



Annual Report

2023

The Jesse Lewis
Choose Love
Movement

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From Scarlett Lewis
Chief Movement Officer

3 About Choose Love

People that feel good don't want to harm themselves or others. Hurt people hurt people. Addressing the root cause of suffering is essential to reducing and preventing the escalating diseases of today, including mental illness, substance abuse, and violence. This is why I created the Choose Love Movement™ .

4 Why We Choose Love

Following my son Jesse's murder in his first grade classroom by a former student, I realized we needed to do better. Our kids are in unprecedented pain, and we can help! Choose Love is the only school-based program that focuses on love, connection, and belonging, teaching post-traumatic growth and how to grow through difficulty.

5 Programs

Our programming is universal, benefiting all ages and stages, and the same essential life skills that we need as adults. Over 10 million students have benefited by learning how to respond to the challenges they face in safe, effective, and healthy ways.

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The unprecedented disruption of the past few years has left our children to deal with academic loss, increased violence, substance abuse, and an epidemic of mental illness. If we can bring Choose Love to more children, more schools, and more communities, we can get to the root causes of these challenges and improve the lives of millions of children. We can keep them safe and do everything in our power to help them flourish.

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Choose Love is proactive, flexible, and transformative. It works for every grade, every community, and for groups outside of school. We are committed to ensuring all children and adults have access, and offer Choose Love solutions at no cost.

Thank you for helping us create the world we want to live in and leave our children, one that is safe and kind! WE CAN DO THIS!

About Choose Love

Scarlett Lewis founded the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement following her 6 year old son, Jesse's murder during the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy in December 2012. It is the worst mass shooting in an elementary school in U.S. history. Twenty-eight people were killed that day, including 20 first graders.

Jesse used his final moments to heroically save nine of his friends. Shortly after his death, Scarlett discovered a message Jesse had written on their kitchen chalkboard, "Nurturing Healing Love" (Nurturing, Healing Love). Scarlett knew if the shooter had been able to give and receive love, the tragedy would never have happened. The three words of Jesse's message are included in the definition of "compassion" across all cultures. The latest research shows that when we give love and healing, we get the same back in spades.

Scarlett realized that love, connection and belonging are universal wants and needs that connect all of humanity. She set out on a mission to teach as many people around the world about this message, beginning with children. These three words (Nurturing Healing Love) led to the creation of a formula that can be used by anyone, at any time, anywhere in the world, to manage their response to any situation.

The Choose Love Formula™ is based on the profound result of practicing the character values inherent in "Nurturing Healing Love," which are Courage, Gratitude, Forgiveness, and Compassion-in-Action.

The Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement is aware of everyone's need for enriching connection, resilience, and well-being. Our Choose Love Formula™ reinforces a Choose Love lifestyle & mindset to nourish and strengthen the body, mind, and emotions. At its core is Jesse Lewis' message of Nurturing Healing Love from within ourselves to thoughtfully respond to all we meet to improve the world around us.



Our Vision

To reach a tipping point where people realize they can 'Choose Love' as a thoughtful response and work from their highest and best selves to benefit our communities and world.

Mission

The Choose Love Movement benefits all ages with universal essential life skills enabling individuals to choose love over fear. The Choose Love Formula: Courage + Gratitude + Forgiveness + Compassion-in-Action, reinforces a Choose Love Mindset that nourishes and strengthens the body, mind, and spirit. At its core is Jesse's message of having the courage to "Choose Love" as a thoughtful response in every situation, circumstance, and interaction to create a safer, more peaceful, and loving world.

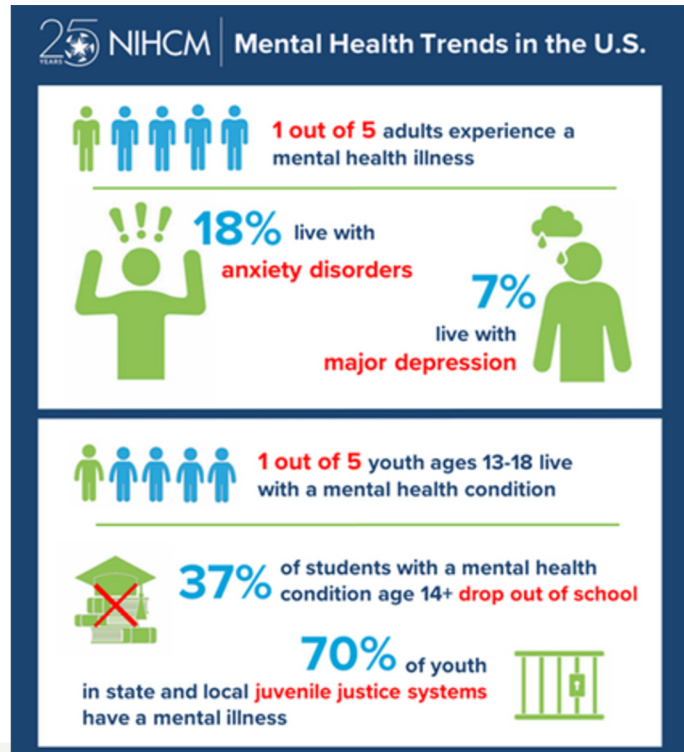
Why We Choose Love

OUR PURPOSE

Teach every child how to Choose Love, and create safer schools and more loving communities.

