
It doesn't matter what size, gender, or race.

You are perfect just the way you are.  
You are priceless, a wonderful new.  
You are dearly treasured by many.  
There is no one more important than you.

Source: <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/for-all-those-people>

# ANNOUNCEMENTS, *Special* EVENTS & *Other* ACTIVITIES



## Wow!! Did You Know About This?

Did you know that DBSA Colorado Springs has a unique AmazonSmile link that makes it easier for you to find and support our organization?

(Think Birthdays, Anniversaries, Valentines Day, Graduations, Mother's Day...and the list goes on!)

*What is our organization's unique link? Here it is:*

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/84-1305365>

## DBSA Colorado Springs 22nd Annual Summertime Potluck Picnic!



Saturday, August 5, 2017

11:00 AM—2:00 PM  
Boulder Park

Lunch served at 12 noon!

Potluck Requests: Side dishes, salads, fruit, dessert

Deli-style sandwiches, cold drinks, & paper goods provided by DBSA-CS

### Bring Family & Friends!

(lawn chairs & blankets, too)

See you there!



## DBSA-CS Hospital Visitation Program Needs Volunteers!

How about volunteering 45 minutes each week visiting with patients at a local psychiatric hospital; letting them know about DBSA and the free self-help support groups we offer?

If that won't work into your schedule, then how about just 45 minutes of your time, twice a month?

Whether its 45 minutes twice a month, or 45 minutes once a week, you can be the very person to open the door of hope to someone who may very well benefit from what we have to offer!

To learn more and apply, call 477-1515, or email: [help@DBSAColoradoSprings.org](mailto:help@DBSAColoradoSprings.org).



## Get Out and Have Fun!

Need to get out and have some fun? Looking for something to do?

The DBSA-CS Office has Crafting, Games, Movies. **And more!**

Simply give us a call and stop by the DBSA office on Bijou anytime between the hours of 10:00 and 3:00 Wednesday and/or Thursday. We have a variety of movies available for watching, loads of supplies for crafting, books for reading, and games for playing (bring a friend). We also have a library full of great books, magazines, and movies available for checkout.

So next time you have nothing to do, or either need or want to get out of the house, come on by and take advantage of just some of the things your DBSA Colorado Springs chapter has to offer!

For more information, call DBSA-CS, 719-477-1515.



# DBSA COLORADO SPRINGS SUPPORT GROUPS MEETING LOCATIONS & SCHEDULES

*The following Groups meet at DBSA Colorado Springs,  
2132 E. Bijou St., Suite 112.*

**Veterans Group:** open to active, retired, & former military with mood disorders, having served any amount of time — regardless of discharge. Meets 7:00 PM, Mondays

**Women's Morning Group:** for women with mood disorders. Meets 11:30 AM, Tuesdays

**Young Adults & Teens Group:** for those 15-26 with mood disorders. Meets 7:00 PM, Tuesdays, Rm. 233 Upstairs. **Note: Release of Liability required for teens under the age of 18.**

**Family & Friends Group:** for family, friends, husbands, wives of people with mood disorders. Meets 7:00 PM, Tuesdays

**Adults Evening Group:** for adults 18 and over with mood disorders. Meets 7:00 PM, Wednesdays

**Adults Dual Diagnosis Group:** for adults with mood disorders and substance abuse issues. Meets 7:00 PM, Thursdays

**Adults Afternoon Group:** for adults 18 and over with mood disorders. Meets 1:00 PM, Fridays

*The following Group meets in the John and Catherine Smith Room, Senior Center, 1514 North Hancock.*

**Later Life Group:** for older adults with depression or bipolar disorder. Meets 12:30 PM, Wednesdays

*The following Groups meet at St. Francis Medical Center,  
southwest of Woodmen & Powers Blvd.*

**Adults Evening Group:** for adults 18 and over with mood disorders. Meets 7:00 PM, **Meeting Room 4**, Wednesdays

**Young Adults & Teens Group:** Ages 15-25 with mood disorders. Meets 7:00 PM, **Meeting Room 5**, Mondays. **Note: Release of Liability required for teens under 18.**

## Other Local Support Groups of Interest

**NAMI Colorado Springs.** Free support groups for family members & Peers; educational classes. For times & locations: 473-8477 or [www.NAMIColoradoSprings.org](http://www.NAMIColoradoSprings.org)

**FOV (Finding Our Voices)** Support Group for Men and Women Survivors of Sexual Assault. Healing art activities for sexual assault survivors. For more information, times, and locations call 636-5065. Online at: [www.findingourvoices.org](http://www.findingourvoices.org)

**Suicide Prevention Partnership:** Free Support Groups for adults and adolescents who have thoughts or actions toward suicide; groups for children left behind by suicide, and for family members of attempters. For more information about these groups, please call 719-573-7447. Information is also online at [www.pikespeaksuicideprevention.org](http://www.pikespeaksuicideprevention.org).

For more information about these groups and other local resources, please visit our website, [www.DBSAColoradoSprings.org](http://www.DBSAColoradoSprings.org), or call DBSA Colorado Springs, 719-477-1515, or contact us by email: [help@DBSAColoradoSprings.org](mailto:help@DBSAColoradoSprings.org)

### DBSA Colorado Springs Membership & Donor Information Form

Please use this form to become a contributing member of DBSA Colorado Springs, or to renew your membership, or to change your contact information, or to make a donation in any amount.

**Dues**            ( ) Individual - \$20            ( ) Family - \$35            ( ) Professional - \$75            ( ) Corporate - \$150  
**Check All**        ( ) New Member (12 month membership)            ( ) Renewing Member            ( ) Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**That Apply**     ( ) Change of Name, Address, Phone, or e-mail            ( ) I would also like to volunteer my time and/or services

**Please Print Legibly**

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Please make your check payable to DBSA Colorado Springs and mail it to:  
DBSA Colorado Springs, 2132 E. Bijou St., Suite 112, Colorado Springs CO 80909

**Donations may also be made through PayPal at [www.DBSAColoradoSprings.org/Donations](http://www.DBSAColoradoSprings.org/Donations)**

*All donations are tax deductible as provided by law. DBSA Colorado Springs does not share its membership list.*