

## Introduction of John Halligan

John Halligan suffered the devastating loss of his son, Ryan, to suicide on October 7, 2003. Ryan was a victim of bullying both at his middle school and online. In the aftermath, Mr. Halligan was determined to use his personal tragedy to protect other children from similar harm. He led the passing of the Vermont Bullying Prevention law in 2004 and established a law that requires suicide prevention education in public schools in 2006.

In May 2005, Mr. Halligan shared Ryan's Story for the very first time with a group of Vermont high school students. Other Vermont schools, hearing of the profound impact Ryan's Story had that day, extended invitations to Mr. Halligan as well. Since then, he has spoken at over 2000 schools throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico, impacting the lives of more than 1 million students. He has also made appearances on numerous national TV programs. John's mission is to inspire a positive shift and foster kindness among students, empowering them to take a stand against bullying and create a safe and inclusive school culture.

Please join me in extending a warm welcome to Mr. Halligan