Our most powerful element is that the program is based on love. This makes Choose Love universal, adaptable, resonant, simple, and sustainable. This is why it transcends the classroom, age groups, or settings. Choose Love has been developed with rigor and based on science.

When practiced daily, the Choose Love principles will transform lives, improve relationships with others, and create a ripple effect of happiness, health, and productivity throughout schools, homes, and communities.



Source: National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

Escalating Mental Illness

- According to a 2023 survey, 87% of young people in the United States have experienced some type of mental health issue on a regular basis. Anxiety was the most common mental health challenge reported, affecting 58% of respondents.
- Homeland Security Advanced Thinking Program reported nearly 350 school shooting incidents in 2023.

“We need this holistic emphasis on social-emotional, behavioral functioning, and mental health. We know that when students are doing well in those realms, they tend to do better in the academic realm.”

-Mark Weist, Professor of Psychology, University of South Carolina

Choose Love Programs

Choose Love Programs

Choose Love offers no-cost Character Social Emotional Development programs for schools, homes, and communities. Choose Love For Schools™ is the flagship program for Pre-K through 12th grade, created by and for educators that teaches educators and their students how to Choose Love in any circumstance. It helps children and adults to become connected, resilient, and empowered individuals. These skills, tools, and attitudes have been proven through decades of scientific research to be the best way to ensure a healthy, meaningful, and purpose-filled life.

Choose Love CARES Workshops and Bus Tours

Choose Love CARES workshops and Bus Tours are creating sustainability, which will provide long-term growth, and ensure our mission to continue providing programs free for all to use. Choose Love CARES helps school administrators cultivate a positive environment and healthy mindsets through fundamental workshops, and supports educators with Spotlight Webinars. Choose Love Bus Tours are community-wide events.

Choose Love Corrections

Choose Love is committed to uplifting the lives of all those involved in the Department of Corrections. The New Hampshire Department of Corrections (NHDOC) took the bold step in the fall of 2021 to pilot Choose Love programming to improve residents' relationships with each other, their families, and communities to better prepare them for reentry.



This was definitely one of the most useful workshops that I have attended in a long time. I enjoyed the tapping therapy and breathing techniques, and it was very inspirational hearing the power of love and positivity. No matter what life brings our way, we need to realize we can overcome any challenge.

Thank you for your message!

-Amy Weber, High School Biology Teacher.
Hempfield Area School District, PA

Choose Love in Action

Marking 5 Years of Choosing Love



5th Choose Love Day in Bentonville

Bentonville Schools celebrated its 5th anniversary of Choose Love Day at the Bentonville Square to celebrate the movement with booths, games, food, and music. Each Bentonville school had a booth at the event to incorporate Choose Love. More than 2,500 people attended, and local media covered the day.



Hillsboro, TX Celebrates 5 Years of Choosing Love

Hillsboro ISD has offered 'Choose Love' at all of their schools since 2018, and was the first Texas school district to adopt the program. A community celebration was held downtown in March, and all were invited.



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE Reach

NEARLY 10 MILLION

Choose Love has grown organically, one person at a time, and growing.



ALL 50 STATES

People from all 50 states and DC have accessed Choose Love programs.



140 COUNTRIES



MORE THAN 15,000 SCHOOLS

STATES WITH HIGHEST CHOOSE LOVE SCHOOLS



Hawaii
276 of 398 schools use Choose Love



New Hampshire
469 of 677 schools use Choose Love



Connecticut
671 of 1,253 schools use Choose Love



Rhode Island
172 of 401 schools use Choose Love



Arkansas
485 of 1,192 schools use Choose Love

Choose Love in New Hampshire



The statewide Choose Love initiative out of New Hampshire continues, with Shannon Desilets' position having been moved out of the Governor's office and into the NH Department of Health and Human Services, Division for Behavioral Health. With the governor not running again, the goal of this move was to secure the supports and services provided to NH through this position.

Over 600 schools in NH Choose Love!

Over 600 schools in NH have accessed Choose Love, including early childhood and post-secondary education facilities. Choose Love is an ongoing recommendation in the NH School Safety Preparedness Task Force Report.

Programming continuously evolves and grows in NH through this statewide initiative. Most recently, increased collaboration and successes have happened in Out of School Time programs, and work has also been done to bring Choose Love into homeless shelters to support individuals and families.

Choose Love for Caregivers

Choose Love for Caregivers continues in NH, working with CWEP, the Child Welfare Education Partnership, to bring forth programming designed for foster caregivers and workers in the field.



