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SOURCES | **OHIO**
OF STRENGTH

Adult Advisor Packet for the HB123 Approach

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Download a digital copy of the AA Packet on SourcesofStrengthOhio.org.

OHIO'S SAVE STUDENTS ACT

The SAVE (Safety and Violence Education) Students Act, also known as House Bill 123 (HB123), was passed by the Ohio General Assembly in late 2020. The goal of the legislation is to increase students' emotional and physical safety by integrating evidence-based safety training and programming into schools. This includes suicide prevention, violence prevention, and social inclusion, as well as threat assessment teams and training, anonymous reporting systems, and emergency management plans. We're going to focus on the suicide prevention components, but just know there are additional requirements beyond the scope of today's presentation that help schools develop a comprehensive approach to student safety.

What does the SAVE Students Act Require Schools to Do?

Starting with the 2023-2024 school year, schools are required to implement an evidence-based suicide awareness and prevention program. This program must be on the list of approved programs maintained by the Ohio Department of Education, and the program implementation must engage all students in grades 6 – 12 for at least one hour or one standard class period per year.

What are the requirements of the approved programs?

In addition to the above, approved programs must be evidence-based and cover the following content:

How to instruct school personnel to identify the signs and symptoms of depression, suicide, and self-harm in students.

How to instruct students to identify the signs and symptoms of depression, suicide, and self-harm in their peers.

How to teach appropriate mental health services within schools and within larger communities, and when and how to refer youth and their families to those services.

How to teach students about mental health and depression, warning signs of suicide, and the importance of and processes for seeking help on behalf of self and peers reporting of these behaviors.

How to identify observable warning signs and signals of individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others.

The importance of taking threats seriously and seeking help.

For more information on the SAVE Students Act, visit <https://education.ohio.gov> and search "SAVE Students Act."

For more information on how to ensure your school's implementation of Sources of Strength aligns with the SAVE Students Act, refer to your Campaign Planning Templates.

RISK FACTORS AND WARNING SIGNS

Exhibit B

Time

25 minutes

Materials

Peer Leader Guides

Key Point

In addition to the warning signs already named, a suicidal person may be impacted by trauma, substance abuse, aggressive/impulsive behaviors, and/or depression. We need to pay attention to the risk factors and warning signs for suicide.

Trainer Overview

Although students may be aware of many of the warning signs for suicide, we want to highlight some of the most common risk factors to be aware of before shifting into a conversation of how to connect to help in the next module. While Sources of Strength spends about 90% of our time focusing on upstream prevention, this module and the following is where we focus about 10% of our time on risk factors, warning signs, and intervention.

Core Risk Factors

Have the group open the Peer Leader Guide to the page titled: Suicide Risk Factors and Warning Signs for Youth and Young Adults. Use a calm and matter-of-fact tone as you continue the conversation about the risk factors and warning signs for suicide. In addition to many of the warning signs that were named in the initial brainstorm, highlight the four risk factors listed in the concentric circles on the Peer Leader Guide.

TRAINER TIP

You can ask the Adult Advisors in advance if the Peer Leaders have already been made aware of the risk factors and warning signs around suicide that year. If so, the trainer can shorten and simplify this module.

“Open up your Peer Leader Guides to the middle where it says ‘Suicide Risk Factors and Warning Signs for Youth and Young Adults’. You can see there is a bulleted list here of some of the potential warning signs of suicide. You all just listed many of these and I would encourage you to read through this list and discuss it in more detail in a follow up meeting with your team. Right now, I want to take a few minutes to highlight the four circles at the top of that page. These are all considered risk factors for suicide. Experiencing these things doesn’t necessarily mean someone will become suicidal, but they can be associated with higher risk and are things we want to pay attention to.”

Substance Abuse

“That first one is substance abuse. Research shows that approximately 60-65% of suicide attempts amongst teens and young adults happen when they are using drugs or alcohol. Sometimes people will make jokes or comments about suicide when they are drunk or high, and their friends might not take them as seriously. They might think ‘they are just drunk, they don’t really mean that.’ However, typically when someone makes those jokes or comments, they have been feeling that way for some time and because they are drunk or high they are finally giving voice to it. We know that when people are under the influence of drugs or alcohol their inhibitions are lowered and their impulsivity is raised. Coupling that with suicidal thinking can be a really dangerous combination, and we want to take that situation really seriously. We want to stay with them to make sure they are safe and we want to invite someone else into that situation, getting a Trusted Adult involved, calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, or calling 911.”

Trauma

“Trauma is another significant risk factor. A trauma could be an accident or loss, or it could be exposure to harassment, violence, or abuse. It could sometimes look like a traumatic brain injury, a concussion that leads to serious mood swings and erratic behavior. A trauma might be something that doesn’t go away very easily and has a sustained impact on a person’s life.”

“When we have a friend that we know has experienced trauma, whether that was a loss of a loved one, harassment, an injury, or something else, we want to make sure we are checking in on them and how they are doing. It often takes time to heal from traumatic

events, so it is important to keep checking in and making sure that our friend is getting the help they need and deserve to move through and heal from that traumatic experience.

“It can also be traumatic if you come to school feeling like you are walking into enemy territory. It can be particularly traumatizing if people are being harassed for their gender, sexuality, race, or culture. Part of your mission is to help students feel accepted and safe, no matter who they are. Research shows that members of the LGBTQ+ community are put at particularly high risk for suicide. Notice I said ‘put’ at risk, there is nothing about being trans or gay that makes someone at higher risk for suicide, rather they are put at greater risk by the way our society treats them. You can use your power as Peer Leaders to create the kind of culture in your school and community where everyone is safe, and where everyone belongs.”

Aggressive or Impulsive Behavior

“One risk factor that is often overlooked is aggressive or impulsive behavior. We often understand the isolating and withdrawing warning signs and see that someone might be struggling. However, aggressive and impulsive behavior prior to a suicide death is often even more common, and something we might be more likely to miss. Getting into fights, risky driving, punching holes in a wall, bringing a weapon to a party, dating violence, and other angry or aggressive behavior are all signs that someone might be struggling and could potentially be feeling suicidal. We want to make sure we are checking in on friends that we are seeing these behaviors in and connecting them to the help they need and deserve.”

Different Forms of Depression

Give quick examples of how people experience depression in different ways (loss, physical illness, Persistent Depressive Disorder, etc.). “The last circle is depression. It’s important to note that people might experience depression in a variety of ways. We are all likely to find ourselves feeling pretty sad or depressed at some point in our lives, but we often can put our finger on a cause. Maybe we have experienced a loss of some kind. A loss might be small and we might feel down for a bit, but quickly recover. Or it might be something big, like losing a family member or friend, and take some time to heal.

“Sometimes people can experience depression not because of something that happened in their life, but because of something that is happening in their body. Sometimes there is a chemical issue at play. There are various types of depression.”

It can be good to share an example here: “We once worked with a 16 year old with suicidal thoughts. He had several symptoms of depression but one of our Sources staff encouraged him to get a physical exam at the doctor. Some blood tests revealed that they had a thyroid condition. With thyroid medication, this teen’s suicidal thoughts disappeared within a month.

“One really common form of depression amongst teens and young adults is something called Persistent Depressive Disorder (previously known as Dysthymia).”

Ask the question (rhetorical):

“Have you ever been chest deep in a pool of water and tried to walk or run to the other side of the pool? That’s kind of what Persistent Depressive Disorder feels like; you can do it but it just takes a lot of work and energy. PDD might go on for months, but you can’t really put your finger on what’s wrong, like you might be able to with a specific loss. The problem with this is that most teens will self-diagnose, but they don’t diagnose themselves as having Persistent Depressive Disorder. Rather they think, ‘I’m lazy, stupid, just not good enough,’ and not that they have a form of depression that can be treated.

