



Mental Health Partnerships

Hope Squad follows the Circles4Hope community model, which involves the collaboration of the entire community through community connections, school programs, and mental health partnerships. School participating in the Hope Squad program are required to have a partnership with a mental health agency, health department, private mental health provider, or other mental health facility. Mental health providers are encouraged to assist Hope Squads in QPR training, share mental health resources with the Hope Squad, participate in the school's crisis team, provide training for school employees and community members, and aid in the mental health referral process.

Student Nominations

Hope Squad student members are chosen by their peers during a school-wide nomination process. This process often happens during a class that applies to all students, such as English or math. The nomination process can be done online or on paper. Students are nominated based on their listening skills, kindness towards other and easy to talk to.

Hope Squads are generally made up of 8-10 students per grade. However, the size of the squad can be adjusted to fit a school's size and need.

Hope Squad members are students selected by their peers for being:

- Concerned about others
- A good listener and easy to talk with
- Someone you could turn to if you needed a friend

Nominees are vetted by teachers and counselors. Parents are notified and have the option to approve their student's participation in the program.

Mission & History

"Our goal is to prevent suicide through public awareness and education, reduce stigma, and serve as a resource to those touched by suicide."

Our Mission

Reduce youth suicide through education, training, and peer intervention.

Our Vision

A Hope Squad in every school.

Core Values

1. We value education. The Hope Squad program was built by educators in partnership with mental health experts. The evidence-based training changes how schools' approach mental health and suicide prevention.

2. We value taking initiative. Hope Squad members are trained to take action when someone is struggling. Instead of waiting for a peer to come to them, Hope Squad members are the ones to reach out first.

3. We value openness. Hope Squad members are trained to be aware of their peers and watch for warning signs. They learn to show empathy to their peers, listen without judgment, and reduce stigma regarding help-seeking and mental illness.

4. We value self-care. You can help others best if you are also taking care of yourself. We advocate for maintaining healthy boundaries, building resilience, and avoiding burnout.

5. We value community. It takes a village to raise a child, and it takes an entire community to save one. The Circles4Hope model recognizes the role of mental health partnerships, school programs, and community connections working together for suicide prevention.

Areas of Focus

1. Safety. Hope Squad members recognize the warning signs of suicide, reach out to peers in distress, and refer them to trusted adults.

2. Connectedness. Hope Squad members actively look for ways to support their peers and increase connectedness in their schools.

3. Bullying Prevention. Hope Squad members recognize bullying, intervene, and encourage other students not to be bystanders.

4. Mental Wellness. Hope Squad members promote resilience and self-care and work closely with their local mental health agency.

5. Reducing Stigma. Hope Squad members reduce the stigma associated with mental illness and mental health and show that it's okay to get help.

6. Substance Abuse Prevention. Hope Squad members understand the complexity of substance abuse, encourage peers to make healthy choices, and persuade struggling peers to get help.