

# Grant Us Hope

January  
2019

Ohio and Northern Kentucky's provider of Hope Squad

## OHIO HOPE SQUAD SCHOOLS

Aiken High School  
Anderson High School  
Beavercreek Ankeney MS  
Beavercreek Coy MS  
Cincinnati Hills Christian  
Deer Park High School  
Fairfield Creekside MS  
Fairfield Crossroads MS  
Fairfield Freshman  
Gamble Montessori  
Hilliard Bradley HS  
Hilliard Darby HS  
Hilliard Davidson HS  
Hilliard Heritage MS  
Hilliard Memorial MS  
Hilliard Weaver MS  
Kettering Fairmont HS  
Kettering Middle School  
Kettering VanBuren MS  
Kings High School  
Kings Junior High  
Lakota East HS  
Lakota West HS  
Lebanon High School  
Lebanon Junior HS  
Louisville High School  
Loveland HS  
Loveland Middle  
Loveland Intermediate  
Madeira High School  
Mason High School  
Mason Middle School  
McNicholas High School  
Milford High School  
Middletown High School  
Nagel Middle School  
Norwood High School  
Oak Hills High School  
Princeton High School  
Princeton Middle School  
Reynoldsburg Encore  
Reynoldsburg eSTEM  
Ross High School  
St. Margaret of York  
St. Ursula Academy  
S.C.P.A.  
Springfield High School  
Summit Country Day  
Talawanda High School  
Taylor High School  
Taylor Middle School  
Turpin High School  
Tuskarawas Valley High School  
West Clermont High School  
West Clermont Middle  
Whitehall Rosemore MS  
Whitehall Yearling High School

## Grant Us Hope Keeps Growing

It is hard to believe that one year ago, GUH had begun discussions with just three Cincinnati schools who were interested in launching Hope Squads. As of January 1, 2019, we have 24 active Hope Squads across Ohio and have begun work with 33 new schools who will be ready to launch in late spring.

Included in the spring group are fifteen urban schools who are starting the program courtesy of the Ohio Attorney General's Office. Thanks to then AG and now Ohio Governor Mike Dewine, the following schools will have Hope Squads by April.

Aiken High School – Cincinnati Public  
Creekside Middle School – Fairfield City  
Crossroads Middle School – Fairfield City  
Deer Park High School – Deer Park Schools  
Gamble Montessori School – Cincinnati Public  
Middletown High School – Middletown City  
Norwood High School – Norwood City  
Princeton High School – Princeton City  
Princeton Middle School – Princeton City  
Reynoldsburg HS Encore Academy - Reynoldsburg  
Reynoldsburg HS eSTEM Academy - Reynoldsburg  
School for the Creative/Performing Arts – Cincinnati Public  
Springfield High School – Springfield City  
Rosemore Middle School – Whitehall City  
Yearling High School – Whitehall City

Congratulations to these schools. We look forward to helping you make a difference in the lives of your students.

## What's in this Month's Newsletter

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- Grant Us Hope continues to expand its footprint with Hope Squad
- 2019 Hope Squad Conference

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- 5 Tips for Parents Talking about Suicide
- IS PATH WARM – Suicide Warning Signs

### Page 4

- Suicide Prevention Starts Now



grant us HOPE

because YOUR life matters

## 2019 Hope Squad Conference

# CONNECTING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Monday, March 11, 2019

Sharonville Convention Center

More information about registering for the conference will be sent to Hope Squad Advisors in early February.



Principal: Dr. Stace Orso  
Advisors: Corrie Madden  
Sean Maher

Mascot: Wildcats

# of Members: 16

Launched: 2018-2019



**HOPE**  
S Q U A D



Ohio Hope Squad of the Month:

## DEER PARK WILDCATS

Like many communities, Deer Park has experienced the effects of the diseases of despair. Compounding these effects is the fact that Deer Park is a small, tight-knit community; thus, the impact of suicide and addiction are broadly felt. Our district enrollment is around 1500 students and most community members have ties to our school system. A string of suicides struck our school and larger community over the course of two consecutive school years beginning in 2013. Prior, there had been a sense that social isolation was nearly impossible in a school and community like ours. Everybody knows everybody.

Establishing Hope Squad is the latest in a string of interventions and programs we have implemented to deal with the larger social/emotional needs of our students. Importantly, for the past 5 years we have hosted in-house mental health service providers, beginning with Talbert House and now Children's Home. Additionally, since the beginning of Dr. Stace Orso's tenure as Deer Park Jr./Sr. High School principal, we have provided a range of programming and experiences that include Be the Difference, Youth Coalition, and PBIS. The past two years have seen the implementation of our H3 room and Restorative Practices. Our H3 room serves as a safe place where students experiencing difficulties can find peace and constructive conversation to help them return to the classroom. Some of our Hope Squad members help staff the H3 room during the day to serve as an additional layer of support for peers that need to process. Through Restorative Practices, we engage our students in weekly, small group conversations aimed at problem solving and sharing.

