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Dear Parent/Guardian,

September is Suicide Prevention Month, and as part of Fresno Unified School District's ongoing commitment to student safety and wellness, we will be providing students with education and resources to support their mental health.

Depression can affect people of all ages, including children and teens. To support student well-being, Fresno Unified uses an evidence-based program from **Erika's Lighthouse: A Beacon of Hope for Adolescent Depression**. This program meets state requirements and supports our commitment to student health and wellness.

Students receive this instruction at key grade levels as they grow:

- **Grade 5 – Level 1: We All Have Mental Health**
- **Grade 8 – Level 2: Depression Awareness**
- **Grade 10 – Level 3: Depression Education & Suicide Awareness**

Each level is age-appropriate and builds on prior learning, helping students deepen their understanding over time.

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](#).

For more information or questions regarding this program please contact your School Psychologist or Social Worker or call Student Support Services: (559) 457-6055

*If you or someone you know is experiencing mental health distress or suicidal thoughts, call or text **988** for immediate support.*

Sincerely,

Fresno Unified School District
Prevention & Intervention / Special Education

