

NPMS COUNSELORS AND SOCIAL WORKERS

DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

[SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2022]

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES AT NPMS:

Welcome back to another great year at NPMS!

We are so thrilled to be able to bring back our Food for Families program for the year. New Prague Middle School believes in supporting children in all areas of development. NPMS is continuing to partner with the Peace Center of New Prague to provide additional resources for anyone in our school in need of food assistance, with the backpack program we call Food for Families. At the end of each week, one backpack filled with food will be sent home per family. If this is a resource that you would like to sign up for, please feel free to reach out to our school support services staff. We are looking to start sending backpacks home with students around the middle of October. We hope to hear from you. If at any point throughout the year your family situation changes, please contact us at any time to discuss accessing this resource. If your family would like to take part in Food for Families, or have any additional questions, please feel free to reach out to our school support services staff:

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FAMILY CORNER:

Mental health is important at every stage of development and supporting the mental health of our middle school students is a strong priority at NPMS. The mental health of our students is consequential as it impacts student choices, the way they feel and respond to stress. September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. As family members, parent(s)/guardians, educators and community members, it is important to have an understanding of key elements of suicide prevention. Prior to the start of the pandemic, rates of suicide in youth in the United States were the highest in record history, rising by 35 percent since the start of the 21st century (CDC, 2020). In the last decade, teens admitted to children's hospital resulting from self-harm or suicidal thoughts has more than doubled during the last decade ([AAP, 2018](#)). Research supports that the pandemic worsened the teen mental health crisis that continues to be an ongoing challenge. Specifically, the [CDC](#) reports, the number of individuals, including adolescents and teens experiencing depression and thoughts of suicide has nearly doubled compared to previous years.

Adolescent/Teen Suicide Risk Factors/Warning Signs:

- Physical symptoms, including changes in eating and sleeping patterns
- History of depression or other mental illness
- Experiencing hopelessness
- Withdrawal/isolation
- Current or prior history of trauma
- Hygiene Change
- Impulsive or aggressive tendencies
- Self-destructive acts/risk taking behaviors
- Chronic Truancy, running away
- Perfectionism

Adolescent/Teen Suicide Prevention:

- Family and community support
 - Social involvement
 - Feeling connected to school and other social institutions
 - Tools for coping and regulating emotions/stress management
 - Skills in problem solving and conflict resolution
 - Access to medical care for mental health and physical health
 - Healthy relaxation methods
 - Strong sense of cultural identity
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How to Help:

- Ask. Never be afraid to ask if someone you care about is safe or thinking of hurting themselves.
- Keep them Safe
- Be there
- Help them connect. Dialing [988](tel:988) or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) is a good place to start

NPMS RESOURCE PAGE

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES:

Commonsense Media has put together a list of [mental health apps](#) for you or your child's devices that are centered around improving mental health during these uncertain times. Aside from general health apps, these mental health apps focus specifically on coping with anxiety, depression, and other difficult circumstances via meditation, connection, and other techniques. Especially when used in conjunction with other approaches, these apps might offer teens a little peace of mind! New Prague Middle Schools Counselors and Social Worker have also created a [website](#) where you can find mental health resources, community resources and more!

We are all in this together, and help is always available: If you're feeling alone and struggling, you can reach out to the **Crisis Text Line** by texting TALK to 741741 or **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** at 1-800-273-TALK. Also included below is local county crisis information.

Mental Health Crisis Resource Information:

- Scott County: Crisis Mobile Team: 952-818-3702
- Rice County: Crisis Mobile Team: 1-877-399-3040
- Le Sueur County: Crisis Mobile Team: 1-877-399-3040