In the Spring of 2018, Dr. Orso proposed establishing a Hope Squad at the Jr/Sr High School beginning with the 2018/19 school year. Grant Us Hope was invited to present the Hope Squad concept to our staff. With the help of our two advisors, Corrie Madden (counselor) and Sean Maher (social studies teacher), the selection process commenced. All grade 9-12 students were polled on what peers they felt they could talk to. From that list, we selected a group of 20 students (5 per grade level) to launch Hope Squad.

Currently, we are in the process of rolling out the program. Our Hope Squad meets everyday for 30 minutes, though we are not always conducting Hope Squad business during that time. About twice per month, the advisors facilitate the curricular lessons. Our Hope Squad members have cheerfully embraced their roles and are looking forward to creating a positive and impactful addition to our community.

NATIONAL  
**SUICIDE  
PREVENTION**  
LIFELINE™  
I-800-273-TALK  
[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

## 5 Tips for Parents: Talking About Suicide

1. Manage your own emotions. Remaining calm helps keep the door of communication open between you and your child.
2. Invite and allow your child to speak, being careful not to dominate the conversation.
3. Prioritize time to have these conversations often and when you can maintain a calm listening stance.
4. Ask questions to your child in a direct manner. Ask if they are thinking of harming themselves or thinking of suicide.
5. If your child shares they have thoughts of wanting to die or hurt themselves, listen while remaining calm. Ensure safety, by removing access to knives, firearms, medications, or other means that could be used to hurt themselves. Ask questions in a caring way and express a need to connect them to other supports to help. Call 911, go to the Emergency Room, or call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255), if needed.

## PARENT-TEEN CONVERSATION STARTER

Be creative in making the conversation feel easier to have. Begin by watching together the popular YouTube music video "Bend Not Break," by Alex Boye'. Then discuss ways they can "bend" rather than "break" in handling hopelessness or other life struggles.

## Warning Signs of Emotional Struggles

Early recognition is key to overcoming challenges. Signs your child may be struggling emotionally include:

- Loss of interest in usual activities
- Mood or behavior changes including appetite and sleep
- Withdrawing or isolating
- Taking excessive risks or behaving recklessly
- Repeated unexplained body aches and pains
- Anxiety interfering with activities
- Frequent anger, irritability, criticizing, or tantrums
- Change in academic performance
- Preoccupation with death or dying
- Talking about wanting to die or being a burden

## How to Get Help

If your child is not responding to support being offered, not improving, or worsening, seek help by consulting with a medical or mental health professional. If having thoughts of suicide or feeling unable to keep yourself safe, call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Room.

## I.S. P.A.T.H. W.A.R.M? - Warning Signs

**I**deation – Threatening or communicated thoughts of wanting to hurt self or die

**S**ubstance Abuse – Increased or excessive use of substances such as alcohol, drugs, prescription or over-the-counter medication.

**P**urposeless – Feeling there is no reason for living or sense of purpose in life

**A**nxiety – In addition to anxiety, watch for agitation, being unable to sleep or sleeping all of the time

**T**rapped – Feeling as if one has no way out

**H**opelessness – The feeling that nothing will get better

**W**ithdrawal – From friends, family, and society

**A**nger – Uncontrolled, rage, revenge-seeking

**R**ecklessness – Engaging in reckless behaviors, or seeming to act without thinking

**M**ood Changes – Dramatic shifts from positive to negative and from negative to positive

# SUICIDE PREVENTION STARTS NOW

Ninety percent of individuals who die by suicide experienced some form of mental illness. Know the signs and risk factors of mental illness and suicide so you can respond proactively. Below is a list, although not exhaustive, of factors that could increase your child's risk.

- Mental illness/psychiatric diagnosis
- Family history of suicide
- Exposure to suicide
- Family history of mental illness
- Physical/sexual abuse
- Losses
- Aggressive behavior
- Impulsivity
- Lack of social support/social isolation
- Poor coping skills
- Access to ways of harming oneself, like guns, knives, medication, etc.
- Difficulties in dealing with sexual orientation
- Physical illness
- Family disruptions (divorce or problems with the law)
- Traumatic event

Working to prevent suicide includes watching for warning signs, asking directly "Have you had thoughts of wanting to hurt yourself or die," expressing care, concern and a desire to help and connecting the individual to qualified help. Many parents are concerned asking about these thoughts will introduce the idea of suicide to their child. Studies indicate this is not the case. Sometimes, children and teens withhold sharing they are experiencing thoughts of wanting to hurt themselves or die because of concern of how parents will react. Direct, non-judgmental questions can encourage sharing of thoughts and feelings. If you suspect they are suicidal, get help immediately.

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because **YOUR** life matters 

## WE HAVE MOVED!



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**PLEASE UPDATE YOUR RECORDS**