



The Hope for B.E.S.T. founder Lori Best Yeager, Lake Erie Crushers mascot, Stomper, and Avon Mayor, Bryan K. Jensen.

Mental Health Awareness

The Hope for B.E.S.T. aims to raise awareness about mental health struggles. Here's how you can help.

by Patricia Nugent

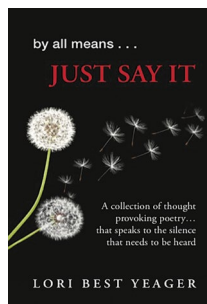
In the wake of her brother's suicide in 2018, Lori Best Yeager was left with a litany of unanswered "whys." There were no signs or warnings preceding Dan's passing. She chose to write her thoughts down, which turned into a book, which turned into a mission: to bring hope to those who are silently suffering and give them the courage to speak their thoughts.

Lori founded *The Hope for B.E.S.T. Be the End to Silent Thoughts* in 2020 to expand that mission. She came out with *By all Means... Just Say It*, a collection of thought-provoking poetry that would be inspirational for anyone dealing with mental health struggles or who knows someone who is.

The grassroots charity recently hosted its third annual K-9 Walk held at Veterans Memorial Park, which has raised more than \$27,000.

"Thanks to our generous sponsors and community support, this year we had 90 donation baskets and vendor booths," says Lori. "Everyone shows up to lend a hand, from Mayor Bryan Jensen to Avon Local Schools superintendent Ben Hodge."

The funds raised go toward mental health awareness programs in Avon Schools, including the S.O.A.R. Through Parenting monthly family nights for



students K-5, which address topics such as anxiety and behavior management.

For future fundraising opportunities, follow the charity on Facebook. In the month of October, Lori is partnering with two other Avon

businesses. Clean Remedies will donate a portion of all its USDA-certified organic CBD products sold to The Hope for B.E.S.T. Just mention when you buy October 1-31. And 30 Minute Hit is partnering with Lori to raise awareness and funds through donations in its studio.

"Whenever I go into businesses to raise funds, it's always a surprise to me how many people mention they've had first-hand experience with the stigma of mental health issues such as anxiety, suicide, addiction or bullying," says Lori. "Having the courage to talk about these issues means struggle can be replaced with hope."

The Hope for B.E.S.T. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Avon. Visit TheHopeForBest.com for more information. You can donate online via a QR code.