“Here’s the good news: nothing is wrong with you just because you may struggle with depression. It’s not a character problem, it’s a chemical issue. Just like having asthma doesn’t mean we are lazy or not athletic, some of the best athletes in the world have asthma, and they live healthy lives by getting the proper care and using an inhaler. In the same way, many people with depression live full and healthy lives with proper care and treatment. Depression is very often treatable, but we have to be willing to try different approaches. Possible treatments might include strengthening your Physical Health and Mental Health; taking medications, changing sleep habits, diet, exercise, talking to a therapist, joining a support group, and more.

“Sometimes we hear from people who say that they saw a therapist once and they didn’t hit it off with them, so they stopped therapy. That’s like going on one bad date

and never dating again. While it can be hard to find a good fit, it's important to continue to advocate for yourself or a person you care about to find a treatment that works. Sometimes you have to try a few different things to find what helps."

Relationship Breakups and Previous Attempts

If time allows, mention two more risk factors.

"Speaking of dating, another risk factor on the list I would like to mention is a breakup. I want to make it clear that we would never say that a breakup causes someone to be suicidal. However, it can be a triggering event for someone. Almost all of us are going to experience a breakup at some point. A breakup can be so painful, but it's almost inevitable, so it's important for us to talk about healthy ways to deal and heal from these kinds of losses, so that no one is put at a higher risk for suicide. And if we have a friend that we know has just gone through a breakup, it can be really important and helpful to continue to check in with them to see how they are handling that experience.

"The final risk factor I want to highlight today is previous attempts. A previous suicide attempt can put someone at higher risk of another attempt. If you or someone you know has previously attempted suicide, even if there was not a hospitalization or no one else knew, it's important to make sure that person has support from an adult that they trust who can continue to check in and support them."

Transition: "Let's talk about what we can do to connect someone to help if we see any of these risk factors or warning signs."

Key Summary

- When someone is thinking about suicide they may demonstrate warning signs that we want to notice and pay attention to.
- Someone considering suicide may have been impacted by these risk factors: trauma, substance use, aggressive/impulsive behaviors, and/or depression.

Notes:

TRAINER FEEDBACK TOOL: RISK FACTORS AND WARNING SIGNS

- Highlighted the four core risk factors listed in the Peer Leader Guide
 - Described substance abuse as a risk factor for youth and young adults
 - Described exposure to physical or emotional trauma and/or harassment motivated by sexual orientation, ethnicity, or race as a risk factor.
 - Described aggressive/impulsive behavior as an often overlooked risk factor
 - Described different reasons someone might experience depression
 - Loss
 - Chemical or hormonal imbalance in our body
 - Persistent Depressive Disorder
 - Reminded the room that depression is treatable, people can get better, and go on to live healthy lives
- Highlighted a few risk factors and warning signs listed in the Peer Leader Guide including:
 - Harassment of sexual orientation or gender identity
 - Break ups as a trigger event
 - Previous suicide attempts

PEER LEADER MISSION STATEMENT

SUICIDE RISK FACTORS AND WARNING SIGNS FOR YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

We Are Sources of Strength

We are a group of diverse **students and adults** from many different corners and cultures of our school and community. We believe that life has ups and downs, that all of us will go through good times and tough times. Our mission is to ensure that during the rough times no one gets so overwhelmed or hopeless that they want to give up.

Our mission is to **spread hope, help, and strength** into every corner of our community.

Our mission is to help students and staff turn to their strengths and their supports that are all around. We are **connectors** to help and strength.

Our mission recognizes that our voice has great power and we use it to **break the silence** when someone is struggling, and to connect them to the help they need and deserve.

We **spread hope** by focusing on stories of strength, rather than on stories of trauma. We know our most powerful impact comes from our personal actions, conversations, and messages that use our music, our art, our writing, our activities, our social media, our culture, and our voice. This gives life to our efforts.

We are Sources of Strength

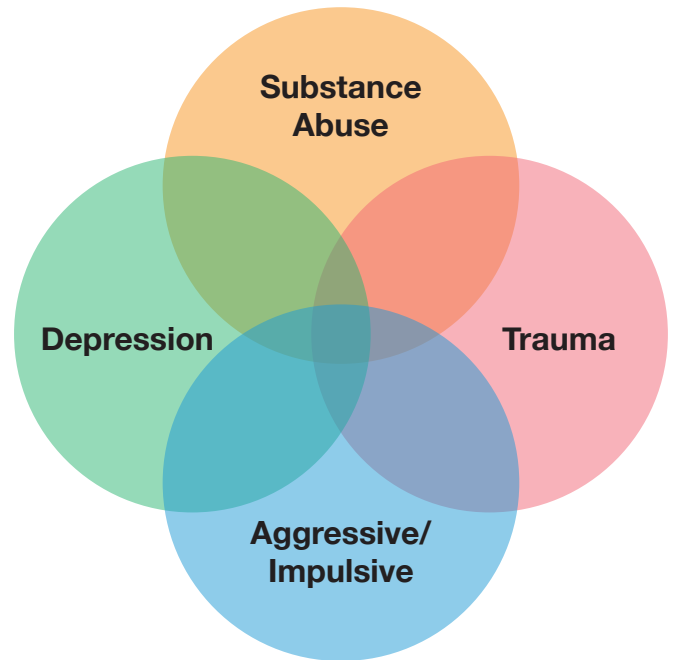
 /sourcesofstrength

 @sourcesofstrength

 @sourcesstrength

#sourcesofstrength

**IF YOU ARE NOT SURE WHAT TO DO
CALL THE NATIONAL LIFELINE:**



- Previous suicide attempts
- Depression, hopeless, helpless feelings
- Drinking, using drugs or heavy nicotine usage
- Increased anger, conflict, aggression, irritability
- Trauma incident – rape, abuse, harassment, fights
- Recent loss of family or friend by death or suicide
- Isolating behaviors toward friends, family & activities
- Risk taking behaviors – cars, weapons, sexual
- Injury or illness that disables – even temporarily
- Harassment of sexual orientation
- Talking or joking about suicide
- Doing poorly in school, skipping classes
- Death themes in music, writing or art
- Losing interest in things they used to enjoy
- Personal care & hygiene changes
- Sleeping, eating, concentration problems, crying
- Giving possessions away
- Substance Abuse is involved in over 65% of teen suicide attempts
- Relationship breakups can be trigger events

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**SOURCES
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SIGNIFICANT EVENTS AND PROTOCOL REVIEW

Exhibit D

Time

5-10 minutes

Materials

Suicide Intervention Protocol (Page 27)

Key Point

As a Sources of Strength team begins to function in a school and community, it's helpful to identify any recent significant events or losses that the Trainer should be aware of, and to ensure that the safety protocols and procedures are in place to connect suicidal students to help.

Trainer Overview

It is helpful for the Trainer (especially a Trainer from outside of the school or community) to know about any recent losses or significant events, particularly with regard to suicide and violence, that may impact the training. At this point, we also want to ensure that the school has a suicide intervention protocol in place and that staff are aware of and familiar with it. We also want to make sure the Adult Advisors feel prepared to respond to suicide risk that could be disclosed, and to connect any students to help in the future.

Recent Loss or Significant Events

"Do you all remember that story about the waterfall? The primary mission of a Sources of Strength team is to move upstream in the prevention cycle, but we do have a role to play in the intervention and postvention spaces as well, in those moments of crisis and after a loss. Speaking of postvention, I'd like to have a brief conversation about any recent loss or significant events that I should be aware of before the Peer Leader training. The intention with this question is not to gossip or bring up drama. It is simply helpful for me to know about any significant events or recent losses in the community so I can be aware as a facilitator and we can support any vulnerable students or staff who may be more likely to feel those big emotions. Is there anything you think I should be aware of?"

This section should be fairly brief and informational. As a Trainer, you should be compassionate and curious, but this is not a time to gossip or ask anyone to disclose unnecessary information.

Adult Advisors will typically share if there have been any recent losses; including deaths by suicide, high profile attempts, incidents of violence, natural disasters, etc. Staff also often share socio-economic or cultural information to give you a better idea of the community context. Take notes during this time and follow up with the administration or counseling team to ensure that you have an appropriate understanding.