Shannon Desilets, the Choose Love Program Director and now Community Wellness Administrator in NH DHHS, continues to serve her state. Additionally, Shannon Desilets served on a panel for the National Governors Association to share about NH's accomplishments with its focus on social emotional well-being and the Choose Love Movement. Additionally, she has worked with US Homeland Security to provide guidance in terms of how Choose Love has been rolled out.



Choose Love for Corrections

Choose Love for Corrections continues in NH at the men's and women's prisons, as well as the Transitional Housing Units. This program has brought great success and motivation into the facilities, and there is currently over a **200-man waitlist inside the men's facility**. Choose Love for Corrections has also expanded beyond NH, and the first class completed the course inside the Miami North Work Release Center, with plans to continue. Additionally, Shannon was asked to present with the NH DOC at the upcoming CLA Regional Conference for leaders in Corrections.

Choose Love Impact

2023 Achievements

- Overhaul of Choose Love Middle and High School Curriculum.
- Videos made by Scarlett Lewis.
- Animated videos added to all grade levels.
- Brave New World lessons were integrated into all grade levels.
- Website redesign.
- Creation and roll out of new LMS system.



2023 Awards

- AARP Purpose Prize Fellow Award
- Stevie Awards for Women In Business
- Charter for Compassion's Karen Armstrong Humanitarian Award
- Silver Anthem Award for a Non Profit Campaign in Education

"In an educational landscape where many educators have the 'not one more thing' mentality, Choose Love is a breath of fresh air. In fact, it is the time I most look forward to all week."
 -- E Birdin, Long Meadow, CT

Interviews and Media Coverage

- CBS News
- New York Times
- USA Today
- Hawaii Now
- Today
- CNN with Anderson Cooper
- CNN New Day
- WTNH
- CT Insider



"We have a choice between reacting and responding in life. One comes from fear, the other from love."

- Scarlett Lewis
 Founder and Chief Movement Officer
 Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement



Photo by Stephanie Diani

Dreamvisions 7 Radio & TV Network



Uniting Humankind with Universal Love
 www.dreamvisions7radio.com

Podcast Partnership

Choose Love partnered with Dreamvisions 7 Radio Network, a Boston-based Holistic syndicated Internet radio station. Scarlett Lewis interviews guests that uplift and inspire. Choose Love podcasts are reaching nearly 100,000 listeners monthly.



Choose Love Sources

Revenue Sources 2023

- Individual Contributions/Grants — 64%
- Fundraisers — 4%
- Workshops & Speaking Fees — 6%
- Book & Program Supplies — 20%
- Investment returns - 6%

Expense Sources 2023

- Programs — 89%
- Mgmt & General — 9%
- Fundraising — 2%



We thank you for your continued support and for Choosing Love.



10 Years of Choosing Love

In 2013, Scarlett Lewis founded the Choose Love Movement to be part of the solution. Choose Love has impacted millions of children and adults to live a more fulfilling life through courage, gratitude, forgiveness, and compassion-in-action.



“December marked eleven years since Jesse was so needlessly and violently killed. I knew immediately that if the shooter had access to social-emotional learning, this tragedy would never have happened. I feel Jesse’s spirit around me, and he inspires me every day to be strong and share his message of love with the world.”

--Scarlett Lewis

“Choose Love has had an immediate and positive impact on our school community. Our team unanimously selected ‘Choose Love’ for its approach, alignment, and vision to support the social/emotional learning and well-being of our students and staff. It has been wonderful to see how quickly ‘Choose Love’ has been embraced by our schools and our community.”

-- Don Briere, Director Of Educational Services, Hebron Public Schools, CT

choose love™

10 YEARS

History

2012

Jesse Lewis saved nine classmates before being killed in the worst school shooting in U.S. history.



2013

Scarlett Lewis created the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement to be part of the solution by developing a social and emotional learning program for schools at no cost.



2015

The Jesse Lewis Empowering Educators Act was introduced in Congress and included in Every Child Achieves Act to provide funding for teachers to be trained in social and emotional learning.



2016

First pilot schools to implement the Choose Love Enrichment Program at Ka'olepulu Elementary School in Kailua Hawaii, and at Rippowam Middle School in Stamford, CT.



2018

Federal Commission on School Safety, headed by Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, included information from the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement.

Choose Love For Homes program launched providing parents with an online video course in social and emotional intelligence.

First state-wide rollout of the Choose Love Enrichment Program, and included in the School Safety Preparedness Taskforce.



2020

Choose Love For Schools is launched and is the first Character Social Emotional program offered. Choosing Love in our Brave New World is launched in response to COVID-19.



2022

Choose Love for Corrections and Choose Love for Caregivers is launched in New Hampshire.

10 Year Remembrance of Jesse Lewis.



www.ChooseLoveMovement.org

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