

SOS Depression Screening at TJ

Frequently Asked Questions

- ❖ **What will my son/daughter do if he/she has opted-out of the program?**
 - There will be an alternative location designated within the building for students who have opted-out of the screening program. The screening program will last approximately one hour, after which students who have opted out may return to their class.
- ❖ **Can my son/daughter view the video only, but opt-out of the questionnaire?**
 - At this time, there is only the option to opt-out of the full program.
- ❖ **Are parents allowed to see their student's completed form?**
 - By default, all completed forms will be shredded at the conclusion of the screening and follow-up intervention if needed, with neither parents nor students having access to the form once it is submitted by the student. However, completed questionnaires will play a key role in follow-up with at-risk students and parents/guardians; as such, parents may have access to the completed form in those situations.
- ❖ **Who is on the depression screening team?**
 - The screening team is comprised of the student services department (counselors and Director of Student Services), the school psychologist, the social worker, and the special education coordinator. All members of the team have a clinical skill set and have undergone training for the SOS program.
- ❖ **What becomes of the questionnaire after the screening?**
 - Student responses on the questionnaire will be kept confidential at all times. Student privacy is enhanced by using ID only as an identifier on the forms. For students who require follow-up, the questionnaire will be used as a reference point for discussion and interview with the student/parents. Only non-identifiable data will be collected by the screening team (e.g. number of students screened, number requiring follow-up, etc.). This data will be shared with the TJ community after completion of the screenings. All questionnaires will be shredded once students have received necessary intervention.
- ❖ **I have more questions and would like to speak to someone—who should I reach out to?**
 - Please direct further questions about the SOS depression screening program to Greg Myers, but realize that not all questions may be answered immediately due to the large number of emails/phone calls typically received for programs such as this. Remember that if you are not completely comfortable with this screening program, you have the right to decline your child's participation by returning the opt-out form that has been sent to you, or by simply emailing Greg Myers at gdm Myers@fcps.edu. *However, please also realize that it is FCPS policy that any time a concern is brought to the attention of school staff that represents a potential threat to your child's safety or the safety of other persons in the school, it may be necessary to conduct a risk assessment prior to receiving parent consent.*

- ❖ **Are you recording the results for statistical purposes?**
 - Some results may be recorded for statistical purposes, but no identifying data will be recorded and all questionnaires will be shredded at the conclusion of the program and all necessary follow-up interventions. Statistical data and outcomes of the program will be shared back with the TJ community.
- ❖ **What will happen if my child is identified with symptoms of depression?**
 - If a student is identified as highly at-risk for depression or suicidal thinking, according to the protocol of the SOS program, a member of the screening team will contact parent(s)/guardian(s) and meet with the student by the end of the school day. If by some unexpected circumstance, a student who is deemed at-risk has not met with a member of the screening team by the end of the school day, parents will be contacted and verbal permission will be sought before allowing the student to go home. If a student is deemed highly at-risk for self-harm or suicide, per FCPS protocol, that student will remain under staff supervision and only be released to a parent/guardian.
- ❖ **Can I opt-out my child via email?**
 - Yes, you may opt-out via an email response to Greg Myers (gdm Myers@fcps.edu).
- ❖ **Why are other classes not included in this screening? Are there plans to offer education/resources/screening to these students?**
 - All TJ students going forward will have had the opportunity to participate in a depression screening twice before graduating. Starting with the Class of 2017, screenings will be administered during freshman and junior years. TJ students of all ages face various risk factors for depression; an argument can be made for any high school grade level that its particular challenges are significant. In light of the intense demands on the screening team of running this program—while also providing essential services that cannot be suspended—the TJ depression screening team decided to focus on the freshman and junior classes for the SOS program. Other means of offering education and support for sophomores and seniors are being considered.