



September is Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month

Dear Pine-Richland Families, Community Members and Colleagues,

As a school community, we continue to empower resiliency to support the health and wellness of all students, families and staff members. Our collective commitment to nurturing a safe and supportive environment is important now more than ever.

We all serve a role in raising awareness of mental health, suicide prevention and intervention. September is National Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month, a crucial time to reflect on our shared responsibility. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among teens and young adults aged 10-24 in the United States (CDC, 2022). This statistic is a stark reminder of the importance of our efforts to foster connections and offer enduring support.

We know that strengthening protective factors can reduce risk factors, such as students building strong connections by joining activities, having trusted adults at home, at school and in the community, and maintaining supportive friendships. Students should also be encouraged to practice good health and wellness habits that contribute to their overall well-being. These can include maintaining a daily routine, prioritizing rest and sleep hygiene, staying hydrated, eating a balanced diet, exercising, limiting screen time and engaging in quality moments with family and friends.

Pine-Richland continues to join others to raise awareness by educating our students, staff, parents and community members on causes, risk factors, warning signs of suicide, as well as access to a continuum of resources at [Suicide Awareness Policy & Resources/Overview](#). We encourage all parents and school staff to review [Preventing Youth Suicide: Tips for Parents and Educators](#), and the [Teen Suicide Prevention](#) video from the Mayo Clinic.

Suicide rarely happens without warning. It is important to understand the risk factors and warning signs, as well as the steps to take to support those who may need it. Parents, school personnel, and teens ([Preventing Teen Suicide—Tips for Peers](#)) may observe changes in behavior, hear about information secondhand, see information on social media, and recognize these warning signs in person. We should never ignore these signs and should refer to getting help for that individual immediately (NASP, 2021).

Together, **WE** can make a difference by making Pine-Richland a place where everyone feels safe, connected, and valued. Every member of our community plays a vital role in creating an environment where students can thrive, know they

What to Do and How to Get Help?

As a **first option**, we encourage our students to talk with **one trusted adult at home and school**.

Call 911 if there is any indication that **danger appears immediately**.

Do NOT leave the child alone until his or her safety is made certain.

Directly report an urgent concern to the **Northern Regional Police Department at 724-625-3157**.

988—A Direct Link to Mental Health and Behavioral Health

On July 16, 2022, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) formally designated **988 as a nationwide three-digit number for mental health crisis and suicide prevention services**.

988 provides a direct link between suicide prevention and crisis support. Calls will be answered 24/7. **Please review the [PA DHS 988 Overview](#)**.

Safe2Say

844-SAF2SAY or [Safe2SayPA.org](#)

This program operates 24/7 and allows one to securely and anonymously report a safety concern to help at-risk individuals before they hurt themselves and/or others.

Resolve Crisis Network

1-888-7-YOU CAN (1-888-796-8226)

are not alone, and can be provided with immediate support when in need. Let's continue to care for one another with compassion and kindness. Your dedication to the well-being of our students is invaluable. Together, we can create a brighter, healthier future for all.

Respectfully,

Dr. Maura Paczan, Director of Student Services
Dr. Greta Kuzilla, Assistant Dir. of Student Services & Special Education
Dr. Taylour Kimmel, Psychologist (K-6)
Dr. Alysha Kaparakos, Psychologist (K-6)
Dr. Melissa Ramirez, Psychologist (7-12)

All calls are answered 24/7 by a mental health counselor.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-8255

All calls are answered 24/7 by a mental health counselor.

Crisis Text Line

Text HOME to 741-741 to text with a crisis counselor 24/7. The Crisis Text Line is similar to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and other hotlines but allows those in crisis to text rather than call.

School Counseling

School counselors are available to all students K-12. Find contact information for each school counselor at <https://www.pinerichland.org/about/school-counseling>.

School-Based Mental Health Counseling

Students in grades K-12 can access outpatient mental health services in school and through a partnership with [Glade Run School-Based Mental Health Services](#). We have two contracted Full-Time Master Level Clinical Therapists, who meet with students over the summer months. They provide 1:1 individual therapeutic services and group therapy, psychoeducational groups, consultation, prevention, and intervention services.

New intakes for outpatient referrals can be completed by contacting either your school counselor or Glade Run Directly

- [Glade Run MHP Referral](#)
- [Q&A Parent Fact Sheet](#)

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

Students in grades K-12 are supported through this systematic team approach to navigate school and mental health resources for families and remove barriers to a child's learning and mental health treatment. You can find information about Pine-Richland's SAP and team members for each school building along with resource numbers at [Student Assistance Program Overview](#).

Resources for Families

The Pennsylvania Department of Education has a list of [Resources to Support Families](#) for support, services and information that can help children and families with basic needs (food, child care, shelter, unemployment compensation, utility assistance, medical assistance).

[PA 211](#) is an easy-to-remember number and resource for finding services for everyday needs and crisis situations.

Grief Resources (K-12)

Crisis Center North

Pine-Richland partners with the [Highmark Caring Place](#) to provide support, grief resources and materials, consultation services, educational training and peer support groups.

The district has a partnership with [Crisis Center North](#) to provide support to our students and families counseling services and support those who have experienced trauma and/or violence.

RAMS Way (K-12)

Pine-Richland has a district-wide positive behavioral support and intervention program called [RAMS Way](#) that encourages a positive and safe environment for both students and staff members.

GoGuardian Parent app (iOS/Android)

Having extra time over the summer break can be enjoyable, but it can also increase moments of social media exposure both positive and negative. We encourage you to engage in family-centered activities while also monitoring your child's social media activity.

Pine-Richland School District uses a program called [GoGuardian](#) on district-owned devices to help protect our students and as part of our compliance with the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA). GoGuardian currently alerts school counselors when a student searches online for terms or views content related to subjects of self-harm, suicide, violence, weapons, bullying or illegal substances. The GoGuardian Parent app (available for download for [iOS/Android](#)) allows parents access to your child(ren)'s browsing history on district-issued devices. Currently, you may log into this app to view all browsing activity.

[Website](#)



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