If someone close to the school community has died, follow up by asking if that person's family members, friends, or classmates will be in the training. Inquire if the impacted student(s) know about the nature of the Peer Leader training. Although the training is Strengths-focused, it can sometimes be overwhelming for vulnerable participants or those who have recently experienced loss. Make a plan as to which Adult Advisors will help support those individuals with check-ins and partnering in the day's activities.

Note: If it comes to your attention that a Peer Leader has made a recent suicide attempt, we recommend that they wait at least 8-12 months before participating in a training. While they are welcome to participate in future campaign events, it is more important for them to focus on their healing in a supportive environment. We would say the same about a Peer Leader who has recently lost someone very close to them to suicide. While we believe that these students have great strength to offer, we want to make sure they have the time and space to focus on their own healing before being put into a prevention role. Make it clear that this student is welcome to attend meetings and participate in activities, but they should take some time to recover before they have a lead role in campaigns or Peer Leader meetings.

Once you have received the relevant information, thank the staff for their openness, and shift the conversation from the postvention realities to the intervention protocols.

Protocol Review

This is a good time to ask about the school or community protocol for referring suicidal students. In most cases there will be a protocol in place, even if the Adult Advisors are not immediately aware of what it is. Use the following questions to determine if there is an intervention protocol, if there is a point person, if this information is widely known, and if there is a postvention response protocol. If there is not a protocol in place, refer them to the Sources of Strength Suicide Intervention Protocol in chapter one or in the Adult Advisor Field Guide on page 125. If the Peer Leaders are connecting their friends to help, and reaching out to their Trusted Adults, then it is essential for staff to follow through and make the proper referrals. It is a good idea to clarify this protocol with the Adult Advisors and then suggest a review of this protocol at a staff meeting in the coming days or weeks, so that all school employees are aware of the protocol and informed of the proper procedures.

These questions should be asked with care and curiosity, this should not feel like an interrogation or quiz. If the Adult Advisors are unaware of the protocol, that is helpful information to know, as other staff are likely unaware as well, and we can make a plan to make sure everyone is brought up to speed.

- “Our research has shown that Peer Leaders are four times as likely to refer a suicidal friend to a Trusted Adult, so we need to make sure that our Trusted Adults know what to do when this happens.
- “Are you aware of your school’s protocol for handling a student in a suicidal crisis?
- “Are you all aware of the first steps taken when someone becomes aware of a suicidal student or young adult?
- “Who is the ‘go to’ person in the school, organization, or community to be contacted when someone becomes aware of a suicidal student or young adult?
- Has the entire staff been trained on this protocol? Have your new staff members been updated on this protocol each year?
- “Who is responsible for follow up support for a student after a risk assessment? After a hospitalization? When they return to school?

Note: If there is a disclosure in the training of a student contemplating violence to self, violence to others, or

that they are a victim of violence, respond immediately; do not wait until the end of the day.

“We particularly want to ensure that when Peer Leaders or other students become Connectors to Help and invite school staff to support a friend or fellow student in crisis, that all school staff know what the proper next steps are. When properly informed of a school’s protocol, staff can continue the chain of connection, getting people the help they need and deserve.”

“Although we don’t anticipate that students will disclose suicidal intent or ideation during the training, it is important to determine who, either in, or outside the training, we can invite in to offer support and conduct a risk assessment as needed.

- “If someone discloses suicidal ideation or intent during the Peer Leader training, who is the person in the building that we can invite in to offer them immediate support?”

TRAINER TIP

Avoid the term “hand-off” when describing suicide protocols and procedures. Instead consider using the term ‘invite in’ to reinforce that we want to wrap multiple supports around someone who is suicidal. Once you invite a Counselor, Mental Health, or Behavioral Health support into the process of supporting a suicidal student or young adult, you don’t stop providing support for them, your support simply takes the form of a Mentor or Positive Friend.

“Thank you for clarifying your safety protocols around suicide interventions. I expect our upcoming Peer Leader training to be a powerful time of connection, and I am confident that this conversation has helped to ensure that it can be a strong and brave space for everyone who participates.”

Transition: “Now that we have reviewed your intervention protocols, I want us to shift our focus back upstream.”

Key Summary

- Inquire if there have been any significant recent events that might impact the Peer Leader training.
- Identify if there are any students who may need additional support throughout the training.
- Follow up with appropriate staff members to prepare a supportive environment for potentially vulnerable Peer Leaders.
- Conduct a brief protocol review, to ensure that school staff know how to connect students to help when they or a Peer Leader are worried about someone who is or may be feeling suicidal.

Notes:

TRAINER FEEDBACK TOOL: SIGNIFICANT EVENTS, AND PROTOCOL REVIEW

- Facilitated a conversation about recent significant events, deaths, or attempts in the school or community.
- Reviewed the school/community suicide and safety protocols
- Identified a Trusted Adult that can be invited in to support a student if necessary during the training.
- Referenced Sources of Strength Suicide Intervention Protocol document (if applicable)

SUICIDE INTERVENTION PROTOCOL

As you are getting started, we know it is important that every school have a suicide intervention protocol in place. If Peer Leader teams are creating effective messaging and shifting culture around help-seeking, you can expect to see an increase in risk referrals after Sources of Strength is implemented. While this can be concerning, it often means that students and staff are watching out for each other and connecting others to help sooner or more often than they previously would have, breaking those codes of secrecy and silence. This is good! If your school already has a protocol in place, we recommend that you review it in staff meetings to ensure it is up to date and that all adults in the school are familiar with the actions they should take if they are concerned about someone in the school. Who should they go to with a concern? What is the plan for follow up after an intervention? Your protocol should answer these questions and include the information below.

Developing or strengthening a protocol for how to respond to a distressed or suicidal student is an important part of preparation for Sources of Strength. This protocol review includes basic suggestions to include in your policy and protocols, and in staff and volunteer training. This is not intended to replace or discard effective protocols that already exist, but to be used as a checklist and guide. If you do not currently have an updated document, here are some things to keep in mind.

Part 1: Importance of Bonding, Connectedness, and Relational Support

Research shows that long-term relational support is very effective in preventing young adults from becoming suicidal or acting on suicidal feelings and impulses. It is our policy that all staff and volunteers be intentional about developing caring relationships with students and young adults, especially those who report low levels of trust towards adults, or have few connections to supportive adult relationships. It is important that staff and volunteers have caring conversations with students during life's ups and downs, and not just during a crisis. Anyone working with young people can work towards being a Trusted Adult.

Sources of Strength is designed to help students and young adults develop multiple strengths and supports in their life, as represented in the Sources of Strength wheel. Staff and volunteers should play an intentional role in introducing students and young adults to a variety of Strengths.

It is our policy that staff and volunteers support the Peer Leaders trained in the Sources of Strength program as they deliver peer-to-peer Hope, Help, and Strength-based messages. Providing personal encouragement, sharing expertise, allowing access of approved Peer Leader messaging activities, and allowing time for Peer Leaders to participate in scheduled activities are examples of support. Trained Peer Leaders are often aware of suicidal peers much earlier than adult staff or volunteers, and they usually turn first to an adult they trust. They are an important partner in suicide prevention and their efforts should be encouraged and valued.

Part 2: Awareness of Warning Signs/Symptoms of Distress for Suicide

At the beginning of each year, the principal or lead administrator should arrange to have the staff and volunteers briefed on student self-destructive and suicidal behaviors. It is important to remember that suicidal ideation or behavior may be linked with isolating behavior often associated with depression, aggressive or impulsive behavior, substance abuse, trauma, or among friends of a student who has died by suicide or made attempts resulting in injury or hospitalization.

Part 3: Referral of Suicidal Student to Designated Staff

Each school or entity should have a person or group of individuals within the organization who are trained in handling a beginning level assessment, conversation, and referral process of a suicidal individual. It is mandatory that all staff and volunteers refer a student they suspect is suicidal or threatens to harm self or others to the designated staff person(s) that same day.

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to talk to young adults they identify as distressed or potentially suicidal, and in a caring and calm manner ask them if they are thinking of suicide, or of killing themselves. If an adult is not comfortable having this conversation with a student, a referral should be made to a counselor immediately. They should personally invite in the designated staff and introduce them. We want to 'invite others in' and not 'make a hand-off'. If the situation is a medical emergency, 911 should be called immediately.

