

News from:

Hortonville Area School District

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## Hortonville High School 'Color Run' Celebrates Students' Wellness and Resilience

*5K Run planned for May 12 to Showcase Teens' 'Sources of Strength'*

Hortonville High School will host a 5k community "Color Run" on May 12 to celebrate mental wellness and resiliency as part of its "Sources of Strength" program. All proceeds from the event will be donated to Harbor House Domestic Abuse Programs of Appleton.

The public is invited to participate in the event, which will be held at Lions Park in Greenville. Registration is \$15 per person. Walk up registration is encouraged, however, event shirts will only be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Check-in begins at 1:30 p.m. and the walk/run will start at 3 p.m.

Hortonville High School was one of the first schools in Wisconsin to adopt Sources of Strength, an evidence-based suicide prevention and mental wellness promotion program. Since it adopted the program in 2015, Hortonville High School's climate has transformed into a place where students feel welcomed, supported and encouraged to reach out to one another and adults when they are struggling, according to Kevin McElrath, a teacher and Sources of Strength Adult Advisor at the high school.



"We are looking forward to showcasing all the great work our students have done to create a school environment where students' capitalize on their strengths and support one another, and where it's normal to reach out and ask for help when life gets tough," McElrath said. "No one should ever have to suffer in silence when struggling with anxiety, depression or any mental health challenge."



During the 5k run, students will pass through several color stations, where they will be dusted with dyed cornstarch. The various colors represent the eight strengths from the Sources of Strength wheel: family support, positive friends, spirituality, healthy activities, medical access, mentors, mental health and generosity. The eight strengths are factors that research has shown are protective against suicide risk.

"We've invited students and staff from other schools in the region to join us to celebrate our youth and to learn more about this life-saving program", McElrath added.

"We are proud of the work of our students and adult advisors as they continue to facilitate campaigns around protective factors for all," said Todd

Timm, District Administrator for Hortonville Area School District. "Our student leadership in the Hortonville Area School District has built a culture of acceptance and support which continues to grow in our school community and communities throughout the state of Wisconsin."

"We are excited to be a sponsor of this important community event," said Wendy Magas, project coordinator of Healthy Teen Minds, an initiative of the N.E.W. Mental Health Connection. "Hortonville's experience with Sources of Strength has shown us the importance of upstream prevention and how students can be powerful

agents of social change – changing unhealthy social norms to healthy ones, where students themselves spread messages of hope and support and model healthy coping skills.”

Six additional high schools – with the Appleton, Neenah and Oshkosh school districts – adopted Sources of Strength this past school year with support from Healthy Teen Minds, a grant-funded initiative to improve the mental health of teens in the region. At least four more school in the region are expected to adopt the program in the 2018-19 school year.

Hortonville High School adopted Sources of Strength as part of its E3 Program, a school-based mental wellness program that educates, engages and empowers K-12 students in the Hortonville Area School District.

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