

Shattering the Stigma: How One Family Turned Loss into Community Healing

Erica Clute-Cubbin and her daughter Eliette Clute have transformed personal tragedy into community healing through Shatter the Stigma, an event that creates a space for families touched by substance use disorder to find support, remembrance, and hope.

Erica's journey with the Alliance started in 2014 when she sought ways to support families facing substance misuse. After facilitating family support meetings and joining the board, she helped launch Shatter the Stigma along with other Alliance volunteers and staff. Eventually, Erica and fellow team leaders stepped in to plan the event directly.

For Eliette, this event is deeply personal, having lost her father Nick to an overdose in 2015 when she was just nine years old. Together, she and her mom created "Team Nick" to honor his memory while supporting others walking similar paths.

"Shatter the Stigma gives people a space to talk about their loved one they've lost as well as gives people who have struggled with substance misuse a safe space to talk without fear of judgement," Eliette explains. This year's event brought together 50 participants across three fundraising teams, Team Nick, Team Leigha and Team Tommy, raising \$7,237.50 for the Alliance's prevention, wellness, overdose prevention, and recovery support programs.

The event features a memorial walk around the park where loved ones' names are displayed on signs, free Naloxone training to prevent future overdoses, remembrance t-shirts listing the names of those lost, and fundraising through team efforts, t-shirt sales, and raffle baskets.

What makes this event so special? "Every year, people get together and are able to talk. You have the safety and security of knowing you have people there for you," Eliette shares.

Erica emphasizes the broader impact: "Shatter the Stigma empowers people to talk about things openly. Every year, the names on the t-shirt grow. It's the club you never want to be a part of, but you're glad that it's there."

Their advice for others considering similar fundraising efforts? "Do it! It's so rewarding," Erica encourages. "It's an incredible feeling to work on something you're so passionate about," adds Eliette, who now interns at the Alliance and dreams of becoming a substance misuse counselor.

The Alliance is deeply grateful for Erica and Eliette's dedication. Their commitment demonstrates how personal experience can fuel community change, creating spaces where "people can openly discuss their feelings and their battle with substance use without being silenced," as Eliette puts it.

Plans are already underway for Shatter the Stigma 2026 next June, with hopes of welcoming more teams and volunteers. If you'd like to join this event or you want to start your own fundraiser to benefit the Alliance, please visit our [crowdfunding page](#) to get started.



Eliette remembers dad, Nick, during Shatter the Stigma, an event that provides opportunities to remember those who've struggled with substance misuse.



Erica and daughter, Eliette, work together raising funds to support prevention, wellness, overdose prevention, and recovery support.