Not all clinicians, or emergency service providers are socially, linguistically, culturally or contextually competent. Among BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities, there are documented incidents of risk and/or harm as they have sought emergency services. It is critically important to continue to advocate for emergency and intervention services to support ALL of our students and staff, regardless of racial/ethnic identity, gender, sexuality, class, age, religious affiliation, English proficiency, literacy and/or ability.

Part 4: Discussion with Student

The student should be:

- Privately assessed to determine the level of risk.
- Offered immediate support and assistance.
- If the student is determined to be at risk, they should be kept under constant adult supervision until parents/guardians or other protective custody can be arranged.

Part 5: Notifying Parents/Guardians

Contact the custodial parent/guardian regardless of the student's age, and ask them to come immediately to the school/agency/entity, or in some cases meet at a hospital or mental health clinic/provider. The custodial guardian should leave with the student after being supported and strongly encouraged to take them to a facility/treatment provider of their choice. These recommendations should be put in writing and sent to the guardians on formal letterhead. Explain that signing a Release of Information form from the treatment provider is very helpful. If the student is displaying signs and/or symptoms of suicide or homicide, and the guardian refuses to have them assessed, it may be necessary to contact your local child welfare or juvenile justice agencies.

Part 6: Mental Health Provider Contacts and Agreement

Your school or entity should have contacts or agreements in place with mental health providers who agree to provide same-day assessment of suicidal individuals. Depending on your region and availability, these providers may be emergency rooms, clinics, mental health facilities/centers, tele-health, or private providers. It is important for parents to be provided with a specific name and number, and it is usually best to assist the parent by making the call and appointment together. Always provide the student and parents with 24-hour phone contacts and hotline numbers to access. See opposite page.

Part 7: Follow-up and Providing Long-term Support

Upon returning from hospitalization, intervention, or treatment, encourage all individuals to use mental health and medical resources, but also engage them in conversations regarding other supports and Strengths using the Sources of Strength wheel as a guide. Help the student identify a supportive, caring adult who can be activated in support. This adult can be within their family system, school, faith community, etc. If an adult is mentioned by the student, assist in encouraging regular contact and supports that can last at least two years. Provide the adult with a brief training in suicide warning signs and who to contact if concerns arise. Help the adult understand that they are there as an older friend to walk alongside, not to fix all the student's problems. Also assist them in identifying some other interests around Healthy Activities, Generosity, Positive Friendships, or Spirituality. These other supports and strengths can be sustained over time and be extremely protective. See the Self Care Card on page 131 in the Field Guide.

Postvention: Next Steps


A school should also be aware of appropriate steps to take in the event of a death by suicide. The Suicide Prevention

Resource Center (SPRC) has created a Toolkit for Schools in the wake of a tragedy, which can be found for free online. Sources of Strength has also created a resource for utilizing Sources of Strength teams after a traumatic event, available at sourcesofstrength.org.

In general, your school should strive to treat each death within a school community the same way, taking care not to glamorize or memorialize the death. Work quickly to reach out to the young person's family, offering condolences, support, and to identify friends who may be in need of extra support.

Bring your Peer Leader team together, acknowledge the pain of the loss and remind them that the work they do is vital in the wake of a crisis. Ask them to keep their eyes and ears open to identify where there may be unresolved pockets of grief around the school and community that may benefit from extra support. Remind Peer Leaders that they are not junior psychologists or student counselors, but Connectors to Help and Agents of Change.

Additional postvention resources and documents can be found at sourcesofstrength.org. In the wake of a loss or a death in the school and/or community, please contact Sources of Strength. Our staff is available as a resource for your Sources of Strength team with meeting agendas, campaigns specifically geared towards Mental Health and help-seeking, as well as staff support.

	NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE:
	9 8 8
	Head Counselor Name: _____
	Number: _____


24/7 HOTLINE 1 - 8 6 6 - 4 8 8 - 7 3 8 6 www.thetrevorproject.org


THE STEVE FUND Text STEVE to 741-741 www.stevelfund.org

Local Crisis Lines:



Sources of Strength Campaign Planning

Campaign:			
Primary Goal:			
Start Date of Campaign:		End Date of Campaign:	
<p>Modalities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circle key modalities for your activities. <p><i>Need inspiration? Check out the Adult Advisor Field Guide or SourcesofStrength.org/campaigns/</i></p>			
<p>Instruction Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which modalities will your team use? Which grades or groups will you reach? Length of instruction time? Which Adult Advisors and Peer Leaders will be involved? Additional Adult support required? 	<p>Remember: Sources teams need to engage each student in at least one hour or standard class period of programming over the course of the year to meet requirements for the SAVE Students Act. To reach every student, it's important to track which students will be engaged in each activity. Are you focused on band students? The football team? Art classes? Math? Study hall?</p>		



Event Log

Record what happened. Stories, pictures, and videos.

Reflect and Share:

What We Did:

- How did your plan compare to the final product?

Who We Reached:

- Did you engage student listed in your plan?
- How will you follow up with the students you missed?

Length of Instructional Time:

- How much time did you spend in the classroom?

Final Steps:

- Do we need to follow up on anything else?

CAMPAIGN: *Getting the Word Out*

Summary: Now that you have completed Sources of Strength Peer Leader Training, it's time to start sharing Sources of Strength with the rest of your school and community. In your first planning meetings your team should brainstorm ways to introduce Sources of Strength to your school and community.

Goals:

- Introduce your Peer Leader team to the rest of the school and community.
- Allow the school to become familiar with the Sources of Strength wheel.
- Help individuals apply the Wheel to their own lives.
- Prepare the community to be watching for future events in which they are invited to participate.

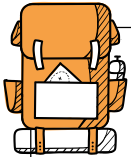
Research:

Research shows that positive personal stories, shared by people you are familiar with, can have a huge impact in the creation of positive social norms within a community.

Peer Leader Meeting

Fun: There are many games that you can play to break the ice and remind Peer Leaders of things they learned during their initial training. Generate excitement for individuals so they want to take what they learned at training out to their friends and classmates. For example, play the Chair Game and have Peer Leaders introduce themselves and share about which Strength is helping them that week.

Share: If this is the first meeting since your training, allow Peer Leaders to share some takeaways or thoughts they have had since then. Break into smaller groups and have Peer Leaders and Adult Advisors share which of the Strengths on the Wheel they are tapping into in this season.



FOR HELPFUL
DISCUSSION PROMPTS,
SEE PAGE [41](#).

Plan: Pull out your brainstorming sheets you worked on in the training. Your goal for the Getting the Word Out campaign is to start getting the message out about ways that we can grow in resilience: rather than focusing on one Strength, your team is introducing the entire Wheel. You may decide to have Peer Leaders return to their original poster group, or you may have already decided to focus on a few solid ideas. Start breaking down these ideas with

your Peer Leaders into attainable steps. Help them to be successful by guiding them towards realistic goals.

Help your Peer Leaders to remember that their goal is to use Hope, Help, and Strength to focus on making a difference. They need to come up with ideas that help others interact, engage, and apply Strength to their lives.

School Wide Campaign:

Now that you have explored the Wheel, consider how you will take it out to the rest of your school and community!

Mediums:

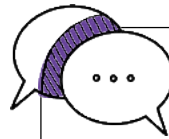
Here are some ideas that you could use to introduce the Wheel to your whole school. Don't be overwhelmed with these lists - you can pick one or two or even make up your own! Remember that these are only meant as suggestions: contextualize anything to make it work for your school and community!

Presentations

- Have Peer Leaders go to classrooms and present on all, or part of the Wheel. Ask students to identify two Strengths they are strong in, and one that they would like to grow in over the year.
- Bring poster boards into classrooms and lead students in the poster activity where everyone draws out the people, places, and things that make them stronger. Then, present briefly on the Wheel.

