

Dear Hopewell Valley Families,

Last January, over 500 individuals responded to the “Call to Action” sounded by the school superintendents of Mercer County. The turnout was overwhelming and demonstrated the critical need for supports and services for our school-aged children.

Since our initial outreach, we continue to experience an increase in the number of students who are referred for mental health services, sent to crisis centers, or hospitalized for self-harming acts or ideations. We remain committed to ending the silence and stigma surrounding student psychological issues and providing concerned parents and caregivers the support they need.

As a follow-up to our first “Call to Action” meeting, NAMI (*National Association of Mental Illness*) Mercer is partnering with ESS (*Effective School Solutions*) to co-facilitate a 2nd “Call to Action” presentation for parents/caregivers on the important topic of youth mental and emotional health. This event is free and no registration is necessary.

The event will be held on Thursday, May 10th, 7:00 pm at The College of New Jersey in the Brower Student Center.

This program will focus on the important topics of:

- i. Warning signs for parents to look out for
- ii. Child presents w/ warning signs or has an “event”
- iii. What a parent can do in the immediate moment
- iv. Short Term / Long Term options, resources, services
- v. Proactive Steps

Through our collective efforts and willingness to combat the stigma associated with mental health, we can provide a network of care and support for all of our students. I hope you will consider attending this event.

Sincerely,

A Call To Action - Our Work Continues

Thomas Smith, Superintendent of Hopewell Valley

David M. Aderhold, Superintendent of West Windsor - Plainsboro

Michael Nitti, Superintendent of Ewing

Steve Cochrane, Superintendent of Princeton

Kathleen Foster, Superintendent Robbinsville

Richard Katz, Superintendent of East Windsor

Fredrick McDowell, Superintendent of Trenton

Scott Rocco, Superintendent of Hamilton

Andrew Zuckerman, Interim Superintendent of Lawrence

Kimberly Schneider, Superintendent Mercer County Special Services School District and Mercer County Technical Schools