

Dear Parents,

The Mont Vernon and Amherst Community Recovery Group recently promoted three informative community forums with Organizational Resilience International, Inc. Below is the introduction and background information from the first forum in January. Similar introductions were made at the January 14<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> forums. We invite you to take a look at the three PowerPoint presentations.

### ***Mont Vernon and Amherst Community Recovery Group***

#### ***Introduction:***

1. As a result of the tragic events in our communities in October, The Disaster Response Behavioral Health Team as well as Employee Assistance Program personnel from Local Government Center (LGC) advised us to consider that, due to the circumstances of the events, it would be prudent to engage the services of an organization that could assist the communities of Mont Vernon and Amherst in their healing and recovery process. SAU #39 responded to the offers of assistance from the NH Department of Education and wrote a grant to engage the services of one of the recommended organizations with experience in these matters. (ORI) Organization Resilience International, Inc. immediately recommended that a group of community and school members from both Mont Vernon and Amherst be formed to represent their communities to aid them as we go through the recovery and healing process.
2. Members of the Mont Vernon and Amherst Community Recovery Group were solicited from Amherst and Mont Vernon faith based organizations as well as Town Administrators and public schools. To date, the Group has held four meetings and is very proud to sponsor this first community event.
3. Our Mission Statement is *“to facilitate community resilience and healing through the coordination of resources, education, and support”*
4. The topic for this evening’s forum is *“The Impact of Tragic Events on our Communities and Ourselves”*
5. Organizational Resilience International (ORI) is a specialized firm that focuses on helping communities and organizations prepare for, respond to, and recover from the human impacts of tragedy crisis and disaster. Based in Concord, New Hampshire, ORI’s expertise in the human and social aspects of crisis and disaster has helped victims of tragedy around the world, from the Oklahoma City bombing, Hurricane Katrina, and New York City’s 9/11 attacks, to the earthquake in Pakistan and the tsunami in Sri Lanka.
6. Our facilitators for this evening are senior partners with Organizational Resilience International and have been working with our community recovery group since its inception.
7. Dr. Kevin Becker is a licensed clinical psychologist specializing in psychological trauma for over 25 years. He is a clinical instructor in the Harvard Medical School Department of Psychiatry and the director of the Institute for Trauma and Crisis, a division of the Continuing Education

Program at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston. Along with working in both the public and private sector on how to best prepare for and respond to crisis, as well as working directly with organizations following major disasters such as the ones mentioned, Dr. Becker currently serves as director of the Massachusetts Victim Assistance Academy, providing nationally recognized training to crime victim service providers. A founding chairperson of the Massachusetts Disaster Response Network, he consults nationally and internationally and has produced an award-winning documentary entitled *PTSD: Beyond Survival*.

8. Jeffrey Wier comes to us with over 20 years of experience in the field of traumatic stress and disaster response and is a founding partner of ORI Consulting. He received his Masters degree in psychology from Antioch New England graduate school and has been a supervisor at the, Center in Boston since 1999. Jeff has provided training and consultation throughout the United States and Europe, worked with corporate and governmental organizations following crises, including workplace violence, terrorism and natural disasters. Along with this work, Mr. Wier co-wrote area \$1.3 million grant to provide trauma related services to victims of human trafficking in the United States.