

## **Signs of Suicide (SOS) Program**

### **Program Description**

The teen years are often a roller-coaster ride of emotions, with this time being especially susceptible to wide variations in mood. It is easy to misread depression as normal adolescent turmoil; depression appears to be occurring at a much earlier age, and the past decade has seen teen suicide rates double. Suicide is the third leading cause of death for teenagers, and there are often warning signs that are overlooked to prevent these tragedies. To increase awareness of the signs of depression and suicide risk, **Loudoun Valley School** will be implementing the SOS Signs of Suicide Program during the school year to ninth graders enrolled in health classes. The program educates students by helping teens understand the connection between untreated mental illness and suicide and by teaching students how to deal with these signs as a mental health emergency. This program uses video clips to present situations and to generate discussion about identifying and responding to signs of depression and suicide. The program will be facilitated by school psychologists, school social workers, and school counselors.