Classroom Integration

- English classes can read *Catcher In the Rye* and discuss the character of Holden. What Strengths did he have? How might life have looked different had he tapped into Strength?
- Ask history students to write a report on a period when a group or individual exhibited one or more of these Strengths for the greater good. For example, how did Americans at home during WWII exhibit Generosity? Family Support? Physical Health? Spirituality?
- Have Science students read different studies behind the benefits of being positive or thankful.
- Have a film class write case studies on especially resilient characters and what Strengths that individual tapped into.



“ASK YOURSELVES,
'WHO COULD
BENEFIT FROM ENGAGING
WITH STRENGTHS?' THE
ANSWER IS, 'EVERYONE!' SO
GET CREATIVE AND THINK
OF HOW TO ENGAGE WITH
ALL GROUPS ACROSS YOUR
SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY.”

Art, Mural, and Wall Displays

- Host a sidewalk chalk show where artists make live art outside the school with the theme “My Source of Strength.” As students, staff, and community members walk through, give them multiple opportunities to hear about the Wheel. Provide chalk to allow others to share their own Strengths.
- Have some Peer Leaders briefly explain the pieces of the Wheel. Fill water balloons with paint that matches the colors of the Wheel. Allow participants to pick a water balloon and share which area on the Wheel they have grown in during the last year. Have them throw the balloon at a giant blank canvas. Place this splatter painting on a wall with a short explanation of how we can tap into Strength to move through difficult times.
- Create a mural of the Wheel on a public wall or in a quad. Use this mural often to allow people to check in about their Strengths and create a school culture where sharing about Strengths is common.

All School Activities

- Post-It Note Challenge: Hang posters up around the school with the names of different Strengths on the top. Hand out markers and Post-It Notes, and ask your Peer Leader team to come up with 5-10 ways to practice the Strength listed on that poster. For example, a Generosity poster might say, “Bake cookies for a Trusted Adult,” “Pay for someone behind you in line at Starbucks,” “When someone drops something, pick it up,” “Volunteer at a local shelter,” “Put your phone down and have a real conversation with a friend or family member,” or “Do the dishes without being asked.” Then post a sign that encourages passers-by to take one of these notes and complete the challenge. You could then encourage them to post/share about it on social media using a hashtag.
- Create large paper chains where participants write down their Strengths on strips of paper. Connect all

of the strips and display the chain in a public place to remind the community of how strong they are.

Video and Photography

- Create a Peer Leader Mission Statement video where Peer Leaders and Adult Advisors read the Mission Statement together. Show this video in classrooms, during half times, in assemblies, on social media, the school website, the local television station, before movies in local theaters, etc.
- Have students take photos of themselves holding a prop representing something that is a source of Strength for them. It could be a camera, paint brushes, hugging a friend, standing with a teacher, palming a basketball, measuring cooking ingredients, etc. Print these photos and display them in a public place with a poster saying, "What are your Sources of Strength?"



"DON'T TAKE OVER
ANOTHER GOOD CLUB: JOIN
TOGETHER TO MAKE EVEN
MORE OF AN IMPACT!"

Social Media

- Host a photo booth with fun props and paper. Have participants write about a Strength in their life. (Example: "My dog Hank, who takes my mind off of stressful testing") Make it contagious by posting these photos on social media and tagging others to do the same.
- Film and post short form interviews where people are asked which Strength they have grown in during the last year.
- Include hashtags such as #MySourceOfStrength, #WhatsYourStrength, #ShowMeYourStrength, or make it personal to your school by using your name or mascot, such as #TitansUnited, #MustangsStrong, etc.

Audio: Music and Announcements

- Have Peer Leaders share two minute stories of Strength. Try to focus 10% of the story on what was difficult, and 90% on what helped them. Share one a day during morning announcements for a week.
- Take a poll of students favorite encouraging or pump-up song. Allow a Peer Leader to introduce why the chosen song is important to them and let it play during the passing period.

Modifications (if needed)

Make sure you are getting the word out to all corners of your school's social network, including alternative learning classrooms, part-time students, teachers and administration, immigrant populations, ELL students, sports teams, clubs, and special interest groups!

Ways to Partner With Other Entities

- Introduce yourselves to Student Council and invite them to work with you on projects that can make your community stronger.
- Throughout the year, think creatively about groups that may not be as included and invite them to work with you.
- Don't take over another good club: join together to make even more of an impact!

Evaluation (mini)

- Focus on successes with Peer Leaders.
- Celebrate and share stories of connection.
- Encourage staff and faculty to share what the event meant for them.
- Check your numbers:
 - How many Peer Leaders participated?
 - What percentage of students and staff participated?
- Consider what lessons were learned:
 - How could you increase or diversify participation? Did you keep it fun? Did you highlight stories of

- Strength? Was there diversity in your responses?
- Make note of what to keep in mind for next year.

Celebrate!

- Note what you accomplished as Adult Advisors.
- Share stories of connection with each other.
- Express gratitude for your team's ideas and efforts.
- Share stories of success in a newsletter to staff, board of education, parents, community, or other prevention groups.
- Tag us, #sourcesofstrength, so we can celebrate with you and share your great ideas with other teams around the world.

What's Next?

- Continue meeting as a Peer Leader team and plan your next campaign.



Sources of Strength Campaign Planning

Campaign: Getting the Word Out			
Primary Goal:	Introduce students and staff to the Sources of Strength Wheel and how it can be used to teach about mental health, resilience, and help seeking, including when a person is displaying warning signs or risk factors for depression, suicide, or self-harm.		
Start Date of Campaign:		End Date of Campaign:	
Modalities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circle key modalities for your activities. <p><i>Need inspiration? Check out the Adult Advisor Field Guide or SourcesofStrength.org/campaigns/</i></p>			
Instruction Details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which modalities will your team use? Which grades or groups will you reach? Length of instruction time? Which Adult Advisors and Peer Leaders will be involved? Additional Adult support required? 	Remember: Sources teams need to engage each student in at least one hour or standard class period of programming over the course of the year to meet requirements for the SAVE Students Act. To reach every student, it's important to track which students will be engaged in each activity. Are you focused on band students? The football team? Art classes? Math? Study hall?		



Event Log

Record what happened. Stories, pictures, and videos.

Reflect and Share:

What We Did:

- How did your plan compare to the final product?

Who We Reached:

- Did you engage student listed in your plan?
- How will you follow up with the students you missed?

Length of Instructional Time:

- How much time did you spend in the classroom?

Final Steps:

- Do we need to follow up on anything else?

CAMPAIGN:*Connect*

Summary: *The purpose of the Connect Campaign is to use positive social norming to break down codes of silence and secrecy, while increasing the acceptability of seeking help for one's self and for others, especially in the area of Mental Health. This is accomplished by creating space and opportunities for students and staff to share stories of times they either got connected during a difficult time in their lives, or connected someone else they saw struggling. As in all Sources of Strength campaigns, the goal is to create opportunities for the general population to engage, interact, and apply the principles underlying this campaign to their own lives and personal contexts. By creating space to tell personal stories of connection, the Connect Campaign contextualizes and normalizes help-seeking and the importance of getting connected to Mental Health during difficult times.*

Goals:

- Increase and normalize help-seeking behaviors.
- Decrease secrecy requests and codes of silence.
- Increase norms and knowledge around seeking Mental Health help through sharing our stories.
- Normalize the idea that asking for help is a sign of Strength, not a sign of weakness, and that getting help for a friend is being a good friend.
- Increase awareness of what resources and pathways are available for seeking help for oneself or a friend in the school or community.

Research:

- Young people are incredibly powerful in setting norms among their peers. While we often talk about negative norms, positive ideas and habits can also spread through social networks.

Peer Leader Meeting:

Fun: Peer Leaders love the game "Walk Around Cool". Play the game and then share a light teaching point about the importance of connection, asking for help, and looking for those who need connection. Other games could be "The Human Knot," "Hog Call," or "1, 2, 3 Look".



