

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The transition after high school is marked by the push and pull of dependence and independence, as well as new stressors that include being on one's own, changes in family relations, financial responsibilities, changes in social life, exposure to new people, ideas and temptations and greater academic demands for those attending college. All these stressors contribute to a rollercoaster ride of emotions that can be difficult for graduates and their parents. It is easy to misread depression as normal turmoil; however, symptoms of depression can be serious and are known risk factors for suicide.

To proactively address this issue, Palatine High School is offering a "refresher course" of the SOS Signs of Suicide Prevention program by implementing the SOS Booster program. The original SOS program has been used by our school over the past years. It has proven successful in increasing help-seeking by students concerned about themselves or a friend. We want to ensure that your child remembers the important message of suicide prevention before graduating, address any mental health concerns that are present and prepare to handle those that may occur in the future.

Our goals in participating in this program are straightforward:

- To help our students understand that mental illness is treatable
- To explain that suicide is a preventable tragedy that often occurs as a result of untreated mental illness
- To provide students with training in how to identify and respond to serious depression and potential suicide risk in themselves or a friend
- To introduce students to resources in the community and provide them with suggestions about getting help on a college campus, should the need for mental health services arise in the future

The Student Services Department will be showing the SOS Signs of Suicide Booster program video followed by a discussion to senior Social Studies classes during the week of May 15th, 2017.

If you do NOT wish your child to participate in SOS Signs of Suicide Booster program intervention training in school, please call Dr. Fred Rasmussen at 847-755-1627. If we do not hear from you, we will assume your child has permission to participate in this program.

Following the SOS presentation, if you are concerned about your child, we encourage you to speak with your son or daughter and follow up with a mental health professional and/or your student's guidance counselor.

Sincerely,

Fred Rasmussen

Student Services Director

Palatine High School