

ViewFest 2027

Mental Health & Prevention Festival



Together, We Lift One Another,
Strengthen Community, and Inspire Hope

~FREE COMMUNITY EVENT~

July 11, 2027 @ The Detroit Zoo

www.ViewFestMHF.com

EVENT & IMPACT OVERVIEW

A free day for mental health & prevention.

Meet local organizations, try hands-on activities
and find resources for yourself and your family.

Sunday, July 11, 2027

Detroit Zoo | Metro Detroit, Michigan

Festival hours: 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Eastern

A free community event presented by Words of Hope 4 Life
2027 Event & Impact Overview

Why ViewFest matters

A free event where families can meet providers, learn and spend time together.

Finding help can be difficult when you do not know what is available or where to start. ViewFest brings organizations together so people can ask questions, learn about services and take part in activities without the pressure of making an appointment.

Words of Hope 4 Life started ViewFest in Metro Detroit in 2021. In 2026, more than 6,000 people attended at the Detroit Zoo, with 259+ tables and 410+ participating partners. The event returns on July 11, 2027.

Visitors can talk with providers, try coping and resilience activities, learn about prevention and discover community resources. Families can explore together, and people can choose how much they want to participate. There is no admission charge for registered attendees.

“Events like this make a real difference by helping people feel seen, supported, and empowered to take positive steps toward well-being.”

ViewFest 2026 community feedback

ViewFest is built on Event-Based Community Interactions (EBCI), an approach developed by Words of Hope 4 Life. It uses community events to introduce mental wellness and prevention resources in places where people can learn and talk comfortably.

Why this matters beyond Michigan

Other communities face the same questions about access, isolation and prevention.

Mental health services can be hard to navigate. People may not know which organization to call, what help is available or how to begin the conversation. ViewFest gives them a chance to meet organizations in person and ask questions during a day out with family or friends.

The event also raises a question relevant to communities across the country: how can prevention and support reach people before a crisis? ViewFest offers an example that reporters, funders and other communities can examine.

Questions for broader reporting

Reaching people earlier. How do families learn about services before they need urgent help? What makes them comfortable asking questions?

Meeting people outside an office. What do providers learn when they meet families at an event, and what can visitors take home from those conversations?

Making a free event possible. What does it take to recruit hundreds of partners, cover costs and coordinate an event of this size?

These questions are best explored through the people involved: families attending, organizations offering resources and volunteers helping run the day. Their experiences can show what works, what remains difficult and what other communities might learn.

2027 safety goal: 3,000 lock boxes and secure storage bags distributed to the community.

ViewFest through the years

Attendance grew from 2,943 in 2025 to more than 6,000 in 2026.

6,000+

attendees

259+

tables

410+

partners

ViewFest 2026 at the Detroit Zoo brought thousands of people together with hundreds of tables and participating partners.

- 2021** **Reimagine Mental Health**
Festival begins; 2.8-mile Hug Buddy postcard record initiative.
- 2022** **Make Happiness a Habit**
1,000+ attendees.
- 2023** **Mental Health Matters**
1,604 attendees.
- 2024** **Breaking Records, Building Hope**
1,835 attendees; Narcan training record initiative.
- 2025** **Live in the Moment**
2,943 attendees.
- 2026** **Bloom Forward**
6,000+ attendees; 259+ tables; 410+ partners.

Inside ViewFest 2026

Visitors meeting organizations and taking part in activities at the Detroit Zoo.



Scenes from ViewFest 2026 at the Detroit Zoo.

Helping Hands; Connecting Communities

The 2027 theme centers on helping others and building relationships.

Helping Hands; Connecting Communities reflects what happens at ViewFest: people offer their time, share what they know and help others find resources. The theme recognizes the contributions of attendees, volunteers, sponsors and participating organizations.

Hands represent helping

Hands represent the work of helping: listening to a question, teaching a skill, sharing a resource or making someone feel welcome. At ViewFest, organizations and volunteers put those actions into practice throughout the day.

Hearts represent care

Hearts represent compassion and belonging. They remind us to welcome people with different backgrounds and needs, and to treat each person with respect.

The theme will appear in the Heart Stone Station, Heart Path / Garden, Hands of Kindness bracelets and other festival activities. Visitors can contribute to shared displays and take home reminders of the day.

Helping can be as simple as listening, sharing what you know or making someone feel welcome.

Sponsors help cover the cost of bringing people together. Volunteers help run the event. Organizations offer activities and information. Attendees bring their questions and experiences. Each has a part in making ViewFest useful and welcoming.

How ViewFest works

Free access, practical learning and opportunities to meet people.

Words of Hope 4 Life developed Event-Based Community Interactions (EBCI) in 2021. The approach brings mental wellness and prevention into community events through activities, conversations and direct contact with organizations. ViewFest is its largest event.

Cost, access to information and social support affect how people find help. These are part of the social determinants of health: the conditions in daily life that influence health and well-being. ViewFest addresses several of them through its event design.

Free access. Sponsors and community support cover event costs so registered attendees can participate at no charge.

Resources in one place. Visitors can meet multiple organizations in one visit, compare services and ask questions.

Practical learning. Activities introduce coping strategies, resilience tools and safety information that visitors can use at home.

Time with others. Families, neighbors and organizations spend time together through activities open to different ages and backgrounds.

For someone unsure where to start, meeting a provider or learning about a service can be a useful first step. ViewFest gives people that opportunity while supporting the work organizations already do throughout the year.

What's coming in 2027

Hands-on activities, take-home items and a community safety giveaway.

