



George W. Bush Elementary School
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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. All 7th and 10th graders will participate.

SOS has been used by thousands of schools over the past few decades. Studies have shown that it effectively teaches students about depression and suicide while reducing the number of students' self-reported suicide attempts.

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.

We will host a parent workshop on **Thursday April 22nd from 5-6pm during our Parent Coffee Hour** for parents interested in learning more about this program. We also encourage you to visit www.sosignsofsuicide.org/parent for information on warning signs for youth suicide, useful resources, and some of the key messages students will learn.

We are including:

- An infographic for you to reinforce the ACT message at home
- The "What If List" sheet with community resources

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's participation in this program, please contact me at **209-283-1775 Mon-Friday from 8am-3pm** or email nlyles@stocktonusd.net or any of our school counselors. Counselor information can also be found on our school website <https://www.stocktonusd.net/domain/4093>.

Sincerely,
Middle School Counselor, Natalie Lyles

Natalie Lyles