



Dear Secondary Parents:

The adolescent years are marked by a roller-coaster ride of emotions—difficulty for youths, their parents, and educators. It is easy to misread depression as normal adolescent turmoil; however, depression (among the most common of mental illnesses) appears to be occurring at a much earlier age. Depression—which is treatable—is the leading risk factor for suicide. To proactively address these issues, GCISD offers depression awareness and suicide prevention training as part of the SOS Signs of Suicide® Prevention Program. The program has proven to be successful at increasing help seeking by students concerned about themselves or a friend, and is the only school-based suicide prevention program listed by SAMHSA for its National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices that addresses suicide risk and depression, while reducing suicide attempts.

The SOS Signs of Suicide® Prevention Program is designed for all secondary students grades 6-12. The GCISD School Health Advisory Committee has previewed and recommended these programs for all GCISD secondary schools. The curriculum and presentations are aligned with district philosophy. The curriculum is age-appropriate, with children being taught new information as they mature. The Student Advocate and/or School Counselor at each school provide the presentations in a classroom environment, so students will be with staff with whom they are familiar, in a comfortable space. A video is shown, followed by a question and answer time, and then students are provided the opportunity to submit a card identifying if they would like to share concerns with a counselor about themselves or a friend.

**A parent preview of the program will be held on Tuesday September 7, 2021 at 10:00am and at 6:00pm at the GCISD Administration Building – Board Room, 3051 Ira E. Woods, Grapevine, Texas 76051.**

We will be showing a parent video entitled “Training Trusted Adults” and then breaking off into groups to view the Middle School Curriculum “Time to ACT” and the High School Curriculum “Friends for Life: Preventing Teen Suicide.” We encourage all parents to attend to get great information on how to recognize and respond to signs of depression or suicide in adolescents. If you are unable to attend, but would still like to view the programs, they will be available online for a limited time. This is available for GCISD parents to preview the programs only. Please do not share or attempt to download the programs for other uses.

Parents have the option to request that their student not participate in the above program. If you do NOT want your child to participate in the SOS Program presentations, you must complete the form located at the bottom of this letter and return it to your school counseling office as soon as possible. If we do not receive this opt out form, we will assume that you have given permission for your child to participate.

Student’s name printed \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

I am requesting my child **does not participate** in the SOS Signs of Suicide Program.

- I attended the parent preview session.
- I viewed the video(s) online.
- I did not preview the program.

Parent name:

Signature: