



New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome  
AND ASSOCIATED DISORDERS

*Collaborative Partnerships  
for the Tourette Syndrome Community*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **NJ Center for Tourette Syndrome & Associated Disorders issues statement in response to tragedy in Connecticut**

SOMERVILLE – The NJ Center for Tourette Syndrome & Associated Disorders (NJCTS) is deeply saddened by the senseless acts that took place Friday at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., and has issued the following statement from Executive Director Faith W. Rice to help families and friends in our community who are affected by this or other tragedies:

“The NJ Center stands united with every American who is grieving the loss of 20 schoolchildren, 6 educators and 1 other adult following the violent acts carried out on the morning of Friday, December 14, 2012, at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. Human beings – especially children – are the world’s most precious resource, and there are none to spare. With that in mind, the NJ Center extends its deepest condolences and sympathies to every family member, friend and person affected by this tragedy.

“The ripple effects of this tragedy are many and will be felt for countless days, weeks, months and years into the future. Coming to the aid of those affected is vital in this most sensitive of times, and it is our duty – that of the NJ Center and everyone associated with care of children – to help those who need support. Parents, educators and medical professionals must join hands with the rest of society to ensure that all children receive the attention and care they need and deserve.

“There has been ongoing speculation that the person responsible for this unthinkable act may have suffered from an unspecified mental health condition. However, it is crucial that no labels, rash judgment or incorrect assumptions are applied to this situation. That would only serve to further the unjustified stigma the world often projects upon people who struggle with mental disorders. More needs to be done in our society to remove barriers so that those who need diagnosis, treatment and support for illnesses of the brain receive thorough, compassionate and expert care.

“The NJ Center recommends taking the following action to ensure the proper support is received:

- If your child or loved one is experiencing changes in mood, sleep or other signs of anxiety or depression, contact your local university medical center, your family doctor or

the NJ Center at 908-575-7350 for a referral list of professionals specializing in pediatric and adult mental health.

- A free library of webinars on a variety of mental health topics is available by visiting [www.njcts.org](http://www.njcts.org). This series features leading professionals sharing information on diagnosis, treatment and strategies for living healthy.
- We live in a world where everyone has differing abilities. Self-advocacy is a skill designed to give young people a voice in their world – on behalf of themselves and their community. The NJ Center Peer Youth Advocate program is open to young people who would benefit from training in social skills, empowerment and self-expression.
- Sometimes, talking to people who have been in your shoes means all the difference. Support groups are taking place in hospitals throughout New Jersey. Find one near you by contacting the New Jersey Self-Help Clearinghouse at 800-367-6274 or the New Jersey Center at 908-575-7350.

“It is important to keep in mind that time heals many wounds, but not all of them. And that is when community is needed most. The NJ Center encourages everyone to seek out friends and neighbors who need help during this time of sadness and grief. As a tightly knit community, we can emerge from this tragedy stronger, more informed and better equipped to understand and face the challenges that lie ahead.”

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*New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome and Associated Disorders, Inc.  
Collaborative partnerships for the TS community.*