

occupational disease

fatalities

life-altering injuries



Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support

Strategic Plan

January

2016 to 2018

December

www.threadsoflife.ca

Who We Are

Our Mission

Our mission is to help families heal through a community of support and to promote the elimination of life-altering workplace injuries, illnesses and deaths.

Our Vision

Threads of Life will lead and inspire a culture shift, as a result of which, work-related injuries, illnesses and deaths are morally, socially and economically unacceptable.

Our Values

We believe that:

- Caring:** Caring helps and heals.
- Listening:** Listening can ease pain and suffering.
- Sharing:** Sharing our personal losses will lead to healing and preventing future devastating work-related losses.
- Respect:** Personal experiences of loss and grief need to be honoured and respected.
- Health:** Health and safety begins in our heads, hearts and hands, in everyday actions.
- Passion:** Passionate individuals can change the world.

Guiding Principles

- 1.** Threads of Life will treat all families affected by a workplace tragedy with respect and dignity. We will accommodate the grief process by providing the necessary tools to help family members through their journey of healing.
- 2.** Threads of Life will participate as a full partner in the national prevention system, consisting of the safety associations, the provincial compensation boards, and the provincial ministries that are responsible for workplace health and safety, by supporting system-wide initiatives, developing partnerships and recommending new initiatives as needed, to the extent that our resources and corporate strategic plans will allow.
- 3.** Threads of Life will demonstrate leadership within the system, and will, over time, identify system-wide initiatives within which we can make a significant and lasting contribution. We will focus our limited resources upon these projects and initiatives, rather than attempting to participate in every available activity.
- 4.** Threads of Life will champion projects which involve as many partners as possible, so that the initiatives undertaken will have the greatest impact upon the communities that we serve, promote sharing and teamwork among the members of the national prevention system, and reduce duplication of effort.
- 5.** Threads of Life recognizes that our most important asset is our volunteer network, and will support volunteers' continued healing, growth and development.

4 Key Strategic Themes

1. Positioning Threads of Life as the go-to support group for families suffering from a workplace tragedy.

Threads of Life has provided help and healing to thousands of family members across Canada – but we know this is only a fraction of the people who could benefit from our support. We must continue to work to ensure all those affected by workplace tragedies – fatalities, life-altering injuries and occupational disease – are aware of Threads of Life and how we can help. Through our key partnerships, communication and marketing efforts, we will position Threads of Life as a safe place to land for families who have experienced a recent tragedy and are desperately seeking information and hope. We will also help family members at any stage of their journey understand that Threads of Life continues to be part of their healing through opportunities to honour their loved ones and prevent future tragedies.

Objectives:

- Develop and implement marketing and communication plans including key messages to establish Threads of Life's identity in all provinces and territories as the support agency for families of workplace tragedy.
- Establish partnerships with key compensation and prevention agencies in regions underserved by Threads of Life, to ensure understanding of Threads of Life's role and services among agency staff and to coordinate outreach to families.
- Develop strategies to be able to extend our reach and services to non-English speaking populations.
- Increase outreach to, and services for, injured workers and their families by disseminating information with partner agencies and by training volunteers to represent and serve this group.
- Provide better service to vulnerable sectors and high-hazard industries by establishing partnerships with key organizations, identifying family members and training volunteers to work with others from those sectors.

2. Delivering family support programs and services.

Threads of Life's primary purpose is to provide family support programs and services to family members who have suffered from a workplace fatality, life-altering injury or occupational disease. Our flagship program, the Volunteer Family Guides (VFGs), engages trained volunteers who have experienced a workplace tragedy, to provide peer support to other families. Through this program, along with our family forums, speaker's bureau and other opportunities to share their stories, we will continue to provide a network of hope and healing for families across Canada.

Objectives:

- Ensure family members in all provinces and territories have access to information resources and Threads of Life services.
- To ensure appropriate support for all family members, recruit and train volunteer family guides from all three streams, mentoring new VFGs and providing opportunities for further development for VFGs.
- Provide further support for families by identifying appropriate VFGs and regions where local peer support groups can be established, and work with volunteers to develop an outline and curriculum for these groups.
- Develop and implement a strategy to manage continued growth of regional family forums.
- Assess and maintain information resources for new family members in all regions and deliver these materials through a variety of channels including partner agencies, online and print media.
- Expand and develop use of communication media – print, web, social media and others – to connect the network of family members and provide venues for family members to tell their personal stories.
- Identify family members – particularly those living with injuries and occupational disease – to become speakers; develop a strategy to offer introductory speaker training in response to regional demand and financial restrictions; identify and implement opportunities for further speaker development.

3. Preventing further workplace tragedies.

Threads of Life will fulfill its vision by raising awareness of and promoting accountability for health and safety in workplaces and communities across Canada. Family members, friends and partners together form a committed network of volunteers engaged in creating cultural change. We will empower our family members to serve as ambassadors for Threads of Life, and for health and safety, through speaking opportunities, Steps for Life and other events. We will align with partners who share our vision and promote corporate responsibility for workplace health and safety.

Objectives:

- Develop and implement communication and marketing programs to increase reach and impact of family members' stories through the speakers bureau, through our own communication channels and through our partners, with a focus on vulnerable groups such as young workers and high-hazard industries.
- Identify organizations and companies which share our vision and develop partnerships to allow them to demonstrate their health and safety commitment through sponsorship, Charity of Choice events, and community leadership.
- Support Steps for Life, Walking for Families of Workplace Tragedy events across Canada, building a solid foundation in participating communities to raise both awareness and funds.

4. Building sustainability.

The ripple effects of workplace tragedy reach all Canadians. It is critical that Threads of Life continue to ensure it is viable and poised to serve the needs of family members and others now and into the future. This includes not only financial sustainability, but good governance and stewardship of our human resources and volunteer resources.

Objectives:

- Secure financial sustainability by implementing a funding development plan to include our funding partners, sponsors, granting bodies and other opportunities.
- Maintain accreditation with Imagine Canada standards, using that framework to identify priorities, establish and improve policies and practices related to board governance; financial accountability & transparency; fundraising; staff management; and volunteer involvement.
- Ensure we have an engaged volunteer base by improving our capacities in volunteer coordination.

Each worker and family member who has been affected by a workplace tragedy is a thread in the quilt of life. Each thread, by itself, cannot stand alone, but when woven together provides strength. Although we are individuals, we are also connected in the fabric of life.



Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support

Threads of Life is the Charity of Choice for workplace health and safety events.

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Note: If you're tweeting about Steps for Life, be sure to include the hashtag #walkforsafety

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