

Warren East High School

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Monday, October 10, 2016

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The teen years are marked by a roller-coaster ride of emotions—difficult for teens, their parents, and educators. It is easy to misread depression as a normal adolescent turmoil; however, depression (among the most common of mental illnesses) appears to be occurring at a much earlier age, and the past decade has seen teen suicide rates double. At Warren East, very unfortunately, we experienced two teen suicides during the 2015-16 school year and I for one do not ever want history to repeat itself.

Therefore, to proactively address this issue, Warren East High School is offering suicide prevention training as a part of the SOS Signs of Suicide Prevention Program. It has proven successful at increasing the number of students seeking help concerned about themselves or a friend and is the only school-based suicide prevention program to show a reduction in suicide attempts in a randomized, controlled study.

Our goals in participating in this program are straightforward:

- To help our students understand that depression is a treatable illness, and help them assess whether or not they may have symptoms consistent with depression
- To explain that suicide is a preventable tragedy that often occurs as a result of untreated depression or feelings of nowhere else to turn
- To provide students training in how to identify serious depression and potential suicidality in themselves or a friend
- To impress upon teens that they can help themselves or a friend by taking the simple step of talking to a responsible adult about their concerns.

Beginning on Monday, October 17th, the Warren East guidance counselors, along with our student services counselors, Kelly Kaiser and Lauren Kummer, and WE Youth Service Center director, Angie Smith, will be going into English classrooms to present the Signs of Suicide training to our students.

The schedule is as follows:

- 9th Grade—Monday, October 17th
- 10th Grade—Tuesday, October 18th
- 11th Grade—Thursday, October 20th
- 12th Grade—Friday, October 21st

If you have any questions or concerns about this program please do not hesitate to contact me at the above listed number or at Nicole.clark@warren.kyschools.us and I will be happy to discuss this important information with you.

Sincerely,

Nicole C. Clark

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