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ERIKA'S LIGHTHOUSE WINS THE 2020 COMMUNITY BUILDER AWARD FROM THE CHILD MIND INSTITUTE

Award celebrates organizations making real change in the mental health care system

July 16, 2020 – Winnetka, Ill. – [Erika's Lighthouse](#), a non-profit organization that is dedicated to educating and raising awareness about adolescent depression, encouraging good mental health, and breaking down the stigma surrounding mental health issues, announced today that it is the winner of the 2020 Community Builder Award from the [Child Mind Institute](#) as part of its annual Change Maker Awards. The annual Change Maker Awards celebrate individuals and organizations making real change in the mental health care system and in the lives of children and adolescents who struggle with mental health and learning disorders. The [blog on the Erika's Lighthouse website](#) was also just named one of [the Best Depression blogs of 2020](#) by Healthline and recognized for providing a resource that aims to break the stigma of depression and educate teens, parents, and teachers about teenage depression. The free depression education program from Erika's Lighthouse has been taught in 530 schools in 39 states and impacted more than 218,000 students since the beginning of the 2019 school year.

"I want to thank our community of educators, students, and supporters who voted for us to win the 2020 Community Builder Award from the Child Mind Institute," said Brandon M. Combs, the executive director of Erika's Lighthouse. "Not only does this award represent the transformational work that Erika's Lighthouse has accomplished in the last 16 years, but it also provides us a chance to look ahead as we continue to bring our free depression education programs to more middle school and high school students around the country."

"We are pleased to recognize Erika's Lighthouse as the crowdsourced winner of our 2020 Community Builder Award," said Child Mind Institute president Harold S. Koplewicz, M.D. "Their mission to combat the isolation of adolescent depression is vital, particularly now in the face of the pandemic. The deep commitment of Erika's Lighthouse to working across school communities to help young people thrive is an inspiration."

Over the last few months, when students stopped going to school to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the staff at Erika's Lighthouse came together and provided resources to students who faced an unprecedented health crisis. The "We're In This Together" campaign empowered teens who felt isolated and alone by providing practical, meaningful tools to support them through these uncertain times when many people around the world were self-isolating. More information is available at www.erikaslighthouse.org/together.

Erika's Lighthouse is A Beacon of Hope for Adolescent Depression and develops and provides free teen depression awareness programs and resources to middle school and high school communities around the country. Erika's Lighthouse continues to make improvements and make it easier for school partners to access its programs and resources. In 2018, a new website and resource portal was introduced that provides all of Erika's Lighthouse resources in one place, including additional teen empowerment activities.

The Child Mind Institute is a national, independent nonprofit organization that is dedicated to transforming the lives of children and families struggling with mental health and learning disorders. Their annual Change Maker Awards celebrate individuals and organizations who raise awareness and dispel stigma, help children and families directly, or work to transform the way we understand and treat mental health and learning disorders. More information is available at <https://childmind.org/>.

More information on bringing Erika's Lighthouse programs to middle schools and high schools is available at www.erikaslighthouse.org/contact/.

About Erika's Lighthouse

Erika's Lighthouse: A Beacon of Hope for Adolescent Depression is a non-profit organization committed to raising awareness about teen depression in middle school and high school communities at no cost to schools. Erika's Lighthouse works to eliminate the stigma surrounding depression and empower young people to take ownership of their mental health. Core programs include the video-based, teacher-led depression awareness classroom programs—The Erika's Lighthouse Program: Depression and Suicide Awareness for High School Students and The Erika's Lighthouse Program: Depression Awareness for Middle School Students. Erika's Lighthouse also provides countless other web-based resources. To learn more, visit www.erikaslighthouse.org.

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