

October 12, 2020

Dear Student/Parent or Guardian:

Governor Mike DeWine established the Ohio School Safety Center (OSSC) in August of 2019 to support schools, first responders, and communities in preventing, preparing for, and responding to threats and acts of violence, including self-harm.

A top priority of the OSSC is increasing information sharing and communication. Victimization, bullying, and other disorders such as drug and alcohol use are often not reported directly to school authorities or even to parents and guardians. Oftentimes this is because students do not want to be identified, don't want a friend or classmate in trouble, or simply don't know how or where to report these threats. The OSSC wants to make sure students are aware of the resources available to them and know they have a safe space to share their concerns.

One available resource coordinated by the OSSC is the [Safer Ohio School Tip Line](#), which is a free service that accepts calls and texts 24/7. The tip line allows students, parents, school administrators, and staff members to anonymously share information with school officials and law enforcement about threats to student safety. The tip line number is **844-723-3764**.

The OSSC encourages reporting on:

- Bullying and cyberbullying incidents;
- Self-harm or suicidal behaviors;
- Withdrawn student behaviors;
- Verbal or written threats observed toward students, staff, or the school itself;
- Weapons/suspicious devices on or near school grounds;
- Gang-related activities;
- Illegal drug use; and
- Unusual or suspicious behavior of students or associates.

Another resource is the [Crisis Text Line](#). By texting the keyword "4hope" to 741 741 you will be connected to a trained Crisis Counselor within 5 minutes. Any person may need help in coping with a stressful situation. Reach out by text to communicate with someone trained to listen and respond in a method that is private, secure, and confidential.

The Crisis Text Line is a free, confidential service available 24/7 via text on mobile devices. Data usage while texting Crisis Text Line is free and the number will not appear on a phone bill with the mobile service carrier. People of all ages can use Crisis Text Line.

We know that things are very different right now with the addition of online learning and limited ability to physically see teachers and peers, but we want you to know that there are resources available to you to be able to share concerns and talk to someone if you are feeling stressed.