

Dear Families,

We have chosen to implement a mental health and depression awareness program called *4th-6th We All Have Mental Health, 5th-12th Depression Awareness or 8th-12th Depression Education & Suicide Awareness*. This program was developed by a highly respected mental health education and advocacy organization, Erika's Lighthouse: A Beacon of Hope for Adolescent Depression.

The program goals include:

- Raising awareness of good mental health.
- Raising awareness of the signs of depression and risk and warning signs of suicide.
- Reducing the stigma surrounding mental health issues.
- Encouraging help-seeking skills and, if necessary, additional support services.

A key component of the Erika's Lighthouse program is Family Engagement through education and awareness. They have developed two ways that may help promote conversations with your children about mental health and depression:

1. "We All Have Mental Health" was written by parents, for parents. It is designed to help you understand and promote good mental health at home. It is part of the **Family Workbook Series on Mental Health & Depression**. Access it [here](#).
2. A short **On-Demand Virtual Family Workshop** is available for you to watch. This workshop will give you an opportunity to learn more about mental health and depression in adolescents, and prepare you for any discussion at home. We will also review the materials that your child will be learning about in the classroom. You can view the workshop [here](#).

OR

An in-person **Family Workshop Training** will be hosted at the September SHAC meeting. Watch for more information on the district website. This workshop will give you an opportunity to learn more about mental health and depression in adolescents, and prepare you for any discussion at home. We will also review the materials that your child will be learning about in the classroom. We hope to see you there.

These fact-based, student-friendly and hopeful programs promote the messages we need our students to hear - Everyone deserves to have good mental health, depression is common and can be serious, but there is hope and help. You are not alone.

Our school wants all of our students to be healthy, both physically and mentally. We encourage students to take control of their mental health and learn how to seek help for themselves or a friend if needed. One of the biggest challenges to mental health is teen depression, a very common, yet widely overlooked mood disorder that will impact 15–20% of young people before they reach adulthood. It is also a risk factor to suicide.

We look forward to working together to better inform students of important issues, like depression, and provide the tools students need to navigate challenging times.

All these programs are donor-funded and no-cost to schools like ours. For more information on this program, please visit [erikaslighthouse.org](http://erikaslighthouse.org).

Sincerely,  
School Administration

