



September 2023

Dear LRMS 7th Grade Parents:

The teen years are marked by a roller-coaster of emotions. It can be easy to misread depression as normal adolescent turmoil; however, depression and anxiety appear to be occurring more often and at a much earlier age. Depression, the most common of mental illnesses, can lead to suicidal thoughts and actions. In fact, suicide is the second leading cause of death among those 14-24 years of age. The good news is that depression can be treated and cured, and suicide can be prevented.

To proactively address this issue, we are presenting the Signs of Suicide (SOS) and Depression program here at Ladera Ranch Middle School. This program has been used by thousands of schools in the USA for over twelve years. Data shows that this program increases awareness of depression and help-seeking behaviors of adolescents. As a result, it has helped reduce suicide attempts.

Our goals in presenting this program are straightforward:

- * To help our students understand that depression is treatable and help them assess whether or not they may have symptoms consistent with depression.
- * To explain that suicide is preventable.
- * To provide students training in how to identify serious depression and potential suicidal ideation.
- * 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.

We encourage parents and guardians to speak with their child after the presentation. **All 7th grade students will be receiving their lesson through their Science classes on the following dates: Mr. Lopez, 9/18; Mr. Rodin, 9/19; Mrs. O'Donovan, 9/20.** If you have any questions or concerns about this program, please contact Mr. Tom Bogiatzis, school counselor at 949-234-5922 or email tbogiatzis@capousd.org

Parents, please click the following link ONLY if you DO NOT want your child to participate in the SOS prevention program: [SOS OPT - OUT FORM](#) (Students not participating in this lesson will have an independent study in the library)

Lastly, we have pre-recorded a parent information video to inform you about the SOS program as well as how to best support your child if they are struggling with depression. Please click the following link to watch the video:

[SOS Parent/Guardian Video](#)

Sincerely,

Mr. Bogiatzis, Mrs. Burke, Ms. Graffeo

LRMS School Counselors

