

## FIGHTING MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES WITH MUSIC: VANNA & KNOW YOUR SHOVEL



DAVEYMUISE.COM/SHOVELBRAND

**Davey Muise is instantly recognizable** as the mouthpiece of popular hardcore unit Vanna, but there's more than just killer vocal duties keeping him occupied. When he's not touring and making music with the Boston-based band, he's going into schools across America with his Find Your Shovel campaign. His motivational talks deal with issues like bullying, self-harm and depression. In support of this campaign, Muise has also launched Shovel Brand. For every Shovel Brand item purchased, an exact same item will be donated to a center for homeless teens. Beginning in his hometown of Portland, Maine, Muise hopes to establish the program in every U.S. state, taking the power of music far beyond the limits of the stage.

**You've had the chance to interact with a lot of young people across schools and across the nation. Is there any one particular story that's inspired you to keep going and keep pushing yourself to do these things?**

My whole entire lesson is to share your story, so of course, I get lots of kids coming up to me after my talks to share their [own]. There are a lot of heart-wrenching stories,

kids that battle with a lot. **We don't give teenagers enough credit for the things they go through** or the things that they were maybe born into. And then there's times where they've had these inspirational moments of their own. I spoke at a school in California where their parking lot was so big, they were sick of seeing [so much space wasted so] they brainstormed, fundraised and had a guy come in and build solar panels over their entire parking lot and [it] now powers 40 percent of their school. When I was 16, I was just skateboarding around town. These kids are trying to change the face of their communities.

**This whole thing—the talks, the Shovel Brand—at least in part stemmed from your song "Digging." Is there anything on *All Hell* that speaks to this proactiveness as well?**

Absolutely. Since "Digging" came out, things have changed; our band has shifted. There are definitely songs on the record that keep the goal of [the track]. There are songs on the

record about watching someone you love go through a hard time. There are songs about how it can just be hell walking down a hallway. The story never ends.

**You have Vanna, you have the talks that you give, you have the Shovel Brand. How do you find the time and the energy to keep doing things, not just for you but for other people?**

I kind of see it as if I'm not busy, then what am I doing? I try to keep moving at all times. I want to be doing something positive because when I started being more positive and trying to help others, my life exponentially got better. I can't imagine not being busy. It's all I know. It's all I want to know. All these things, they make my life better. They make me smile. I am getting something out of each thing I do. Each time I speak at a school, play a show, or we sell some clothes and are able to make clothes for some homeless kids, whatever it may be, I get to smile. It makes me feel amazing. There's no feeling like being around kids and stories. Watching these kids get these clothes at this homeless center, it all just drives me to keep it going. I wouldn't have it any other way. —Taylor Markarian

