

Sturgis Charter Public School - East



Parents of Freshmen:

As the teen years are marked by a roller-coaster ride of emotions, it is easy to misread depression as normal adolescent turmoil; however, depression appears to be occurring at a much earlier age. To proactively address this concern, Sturgis offers freshmen a Signs of Suicide (SOS) training. This program has proven successful at increasing help-seeking behavior by students concerned about a friend or themselves.

Our goals in offering the SOS program to our freshman class are straightforward:

- To help students recognize symptoms indicative of depression and help them understand that depression is a treatable illness;
- To explain that suicide is a preventable tragedy that can occur as a result of untreated depression;
- To impress upon teens that they can help a friend or themselves by talking to a trusted, responsible adult about their concerns.

Sturgis will offer this program in classes during the academic year. The training involves a video and discussion about the signs of depression and suicide and the steps to take if one feels a friend or oneself is at risk. Students also complete a brief depression inventory form and, if needed, are provided with guidelines for getting help.

Please note that the depression inventory tool we utilize addresses thoughts and feelings that a child may be experiencing. This tool does not provide a diagnosis of depression, but does offer an indication of whether a young person should be referred for an evaluation by a mental health professional.

We ask that you complete the attached Signs of Suicide & Depression Inventory Permission Form and return it to the attention of your child's school counselor. Feel free to fill the form out today, or to send the form through the mail, or scan the signed form and attach it to an email. Please note: ALL freshmen parents need to return the form whether or not you want your child to participate.

If you have questions or concerns about the training or the inventory, please do not hesitate to speak with your child's school counselor. Contact information is listed on the permission form.

Looking forward, it is important to note that our primary method of communication is via the weekly parent newsletter or individual e-mail. There is also a school counseling section on the Sturgis website, where we maintain pertinent information for parents and students alike.

Regards,

The School Counseling Team
Sturgis East

Debbie Hempel
Last Names A – H

Kerrie Lombardozzi
Last Names Hi – McD

Carol Vari
Last Names McG – Z

Signs of Suicide Training & Depression Inventory Permission Form

Parents/guardians of freshmen, it is important that you complete this form and return it to the attention of your child's school counselor. Please note that there are two parts to the permission form: the first grants permission for your child to take part in the Signs of Suicide Training and the second grants permission for your child to take part in a brief depression inventory.

With regard to my child, _____,
(Please print name of child)

I, _____,
(Please print name of parent/guardian)

Signs of Suicide Training

- Grant Permission
- Do NOT Grant Permission

Brief Depression Inventory

- Grant Permission
- Do NOT Grant Permission

Parent Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

Please complete this form and return it to the attention of your child's school counselor.

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