

# SOURCES OF STRENGTH

## What is *Sources of Strength*?

- A school-wide **health promotion and suicide prevention** program
- Utilizes the power of student **'Peer Leaders'** to **change norms** of other students
- Supports the mission of high schools to **increase students'** bonding to school

## How does *Sources of Strength* work?

- **Adult Advisors:** 2-3 school staff are trained on recruiting and mentoring Peer Leaders to conduct safe messaging activities (4-6 hours)
- Orientation for school staff and administration
- **Peer Leaders** and **Adult Advisors** attend ½-day engaging, interactive workshop by certified trainer
- Peer Leaders conduct **four messaging steps:** (1) Engaging 'Trusted Adults'; (2) Telling friends about their Sources of Strength, (3) Presentations; and (4) Media Messaging

## How is *Sources of Strength* different from most suicide prevention programs?

- Training for students and adult mentors; most suicide prevention programs focus on either adults or youth, not both
- **Promotes eight protective factors** (sources of strength) across the school
- Ongoing technical assistance to support high-quality program in each school
- **Research-based** – rigorously studied in several states
- On the **National Best Practices Registry**

## What does research show about *Sources of Strength*?

- Increases Peer Leaders' connectedness to adults, school engagement and coping
- Increases positive help-seeking norms **among ALL students** in a school, including those at high risk for suicide

## Funding Opportunities

With the support of the National Institute of Mental Health and the Office of Mental Health in NYS, University of Rochester may be able to provide the Sources of Strength program to selected communities at partial or no cost. Specifics will be presented at the Sources of Strength introductory meeting.

## Evaluation Opportunities

As part of funding requirements, participating schools/sites may be asked to participate in program evaluation research. University of Rochester also offers evaluation opportunities to interested communities to help them better understand how the Sources of Strength program is impacting their schools.



Wall of Trust at Perry High School, NY



Names of Peer Leaders and Trusted Adults at Spencer-Van Etten HS, NY

University of Rochester

Sources of Strength

National Peer Leader Study

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