

**International School – For Families of 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Students – October 29, 2021**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Middle and high schools in BSD are teaching students about mental health and how students can seek help if they are concerned about themselves or a friend. It can be hard to tell the difference between normal adolescent turmoil and what might be a mental health concern. Depression is becoming more common among youth and appears to be affecting students at an earlier age. Depression is treatable; untreated depression is a leading risk factor for suicide.

To proactively address mental health, BSD is offering suicide prevention education using the Signs of Suicide (SOS) program in our **7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> Grade PE/Health classes**.

**We invite you to learn more about Signs of Suicide Program by attending the following events:**

- SOS Information Meeting by Bellevue Schools Foundation on Wednesday November 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:00pm
- International School Families SOS Information Night on Tuesday November 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm

Please go to this website for links to attend: <https://bsd405.org/international/counseling/parentnights/>

**You are receiving this letter because your 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> grade student will be receiving the SOS lesson in their PE/Health class from mid-November – beginning of December.** Our goals include teaching students:

- that depression is treatable
- how to identify serious depression and potential suicide risk in themselves or a friend
- to ACT (Acknowledge, Care and Tell a trusted adult) if they are concerned about themselves or a friend
- who they can get help from at school

We encourage you to visit [www.sosignsof suicide.org/parent](http://www.sosignsof suicide.org/parent) for information on warning signs for youth suicide, to access useful resources, and to learn more about the key message all students will learn.

Along with the SOS lessons, your student will participate in a universal screening of their well-being. The screening tool used is the Behavior Intervention Monitoring and Assessment System, Second Edition (BIMAS2). The BIMAS2 provides a range of information regarding the academic, emotional, social, and behavioral functioning of school-aged youth. For students who may benefit from support, the Mental Health Assistance Team (MHAT) is offering a variety of evidence-based mental health services. As a part of the screening process, we will communicate with you if we have concerns for your student’s well-being and safety. The information received from the BIMAS2 screener will be reviewed by the school-based support team to consider the well-being of students.

Thank you for your partnership and support. If you have questions or concerns about the SOS lessons, the BIMAS2 screener, or the Mental Health Assistance Team, please feel free to contact Layne Barker, Signs of Suicide Coordinator, [barkerk@bsd405.org](mailto:barkerk@bsd405.org), 425-456-6711.

**If you wish to have your student participate in the SOS lesson and the BIMAS2 screener, NO FURTHER ACTION is needed.**

**If you wish to opt your student out from participating in the SOS lesson and/or the BIMAS2 screener, please complete the attached Opt Out form and return to [barkerk@bsd405.org](mailto:barkerk@bsd405.org) no later than Friday November 12, 2021.**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I opt out my student from participating in the Signs of Suicide Lesson.

\_\_\_\_ I opt out my student from participating in the BIMAS2 Screener.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_