Share: In a large group, ask students about times that they have reached out and received help, or when they have reached out to another person to connect them to help. You might prep a Peer Leader with a good story ahead of time so that they can lead with an example: "My name is Angela, and I saw that a friend of mine on the volleyball team seemed to be struggling. She was missing practice and I felt like she looked really down. I texted her to ask if she was okay and at the end of our conversation, she agreed to go see Miss Sanchez, our school counselor about some stuff she was dealing with. She's doing a lot better now."

Plan: Move into a time of brainstorming about how you could help spread the norm of connecting others to help to the rest of your school. Remember, your goal is to reach 90% of students and staff with a message that breaking codes of silence and reaching out is something that makes individual and communities stronger.

School Wide Campaign:

Consider what could be hindering young people from reaching out for Mental Health support and work to remove those barriers by highlighting stories of Strength.

Mediums:

Presentations

- Allow students to present to younger classrooms about stories of help-seeking and connection. You could have a school counselor accompany the students so that everyone could meet them.
- Form teams of Peer Leaders to present at halftimes at sports games. Allow 2-3 Peer Leaders to briefly share a story of connection and remind people of resources available, whether at the school or in the community.



“IF PEER LEADERS SEEM NERVOUS TO START A CONVERSATION, IT CAN BE HELPFUL TO GIVE SMALL PRIZES, (STICKERS, SUNGLASSES, CANDY, FULL RIDES TO COLLEGE, ETC.) TO GET THINGS MOVING.”

Classroom Integration

- Study the impact of various therapies on a person's well being.
- Study and discuss Social Network Theory.
- Use a novel to discuss how a character seeks help to get through a difficult situation. Bring up the importance of multiple Strengths, and seeking out access to Physical and Mental Health support.

Art, Mural, and Wall Displays

- Create a poster campaign of students with stereotypical physical injuries to make a connection between getting access to, and using Physical and Mental Health resources, i.e., the hockey player with a blacked out tooth saying- “If I lost my tooth, I'd go to a dentist, and when I lost my way, I went to the school counselor.”
- Collect individuals stories of connection, starting with “I Got Connected” or “I Am a Connector”. Post these stories up in a colorful wall display.

All School Activities

- Host a basketball tournament where a counselor, social worker, or Trusted Adult is on every team. Several times throughout the event, have Peer Leaders share brief stories of connection and help-seeking. Have signs and posters up in the gym that reinforce help-seeking and breaking the silence when someone is struggling.
- Join together as a community to host a walk or a 5k to raise money and awareness for Mental Health resources, and to hear stories of Strength and connection from different perspectives across your community.
- Create a short survey, asking students if they feel they can reach out for help for themselves or others, and ways that the school might make it easier (“Have counselors in their office during lunch hours, post signs of how to find the office, etc.”)
- Explore help-seeking pathways amongst staff at your school or organization, as well. Who might benefit from additional opportunities for mentorship (or mentee-ship)?

Video and Photography

- Create a photo booth where students can take photos with someone they have connected to help, or holding up short stories of connection they have experienced. Print these photos and put them on display.
- Create a lighthearted and uplifting video with individuals sharing times that they have gotten connected or connected others to hope, help and Strength. Share this video on social media, in classrooms, during halftime shows, at pep rallies, during morning announcements, etc.
- Make a fun video introducing your school to the counselors and social workers at your school. Have the video include how to locate the counselors and social workers, provide their office hours, and give different ways to reach out.

Social Media

- Show short videos about how individuals were able to find help and healing through help-seeking for themselves or someone else.
- Create a fun Instagram or Snapchat story about how a person can find the school's counseling office.
- Take a portrait of each school counselor and social worker, and allow them to include a caption introducing themselves and inviting people to visit.

Audio: Music and Announcements

- Help Peer Leaders share a story of connection or help-seeking during morning announcements. Share appropriate resources available to students and staff.
- Host an open mic night where students can share stories of help-seeking and connection through their storytelling, poetry or music. It is advisable that an Adult Advisor listen to the entries ahead of time to check that they reinforce a message of Hope, Help, and Strength by centering 90% of the story on getting better rather than the difficult situation (See page [40](#) for more on the 90:10 ratio).

Modifications (if needed)

- Don't assume that all students could seek out a counselor (or even walk into their office) with ease. This can be a scary thing! Make sure there are multiple avenues for a student to get in contact with a counselor or social worker. Additionally, ensure that your school has culturally informed counselors in regards to religious practices, family engagement, and views of Mental Health.

Ways to Partner With Other Entities

- Invite the Student Council to co-host an event that focuses on connection to Mental Health and help-seeking.
- Talk to coaches about reminding athletes of resources available to them and the importance of refusing to keep secrets when a person needs help.

Evaluation (mini)

- Focus on successes with Peer Leaders.
- Celebrate and share stories of connection.
- Encourage staff and faculty to share what the event meant for them.
- Check your numbers:
 - How many Peer Leaders participated?
 - What percentage of students participated?
- Consider what lessons were learned
 - How could you increase or diversify participation? Did you keep it fun? Did you highlight student stories of Strength? Was there diversity in your responses?
 - Make note of what to keep in mind for next year.

Celebrate!

- Note what you accomplished as Adult Advisors.
- Share stories of connection with each other.
- Express gratitude.



Sources of Strength Campaign Planning

Campaign: Connect			
Primary Goal:	Use positive social norming to break down codes of silence and secrecy while increasing the acceptability of seeking help for one's self and for others, especially in the area of Mental Health.		
Start Date of Campaign:		End Date of Campaign:	
Modalities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circle key modalities for your activities. <p><i>Need inspiration? Check out the Adult Advisor Field Guide or SourcesofStrength.org/campaigns/</i></p>			
Instruction Details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which modalities will your team use? Which grades or groups will you reach? Length of instruction time? Which Adult Advisors and Peer Leaders will be involved? Additional Adult support required? 	Remember: Sources teams need to engage each student in at least one hour or standard class period of programming over the course of the year to meet requirements for the SAVE Students Act. To reach every student, it's important to track which students will be engaged in each activity. Are you focused on band students? The football team? Art classes? Math? Study hall?		



Event Log

Record what happened. Stories, pictures, and videos.

Reflect and Share:

What We Did:

- How did your plan compare to the final product?

Who We Reached:

- Did you engage student listed in your plan?
- How will you follow up with the students you missed?

Length of Instructional Time:

- How much time did you spend in the classroom?

Final Steps:

- Do we need to follow up on anything else?

CAMPAIGN:*Trusted Adults*

Summary: One of the best ways we can protect a young person from suicide is for them to have caring, connected, and positive adults in their lives. A Trusted Adult could be a parent, an older sibling, a relative, employer, teacher, coach, faith leader, or community member - anyone that a young person could reach out to. This campaign focuses on helping individuals identify, name and connect to an adult they could go to if they were experiencing a difficult time or if a friend needed help.

Goals:

- Increase youth/adult connectedness.
- Create a culture that increases students' belief that adults can help friends who are at risk and can be trusted in difficult times.
- Practice help seeking pathways.
- Use positive norming to encourage healthy trust and connection between youth and adults.



"A GREAT MENTOR IS
AN ADULT WHO SEES
WHO YOU REALLY ARE AND
BELIEVES IN YOU ANYWAY"
- HIGH SCHOOL PEER LEADER.

Research:

- A student who tells a Trusted Adult that they play an important role in their life is more likely to return to that adult during a difficult time.
- A student is more likely to go to a Trusted Adult if a trusted friend names an adult, and explains why they have earned their trust.
- Students who have a Trusted Adult they can go to have significantly lower suicide rates.

Peer Leader Meeting:

Fun: Take a survey of Trusted Adults around your school and create a Trusted Adult BINGO card. Have Peer Leaders sign the boxes of the Trusted Adult they named. Some boxes can be specific and others can be more general, like "My mom", "My grandfather", "My boss".

Share: Hand out postcards that say, "Thank You for Being a Source of Strength in My Life" and encourage students to write a short note thanking that person for showing up in their lives. Then encourage Peer Leaders to hand deliver their notes to the adults they named within the next 4-5 days. If you have already done this, have 5-10 Peer Leaders share with the group who they named as their Trusted Adult and why.

