

Dear Parent / Guardian,

During this challenging year, school staff are working to teach students about mental health and how to seek help if they are worried about themselves or a friend. We are using a program called *SOS Signs of Suicide*. The program teaches students about this difficult topic and encourages them to seek help.

Through the program, students learn:

- that depression is treatable, so they are encouraged to seek help
- how to identify depression and potential suicide risk in themselves or a friend
- to ACT (Acknowledge, Care and Tell a trusted adult) if concerned about themselves or a friend
- who they can turn to at school for help, if they need it

Students will watch age-appropriate video clips and participate in a guided discussion about depression, suicide, and what to do if they are concerned about a friend. Following the video, students will complete a response slip which asks whether they would like to talk to an adult about any concerns. School staff will conduct brief meetings with any student asking to talk. School based mental health staff will be available throughout the discussion for support and available at any point before or after to discuss any concerns.

**This program will be provided to all eighth grade students virtually through their Health/PE class. The lessons will be conducted during the weeks of April 12th, 19th, and 26th. Your child's Health/PE teacher will inform your child of the exact day and week prior to the lesson.**

**Things to consider when supporting your child:**

- Your child will be required to keep his/her video on during the entire lesson. If your child does not have his/her camera on then they will be asked to leave the class (but will still be counted as present).
- If your child expresses any concern regarding suicide or suicidal ideations you will be notified. Please ensure that your contact information is up to date on Powerschool.

**If you do not wish for your child to participate in the SOS lesson please sign and submit the form below to your child's Health/PE teacher or email Mrs. Tammy Mizelle, 8th grade school counselor @ [tbmizelle@henrico.k12.va.us](mailto:tbmizelle@henrico.k12.va.us).**

We encourage you to visit [www.sossignsof suicide.org/parent](http://www.sossignsof suicide.org/parent) for information on warning signs for youth suicide, useful resources, and some of the key messages students will learn.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's participation in this program please contact the QMS school counseling department at 804-750-2636.

Sincerely,  
*Melanie Phipps*, School Principal

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I **do not** give permission for my child \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in the Signs of Suicide (SOS) lesson.

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Parent Signature

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Date