



THE PEYTON HEART PROJECT

On October 8, 2014, my 13 year old son, Peyton James, came home from school and attempted to take his own life. Five days later, on the 13th, he succumbed to his injuries and was declared brain dead. My world changed forever that day. The pain that a parent goes through when losing a child is indescribable. Knowing how I felt that day, and every day since then, I have made a promise to myself that I would do whatever was in my power to keep another parent from experiencing the pain I live with daily.

Peyton was bullied for most of his days in school. His red hair, freckles, small build and quirky personality made him an easy target. All he ever wanted was to be accepted for who he was, but instead, he was pushed, shoved, called names and harassed. When he was 12, he was also diagnosed with depression. When all of the bullying and depression became too much for him, he chose to take his own life rather than live with the pain.

In February of 2015, I was contacted by an incredible lady named Jill Kubin. Her daughter Emily is the creator of Emily's Hats for Hope Initiative. Jill asked if I would allow them to hold a hat drive in Peyton's name. I was honored, and the drive took in over 500 hats for the homeless and under resourced.

Jill's next idea was even better. She and her daughters, Emily and Julia, were leaving small knit or crochet hearts with a positive message attached around their town for people to find. Jill asked if they could call the project the #PeytonHeartProject. The idea is simple but elegant. People find the heart, look up the hashtag and see the message behind them. They also get to see what our mission is which is to bring awareness to bullying, suicide and mental illness. I agreed, and became involved. I began leaving hearts around local restaurants, stores, the mall, and anywhere else I could think of. I also began to post to Facebook, Instagram and Twitter hoping to raise awareness.

I am looking for anyone who knits or crochets who would like to help. Even just a few hearts would make a world of difference and would help carry on Peyton's legacy of wanting to make people happy.

--Written by David James, Peyton's father; used with permission from David James and Jill Kubin

The mission:

- *Bring awareness to suicide and bullying.
- *Show people their life is worth living and every life matters.
- *Eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health issues and suicide.

What you can do to be involved:

*Check out The Peyton Heart Project on Facebook; spread the word and get involved!

*Make a heart:

You can crochet or knit a heart or cover a cardboard heart with yarn. If you make hearts please add a tag with one of our positive messages/quotes and the hashtag #PeytonHeartProject. Please note that our quotes are only to be used for the Peyton Heart Project. The hearts you make should be about 2 inches by 2.5 inches in size and be bright colors not black. Please do not attach buttons, beads, etc. to the hearts because a small child might find the heart and it could present a choking hazard. Have fun and please take some photos along the way. Be sure to share them on our Facebook page and/or Instagram/Twitter too. When posting on social media please add the hashtag #PeytonHeartProject to your photos.

Please contact the Peyton Heart Project on Facebook or through email at youaretrulybeautiful@yahoo.com to get all the quotes and the necessary directions emailed to you.

You can scatter hearts around your community if you let us know where you put them either by emailing us or adding pictures on the group page

OR

You can send hearts to:
The Sidewalk Smiles Campaign
ATTN. Peyton Heart Project
P.O. Box 2374
Morristown, NJ 07962-2374

The Sidewalk Smiles Campaign
~home to the Peyton Heart Project~

<https://twitter.com/SidewalkSmiles>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Sidewalk-Smiles-Campaign/763029457048403>

<https://instagram.com/sidewalksmilescampaign/>

<https://www.facebook.com/ThePeytonHeartProject>

Thank you for wanting to help make and scatter Peyton Heart Project hearts in your area.

Sincerely,
Jill Kubin
Creator of the Peyton Heart Project