started the If U Care Share Foundation (IUCSF) after losing my eldest son Daniel to suicide in March 2005. Eleven years on and the charity, which I set up in Dan’s memory, has supported more than 600 people bereaved by suicide and worked with more than 15,000 young people in schools and football clubs up and down the country.

After the loss of Daniel, aged 19, his two younger brothers Matthew and Ben, along with their cousin Sarah (then aged 10, 5 and 13 respectively), hoped to do something positive to try and prevent another family suffering a similar experience. They felt his death could have been prevented and that if you care about someone then you should share how you are feeling. From this simple idea the three young family members created a wristband to be sold at football matches and other events in the North East to promote the ‘If U Care Share’ message.

After starting in 2009, IUCSF gained registered charity status two years later. Now the charity works throughout the North East providing one-on-one practical and emotional support to people bereaved by suicide. I work alongside other support workers who have their own personal stories of being affected by suicide. Matthew, Daniel’s younger brother, coordinates the TEAMH Project, which seeks to tackle emotional and mental health with young people. A large part of his time is taken up delivering talks to young people and sharing his story about the importance of talking about how you’re feeling.

In September 2014 IUCSF launched a national campaign, Inside Out, to raise awareness of suicide prevention. An annual Inside Out event is held on 10 September each year, which coincides with Worldwide Suicide Prevention Day. Many people who take their own lives display no prior signs and have no contact with mental health services. The results are devastating and life-changing for their families, friends and the communities they belong to. Quite literally, suicide turns people’s lives inside out.

IUCSF’s relationship with CPHVA began following support the charity has given to some Unite members who had been affected by suicide. Our charity would welcome the support of the CPHVA members whether through volunteering at events, fundraising or raising awareness around the issues surrounding suicide and promoting our Inside Out campaign. Any help given is greatly appreciated, no matter how great or small, as it all contributes to our work in prevention, intervention and support for those bereaved by suicide.

IUCSF believes that talking can make a difference, that suicide is preventable and that, in some cases, talking about your feelings can save lives. The campaign is simple: we ask people all over the country, from all walks of life, to wear at least one item of clothing ‘inside out’ on the 10 September, along with our ‘Ask me why?’ sticker. This is to prompt a conversation around the issues of suicide and to help reduce the stigma surrounding this subject, but most importantly to encourage people to open up and ask for help, when needed.

Last year’s campaign saw thousands of stickers distributed and hundreds of people from all over the UK joined us in bringing what’s Inside Out. We believe this campaign could make a real difference and start a lifesaving, culture-changing conversation.

For further information, visit our website at www.ifucareshare.co.uk