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Thursday, May 2nd, 2024 - Principal's Message, Mr. Cody Baird

This message includes important information regarding presentations and learning experiences for our students. Please read this information fully as there are some emotionally heavy topics that may impact individual students differently.

Mental Health Week Presentation: PSC's parent council has raised funds to bring in a presentation for all of PSC. This presentation is surrounding mental health, primarily focusing on suicide awareness. This is a virtual presentation from a group called "[Life Is Worth Living](#)" that will commence in our homeroom classes at 8:40 AM and will run for approximately 1 hour. The presentation focuses on a family of sisters who had lost their older sibling to suicide.

Here is a list of learning objectives that the presentation is designed to meet:

- Develop a mental health check in practice
- Decrease the stigma surrounding mental health, mental illness and suicide
- Understand how to access mental health resources
- Recognize and understand warning signs, risk factors, and protective factors
- Understand the importance of reaching out for help and learn how to help a friend or family member in crisis
- Acquire empathy and compassion for individuals struggling with their mental health
- Learn about the impact of language surrounding mental health, mental illness, and suicide
- Gain an understanding of various coping mechanisms to implement in daily life
- Learn about how to set boundaries while helping someone who is questioning if life is worth living

PSC students will have an additional opportunity to meet the presenters through an online google meet presentation the following day (May 7, 2024) if they choose. This session is optional and would require students to advocate to their homeroom teacher that they would like

to attend the session. The session will commence at 9:00 AM in our PSC theater and will run for roughly 1 hour.

At PSC we recognize that a majority of our students have been impacted by suicide in some capacity. Parent Council and the school both feel that mental health is a topic that our students could use some education and support in, due to the amount of trauma and experience our students have had with suicide.

I want to be upfront about the topic as it is emotionally heavy and could be triggering for students. If you feel that this is not for your child, we ask that you speak to your child about advocating to their homeroom teacher that they will not be taking part in this session and we will have a supervised area in our "Broncs Learning Corner" for students to study / catch up on homework or if you wish to keep your child home that morning please call the school attendance line to excuse them (403-783-4411).

We also want to have resources for our families, and encourage you to have conversations with your child(ren) about their mental health. Included is a list of resources available to anyone needing support. Each student will receive one of these to take home if they wish.

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

Ponoka and Area

Ponoka Mental Health and Addiction:

1-888-594-0211 or 403-783-7903

FCSS Counselling: 403-783-4462

McKinney Psychology: 403-783-1854

Maskwacis Counselling: 780-585-3830

Maskwacis Mobile Mental Health: (24hrs a day, 7 days a week): 780-362-2150

Alberta (24 hrs a day, 7 days a week)

AB Emergency Services: 911

AB Mental Health Helpline

1-877-303-2642

Suicide Crisis Helpline: 9-8-8

Suicide Distress Line for the (403) area code:

1-800-784-2433

Canada (24 hrs a day, 7 days a week)

First Nation and Inuit Hope for Wellness Helpline

1-855-242-3310

Kids Help Phone 1-800- 668-6868

Trevor Project (LGBTQ2S + Crisis Hotline):

1-866-488-7386



Nitohtawin: Today our Grade 10 students will participate in the Nitohtawin Gathering. Nitohtawin is Cree for “Listen to Me”. It is an opportunity for PSC students to voice their opinions on their education and provide feedback to our school. Students will move through four sessions

based on the medicine wheel. Each session will focus on a guiding question where students will reflect and answer the question. After completing all four sessions, students will come back together to enjoy soup and bannock! We want to thank Elder Sheila, Elder Effie, Josephine Small, Dione Yellowbird (Cultural Support), "Grandma" Lila, Miss Cooke, Erin Tisdale (Director of Indigenous Education and Reconciliation) and the BRICK Learning Center for all supporting this amazing opportunity for our students. The activities will start at 1:00 PM and will run until the end of the day.

Cody

"Work hard, be kind and amazing things will happen."

Conan O'Brien