Plan: Discuss ideas about how to include 90% of your student body in this same process of identifying, connecting to, and sharing about their Trusted Adults.

School Wide Campaign:

- Now that you have planned your campaign, help your school and community grow in youth-adult connectedness. Here are some ideas you might want to layer in.

Mediums:**Presentations**

- Send trained Peer Leaders into classrooms to describe the value of Mentors and ask students to share their own Mentor stories.
- Have Peer Leaders attend a staff/faculty meeting to lead a short discussion about who their Mentors are;

have Peer Leaders lead staff in shouting out others they feel are good Mentors.

Classroom Integration

- Lead students in reading and discussion of the literary classic, *The Giver*. Is *The Giver* a Mentor to Jonas? If so, how?
- Read or watch *The Hunger Games* and compare and contrast the Mentor figures of Effie Trinket and Haymitch or Cinna.
- Read or watch *To Kill a Mockingbird* and examine the Mentor relationship of Atticus Finch to Jean Louise.

Art/Murals and Hall Displays

- Create hallway displays with Trusted Adults named during campaigns.
- Create a pair of paper wings where the feathers are names of Trusted Adults. Encourage students and staff to take photos in front of the wings and tag the photos on social media.

All School Activities

- Host a March Madness Mentor Month where the staff and faculty members who were named by students as Trusted Adults can participate in small competitions until one is left standing. Make the competitions fun and silly, i.e. which Mentor can fit the most marshmallows in their mouth at one time. Use the hashtag #MentorMadness to capture everything.
- Walk around the school with an empty frame and have students take photos with their Trusted Adults. Allow Peer Leaders to print these photos and give them to those adults to display in their classroom as a way of saying thank you for their support.

Video and Photography

- Interview Peer Leaders to share stories of their Trusted Adults in a short video which could be shown in classrooms, student news, on social media, or during assemblies.
- Host a Dress Like Your Mentor Day and take selfies at a photo booth - then print and hang up the photos!

Social Media

- Post selfies from the Trusted Adult photo booth on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat with a short caption describing why they were named. Then have Peer Leaders tag three friends to do the same.
- Post interesting Trusted Adult stories on social media, telling about times when an adult was helpful or supportive in a situation.
- Use hashtags like #Mentors, #TrustedAdults, #WholsYourTrustedAdult, #MyTrustedAdult, or make it reflect school spirit with your team or town, such as #TrustedEagles, #MentorsGiveGreeleyWings.

Audio: Music and Announcements

- Host "Mentor Mondays" where morning announcements feature a student sharing a story about their Mentor each Monday.
- Collect a favorite song from each teacher or staff member. Play a new song each week and give a prize to the student who can identify which mystery adult chose that song.

Ways to partner with other entities:

- Invite the National Honor Society to help sponsor the event.
- Ask student clubs, athletic teams, and groups to participate.



"HAVE STUDENTS INCLUDE THEIR NAME AND THE NAME OF THEIR TRUSTED ADULT IN THE DISPLAYS. THIS MAKES THEM MORE PERSONAL AND CAN ALSO HELP STUDENTS LOOKING FOR A TRUSTED ADULT GET CONNECTED."

- Make sure that teachers, coaches, paras, and community leaders know about the event and are invited to participate.

Modifications (if applicable)

- These campaigns can be applied outside of a traditional school context, such as youth detention facilities, a recently reorganized school, or an environment with low adult-student relationships, but they may take some extra work and care. Before engaging in a large-scale Trusted Adult Campaign, have staff dedicate time to building one-on-one relationships with students. This can be in the form of circle sharing during “Community Meetings” or lunchtime conversations with smaller groups of students where staff are sharing (but not oversharing) about their own experiences and also learning about students. It is not unusual that students who may not see themselves as “leaders” in the traditional sense, or who have low trust in adults, may need to be invited several times to join the program, or even to share about their experiences during a campaign. It is one job of the Adult Advisors to “woo” students into their potentially positive leadership roles.

Evaluation (mini)

- Focus on successes with Peer Leaders.
- Celebrate and share stories of connection.
- Encourage staff and faculty to share what the event meant for them.
- Check your numbers:
 - How many Peer Leaders participated?
 - What percentage of students participated?
 - How many different Trusted Adults were named?
- Consider what lessons were learned:
 - How could you increase or diversify participation? Did you keep it fun? Did you highlight student stories of Strength? Was there diversity in your responses?
 - Make note of what to keep in mind for next year.

Celebrate!

- Note what you accomplished as Adult Advisors.
- Share stories of connection with each other.
- Express gratitude for your team’s creativity and hard work.



Sources of Strength Campaign Planning

Campaign: Trusted Adults			
Primary Goal:	Help individuals identify, name and connect to an adult they could go to if they were experiencing a difficult time or if a friend needed help.		
Start Date of Campaign:		End Date of Campaign:	
Modalities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circle key modalities for your activities. <p><i>Need inspiration? Check out the Adult Advisor Field Guide or SourcesofStrength.org/campaigns/</i></p>			
Instruction Details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which modalities will your team use? Which grades or groups will you reach? Length of instruction time? Which Adult Advisors and Peer Leaders will be involved? Additional Adult support required? 	Remember: Sources teams need to engage each student in at least one hour or standard class period of programming over the course of the year to meet requirements for the SAVE Students Act. To reach every student, it's important to track which students will be engaged in each activity. Are you focused on band students? The football team? Art classes? Math? Study hall?		



Event Log

Record what happened. Stories, pictures, and videos.

Reflect and Share:

What We Did:

- How did your plan compare to the final product?

Who We Reached:

- Did you engage student listed in your plan?
- How will you follow up with the students you missed?

Length of Instructional Time:

- How much time did you spend in the classroom?

Final Steps:

- Do we need to follow up on anything else?

CAMPAIGN:*What Helps Me*

Summary: *The What Helps Me Campaign focuses on highlighting emotional regulation and what Strengths help us to cope or manage our emotions in times of stress or difficulty. No one gets through life without regularly experiencing one of the Big Three Emotions: anger, anxiety, or feeling down, sad, or depressed. The What Helps Me campaign is about helping individuals to identify which of these emotions they wrestle with the most, and which Strengths function as positive and healthy coping strategies for them. We know that these emotions are common and pervasive but we don't as often hear how people cope or manage them. Let's tell that story, and give others hope that they are not alone; they too can discover Strength to overcome.*

Goals:

- To increase participants social-emotional awareness of how they react to stress, difficulty, or challenges.
- To identify ways to manage difficult events in healthy ways.
- To share options that could help others with emotional regulation and resilience.
- To normalize healthy coping strategies and change the narrative on how we respond to hard times.

Peer Leader Meeting:

Fun: Lead group in a round of the Shoe Kick game (see games list on our Website). When the shoe's owner comes to claim their shoe, each person should share which of the Big Three Emotions is most familiar to them when stressed, and what helps them when they are feeling big emotions.

Alternative Option: Lead the group in the Chair Game (see page [113](#)), where each round participants are prompted to answer the question, "Which of the Big Three Emotions is most familiar to me when I'm stressed, and what helps?"

Share: Break into small groups and give Peer Leaders time to share about a time when they felt one of the Big Three Emotions. They should then share what they did or what Strengths they used, that helped them find balance, or feel better. After small group sharing, gather back together and ask 8-10 Peer Leaders and Adult Advisors to raise their hands and share briefly about what Strengths they used to work through difficult emotions.

Plan: Have Peer Leaders brainstorm ideas for how they might engage the rest of the school to reflect on and share what helps them with the Big Three Emotions. (For ideas about different ways to facilitate brainstorming, see page [44](#).)



REMEMBER TO
RECORD YOUR EFFORTS

School Wide Campaign:

Now that you have planned your campaign, develop some campaigns elements that you can layer over a period of time that will help people practice Strength in their own lives.

Help Peer Leaders carry out their ideas in creative and attractive ways that invite people to interact and engage with a Strength, and apply it to their own lives. Help students and staff to share their own stories, internalizing Strength in a way that makes it relevant to their everyday lives. This will help both groups and individuals better cope with the natural ups and downs of life. It will also normalize that big emotions are a part of life and that we already have a number of skills that help us cope and overcome.

