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**OSAGE COUNTY R-III  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
143 E. Main, P.O. Box 37,  
Westphalia, MO 65085  
Phone (573)455-2375 Fax (573)455-9884  
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December 18, 2018

Dear parent or guardian:

Did you know that, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Preventions (CDC), suicide is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for U.S. children and adolescents ages 11-18? Also, the prevalence of depression in adolescents and young adults is on the rise, increasing from 8.7% in 2006 to 11.3% in 2014. This problem has been linked to poor performance in school, substance abuse, feelings of worthlessness, and suicide.

The administrators and counselors of Fatima High School are aware of the problems our students might be facing, and we want to help keep our kids safe from these and other problems. Therefore we are implementing a suicide prevention training program. Our students will be assessed for suicidal tendencies and given information about what to do if they are feeling suicidal. They will also learn the signs of suicide and the steps that must be taken to stop a person from committing if they are feeling depressed and/or suicidal. This will take place the morning of January 8<sup>th</sup>, and any students who express suicidal ideations will be spoken to that day.

We will also host a program called "Training Trusted Adults" that evening to teach the warning signs and the protective factors of suicide so we can reduce the risk of suicidal behavior in our communities. Participants will watch an informative video, and then we will have time for discussion and question/answer time. The program will start at 6:00 p.m. and will be held in the multipurpose room. Any and all adults are welcome to attend.

We realize that this topic is quite sensitive, but studies have shown that talking about suicide does NOT increase the chances of it happening. We also realize that many people in our community have been personally touched by this prevalent problem. Therefore, if you wish that your student not participate in this program, please let us know by calling the high school counselor, Donna Mueller, at (573) 455-2375.

If you have any questions or need any assistance, feel free to call the high school counselor at (573) 455-2375 ext. 118 or email [muellerd@fatimacomets.org](mailto:muellerd@fatimacomets.org).

Sincerely,

Donna Mueller  
High School Counselor

Jeff Buthod  
High School Principal