

SUICIDE PREVENTION & MENTAL HEALTH GUIDE

A Parent & Guardian Information Handout — Middle School Awareness Presentation

At our school, student safety and well-being are our highest priorities. We recently presented an essential lesson to our middle school students regarding **suicide prevention**, recognizing warning signs, and knowing how to seek help. Please review this guide to reinforce these life-saving conversations at home.

#2 Leading Cause of Death

For middle school youth (ages 10–14). Early awareness and proactive adult support save lives.

4 out of 5 Show Signs

Individuals considering suicide give clear verbal or behavioral warnings beforehand.

RECOGNIZING WARNING SIGNS

Emotional Changes

Persistent sadness, hopelessness, severe mood swings, or loss of interest in favorite activities.

Physical & Behavioral Changes

Giving away prized possessions, engaging in self-harm (cutting/burning), or saying final goodbyes.

Social Changes

Pulling away from family/friends, eating alone, withdrawing from activities, or feeling isolated.

TAKING ACTION: HARM TO OTHERS

Observable Warning Signs

- **Threats:** Direct or indirect talk or writing about violence.
- **Fixation on Violence:** Unusual interest in weapons or violent acts.
- **Extreme Anger:** Frequent, intense, or uncharacteristic rage.

How to Report

Report Immediately: Do not wait, no matter what.

Tell a Trusted Adult: Adults can connect with law enforcement or mental health services.

"We would rather you be wrong about your concern than to not report and someone be in danger."

TAKING ACTION: HARM TO SELF

1. **Find a Trusted Adult:** Parent, guardian, teacher, coach, counselor, or family member.
2. **Speak Up:** Say, *"I need to talk about something important."*
3. **Get Help:** Let an adult take over and connect with professional support.

BUILDING A SAFE COMMUNITY

- **Be an Upstander:** Get help when seeing someone being bullied or mistreated.
- **Practice Empathy:** Listen to peers without judgment.

National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: Call or Text 988 (24/7, Free & Confidential)

SCHOOL COUNSELING & MENTAL HEALTH CONTACTS

Grade / Role	Staff Member
6th Grade Counselor	Mrs. Heffron
7th Grade Counselor	Mrs. Heffron / Mrs. Vial
8th Grade Counselor	Mrs. Vial
Mental Health Professional (MHP)	Mrs. Bourque

KEY MESSAGES SHARED WITH STUDENTS

 It's okay to feel sad or overwhelmed

 You are never alone

 Asking for help is a sign of strength

 You can help a friend

Mental health is everyone's responsibility — awareness leads to understanding, compassion, and action.