Heart Stone Station. An activity using heart-themed stones and messages of encouragement.

Heart Path / Garden. A shared display bringing together contributions from attendees.

Hands of Kindness bracelets. Bracelets that remind attendees to practice kindness after the event.

Winds of Hope fans. Fans featuring messages of hope for visitors to use and take home.

Care Corner. A space offering care, comfort and practical support during the festival.

A third record effort: community safety

2027 goal: distribute 3,000 safety lock boxes and secure storage bags.

ViewFest's previous record initiatives involved a 2.8-mile line of Hug Buddy postcards and single-day Narcan training. For 2027, organizers are bringing partners together to distribute safety lock boxes and secure storage bags, along with information about safe storage.

The target is 3,000 items. A Michigan record attempt is being organized, with independent third-party verification being coordinated. The purpose is practical: help families keep potentially harmful items securely stored.

What attendees can expect

Meet organizations, try activities and learn at your own pace.

Visitors move among partner tables and activities, stopping wherever something interests them. They can ask about services, try an activity or spend time talking with an organization. Visitors choose which tables to stop at and how long to spend at each.

For individuals and families

Families can explore together. A hands-on activity may introduce a coping skill or lead to a conversation about a service. Visitors can take information home for themselves or someone they know.

For young people

Creative activities give young people ways to participate, learn and contribute. They can make something, add to a shared project and meet people working in their community.

For participating organizations

Organizations can explain their services directly to visitors and offer something useful through an activity or conversation. They can also meet other providers and community partners.

Come with questions, come with family or simply come to take part.

The final activity roster, accommodations and participation details will be provided through the event website.

People and activities

A closer look at ViewFest 2026.



Scenes from ViewFest 2026 at the Detroit Zoo.

ViewFest in Metro Detroit

A local event bringing families and organizations together from across the region.

ViewFest began in Metro Detroit and grew through relationships among local organizations, schools, providers and volunteers. Its roots include the Lakes Area, with participation extending across the region.

The Detroit Zoo gives families a familiar place to gather. Keeping the event free is a priority, especially for people who might otherwise be unable to attend. Sponsor support helps make that possible.

Local stories reporters can explore

Families finding resources. Talk with attendees about what they learned, which services they discovered and what they plan to use after the event.

Organizations working together. Meet the providers, nonprofits, schools and public agencies participating in 2027, and learn how they work together.

Youth and community leadership. Meet the people behind Hug Buddy Postcards and the kindness and resilience activities.

The work behind free access. Look at the funding, volunteers and coordination needed to host thousands of people at no charge.

Local coverage can help residents find the event and understand what is available. Those same interviews can give a national audience a closer look at how this community organizes around mental health and prevention.

ViewFest 2027 at a glance

Dates, registration and arrival information.

Event

ViewFest 2027 Mental Health & Prevention Festival

Theme

Helping Hands; Connecting Communities

Date

Sunday, July 11, 2027

Location

Detroit Zoo | Royal Oak, Michigan | Metro Detroit

Festival hours

8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Eastern

Admission

Free community event; registration details on the event website.

Arrival & entry

Arrive by 9:30 a.m. to get through the Zoo gates before 11:00 a.m. Entry is not permitted after 11:00 a.m.

Check-in & parking

Check in at the ViewFest tents outside the main Zoo gates. Free on-site parking is available; capacity is limited.

Registration

Sponsorship opens November 1, 2026.

Event registration opens February 1, 2027.

Visit viewfestmhf.com for event and sponsorship information.

Organizer

Words of Hope 4 Life, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

Event website

viewfestmhf.com/viewfest2027

Festival activities run until 1:00 p.m.; Zoo gate entry closes at 11:00 a.m. Check the event website for current participation details.

Words of Hope 4 Life

The nonprofit behind ViewFest and its year-round community initiatives.

Words of Hope 4 Life is a Michigan-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit. It develops community programs that introduce mental wellness and prevention through activities, education and opportunities to meet others.

ViewFest is its largest event. Other initiatives include Hug Buddy Postcards, Resiliency Rocks and Hearts of Resilience, which give people ways to share encouragement and participate in their communities.

The RAIL pillars

Resilience. Building skills to handle challenges and recover from setbacks.

Attitude. Encouraging a hopeful outlook and constructive responses to challenges.

Interconnection. Helping people connect with one another and with organizations in their community.

Learning. Teaching practical skills and sharing useful information.

These four pillars guide the organization's work, from a postcard shared with someone who needs encouragement to an event where thousands of people can meet local organizations.

The Rail - community space

2071 E. West Maple Road, Suite E503
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

Tax ID: 87-3312148. Incorporated December 2021.

Contact & participation

For sponsorship, event information and media inquiries.

Whether you want to sponsor ViewFest, attend with your family or cover the event, visit viewfestmhf.com or contact the team below.

Media inquiries

Contact Glen Schwartz to arrange interviews with organizers and participating organizations, request event photos or discuss on-site coverage. The team can also provide updates on the safety giveaway and record effort.

Glen Schwartz

President, Words of Hope 4 Life

Glen@Wordsofhope4life.com

773-619-4556

General event inquiries

Info@viewfestmhf.com

844-844-5900

Event updates

<https://viewfestmhf.com/viewfest2027>

<https://www.wordsofhope4life.com>

Help make ViewFest possible

Sponsor support pays for free attendee access, festival activities and prevention resources. Sponsorship opens **November 1, 2026**; event registration opens **February 1, 2027**. Visit viewfestmhf.com to explore the event and get involved.