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MHA-NYC Crisis Contact Center Rallies to Support People in Distress After the Attack on the Boston Marathon

NEW YORK, NY – April 17, 2013 – In the wake of the horrific attack on the Boston Marathon, the Mental Health Association of New York City (MHA-NYC) has yet again stepped up to respond to the emotional needs of people impacted by disaster.

MHA-NYC's trained, professional crisis counselors are available 24/7/365 for people experiencing distress as a result of these disasters, or as a result of repeated viewings of gruesome images and video via the Internet and television. As the operator of the national Disaster Distress Helpline's crisis call center for fourteen states in FEMA Regions I, II & V (the Northeast, New England and the upper Midwest), Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands, we have been, and continue to be, a vital part of the response to the Marathon attack, the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary and Hurricane Sandy.

"The Mental Health Association of New York City's LifeNet crisis hotline played an essential role in the mental health response to the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Based on that experience we advocated with the federal government to create a national Disaster Distress Helpline. We are privileged now to be able to serve people all across the country during times of great distress," said MHA-NYC President and CEO Giselle Stolper.

"MHA-NYC is a proven organization that works with nearly 100,000 people every year in providing support, counseling, information and resources. There is no better group of crisis counselors to help people across these regions of the country address their anxiety and anguish after a disaster than the team at MHA-NYC," says Christian Burgess, Director of the national Disaster Distress Helpline.

The national Disaster Distress Helpline, which is operated by MHA-NYC's subsidiary Link2Health Solutions, Inc., is accessible by calling 800-985-5990 or texting 'TalkWithUs' to 66746 (Spanish-speakers can text 'Hablamos' to 66746). Calls and texts are answered 24/7 by trained, caring crisis counselors from call centers throughout the U.S. The Disaster Distress Helpline can also connect callers with counselors in over 100 languages via interpretation services and counseling services are also available to hearing-impaired individuals via text and phone (TDD 1-800-846-8517).

We invite you to learn more about our expertise in disaster services at

www.mhaofnyc.org/service/disaster-services.aspx.

MHA-NYC also has experts on hand to discuss the mental health effects and response to the disaster. Please contact Jeremy Willinger to schedule an interview.

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The Mental Health Association of New York City (MHA-NYC) is a not for profit organization that addresses mental health needs in New York City and across the nation. It is a local organization with national impact and has a three-part mission of services, advocacy and education. After the events of 9-11, LifeNet became a central service in the largest federally-funded disaster mental health response in the nation's history, "Project Liberty." LifeNet was also called upon by the American Red Cross to assist in their Mental Health Recovery Program post-9/11 and again in 2005 after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast. For over 40 years, MHA-NYC has offered innovative and culturally sensitive services that promote the importance of mental wellness. www.mha-nyc.org

Link2Health Solutions, Inc. (L2HS), a subsidiary of the Mental Health Association of New York City, is a leading innovator and developer of technology and communications infrastructure critical for supporting the emotional well-being of individuals and communities in need. Through its service networks and agency partnerships, L2HS administers high-quality programs that reach over a million people every year throughout the country. www.l2hs.org