Mediums:

Presentations

- Have Peer Leaders come before the school board or staff and lead a short discussion around how these adults find balance during times of stress.
- Help Peer Leader teams go into classrooms and lead discussions and activities about What Helps Me. This is also a good time to get students to complete elements to add to a wall display, i.e., What Helps Me feathers, snowflakes, balloons, or leaves.

Classroom Ideas

- English teachers can give writing assignments interpreting Strengths that might have helped literary characters manage difficult emotions, relationships, or circumstances, i.e., Catcher and the Rye, Lord of the Flies; have students research the effects of various emotions and Strengths, and write essays of how specific Strengths may have or did help the characters to cope.
- Psychology teachers could teach on emotional regulation and the body's reaction to stress over time, as well as what helps relieve stress.
- Biology teachers could teach on the human stress response and how it effects our brains neurological and physiological processes.

Art, Mural, Wall Displays

- Create a wall display where everyone lists which of the Big Three Emotions they wrestle with the most and what helps them. Common wall displays or sharing prompts have been: Leaves on a tree; elements of school mascots; seasonal displays like snowflakes or fall leaves; feathers on two big wings; petals on flowers; bricks on a wall of Strength etc.
- Create photo displays or story posters of students sharing their own stories of Strength.



“DON'T FORGET TO
EXPRESS GRATITUDE FOR
THE EXPERIENCE AND THANK
YOUR TEAM.”

All School Activities

- Host a screening and discussion of the Pixar movie *Inside Out* and discuss the Big Three Emotions and how we can find balance.
- Host a “Chill Room” during stressful seasons where students can visit to take a break and mentally get away from the demands of the day. Have tea, yoga mats, coloring pages (see the Tangled Ball of Emotions or Strength coloring pages from page [130](#)), relaxing music, and have school counselors there to introduce themselves. Peer Leaders can take shifts to share about the Big Three Emotions and how we can find balance in stressful times.

Video and Photography

- Get a number of the Peer Leaders and Adult Advisors to state “What Helps Me with _____ (emotion) is _____ (Strength) and _____ (Strength) and _____ (Strength) on video. Example: “What helps me when I get too anxious or worried is playing my guitar, talking to my mom, and going for a run.” Stories can be simple or more detailed, as long as they remain Strength focused and hopeful. Show video in classrooms, at events, or on morning TV announcements. The more students and staff that can participate in these videos the better.
- Fun Tips: shoot B-roll footage of students engaging in their Strengths in a funny way; i.e., running through a forest screaming, playing with their dog, jamming out airband style to their favorite song, climbing a tree, listening to music on their bed, or retail therapy in the local mall.
- Host a photography show where individuals take photos on the topic “What Helps Me” and display it in a public area with short captions about people's stories.

Social Media

- Ask Peer Leaders to make short videos sharing how they recover from stress and then challenge others to share their own stories.
- Create a school wide Instagram challenge: anyone who enters a photo and caption sharing their story of which Strength helps them with stress will be entered to win a prize at the end of the week or month.

Audio: Music and Announcements

- Take a poll for students' favorite "chill out" song. Once they have been reviewed, play them during passing periods during a stressful season, like testing.
- Have Peer Leaders share their stories of "Strength Over Stress" on morning announcements. One Peer Leader can share a one to two minute story each morning for a week.
- Start a school podcast with students sharing what helps them with difficulties, stress, or challenging emotions.

Ways to Partner With Other Entities (students, staff, community).

- Team up with a local yoga studio or Zumba instructor to teach a one hour event focusing on stress relief and easy practices for students to use in life.
- Partner with coaches to help them spread the word about dealing with stress with their athletes. Have athletic trainers check in with athletes about how they are dealing with stress at each interaction.
- Math teachers can share about how their subject is historically one of the most anxiety provoking subjects and how calming yourself, breathing, sharing a moment of gratitude, or meditation for a few minutes before class can often help calm fears and help students focus and perform better.

Modifications (If needed/applicable)

- Identifying and speaking about emotions is not an easy skill for everyone. Be sure to give support in teaching how an emotion might feel physically in someone's body (such as tense shoulders, a tight chest, clenched jaw, sweating, etc.), as this will help increase mind-body awareness.

Evaluation (mini)

- Ask for stories of success of impact with Peer Leaders.
- Celebrate and share stories of connection, coping, or emotional regulation.
- Encourage staff and faculty to share what the event meant for them.
- Check your numbers:
 - How many Peer Leaders participated?
 - What percentage of the school body participated? (Remember, we are aiming for 90%!)
- Consider the impact and/or lessons learned:
 - Did you (adults or Peer Leaders) learn something about how you or others manage difficult emotions?
 - Did you hear stories from friends or peers about stresses they experience and how they cope with them?
 - Do you feel like we helped normalize these emotions and break the silence on how people cope with them?

- Were various resources, coping strategies, or management skills promoted or highlighted?
- How could you increase or diversify participation in this campaign?
- Did you keep this campaign fun and engaging?
- Did you highlight student stories of Strength?
- Was there diversity in the stories highlighted?
- Make note of what to keep in mind for next year and how you could improve the campaign next time.



Celebrate!

- Note what you accomplished as an Adult Advisors or Peer Leader team.
- Share powerful stories of Strength, coping, or connection with each other and with your staff or community.
- Express gratitude for the experience and thank your team.



Sources of Strength Campaign Planning

Campaign: What Helps Me			
Primary Goal:	Highlight emotional regulation and which Strengths function as positive and healthy coping strategies for our emotions in times of stress or difficulty.		
Start Date of Campaign:		End Date of Campaign:	
Modalities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circle key modalities for your activities. <p><i>Need inspiration? Check out the Adult Advisor Field Guide or SourcesofStrength.org/campaigns/</i></p>			
Instruction Details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which modalities will your team use? Which grades or groups will you reach? Length of instruction time? Which Adult Advisors and Peer Leaders will be involved? Additional Adult support required? 	Remember: Sources teams need to engage each student in at least one hour or standard class period of programming over the course of the year to meet requirements for the SAVE Students Act. To reach every student, it's important to track which students will be engaged in each activity. Are you focused on band students? The football team? Art classes? Math? Study hall?		



Event Log

Record what happened. Stories, pictures, and videos.

Reflect and Share:

What We Did:

- How did your plan compare to the final product?

Who We Reached:

- Did you engage student listed in your plan?
- How will you follow up with the students you missed?

Length of Instructional Time:

- How much time did you spend in the classroom?

Final Steps:

- Do we need to follow up on anything else?

FIDELITY MARKERS (CHECKLIST)

Rationale:

In addition to the Fidelity Markers listed on page 102 of the Field Guide, Sources of Strength teams in Ohio have additional fidelity markers to align Sources implementation with the SAVE Students Act, aka HB123.

This checklist serves as a resource in planning, implementation, and course-correcting to make sure that your Sources of Strength program is within fidelity for the SAVE Students Act while delivering the culture change we hope to see.

SAVE Students Act

- Our Adult Advisors received training on the requirements of HB123 during the Adult Advisor training.
- Our campaigns engaged every student in at least one hour (or standard class period) of instruction.
- Through our campaigns this year, we covered HB123's required content:
 - How to instruct school personnel to identify the signs and symptoms of depression, suicide, and self-harm in students.
 - How to instruct students to identify the signs and symptoms of depression, suicide, and self-harm in their peers.
 - How to teach appropriate mental health services within schools and within larger communities, and when and how to refer youth and their families to those services.
 - How to teach students about mental health and depression, warning signs of suicide, and the importance of and processes for seeking help on behalf of self and peers reporting of these behaviors.
 - How to identify observable warning signs and signals of individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others.
 - The importance of taking threats seriously and seeking help.
- Our Adult Advisors and Peer Leaders completed campaign planning templates to help fulfill the requirements of HB123.

OHIO SAVE STUDENTS ACT

