



September 11, 2025

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

During this challenging year, school staff is 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. The information will be presented by OhioGuidestone.

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

On September 22nd, students in Government classes 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.

On September 25th, the students will complete a brief depression screening too. This tool cannot provide a diagnosis of depression but does indicate whether a young person should be referred for evaluation by a mental health professional. The students will also complete a School Climate survey. All students will be followed up by mental health professionals.

We 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.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's participation in this program please contact your child's School Counselor, Christine Diaz, (A-K) 988-1340 or Sarah Rigda (L-Z) 988-1400.

Christine Diaz and Sarah Rigda
Amherst Steele School Counselors