

## 19 August – Saratoga Town Council – Prevention updates



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### ***Community Meetings***

August 25<sup>th</sup>: In-Person Meeting - Saratoga 5:30-7 pm at Platte Valley Community Center

### ***August's theme***

The start of a new school year can be an exciting time, but it can also bring challenges that impact students' mental well-being. It's important for parents, educators, and students to be aware of potential stressors and proactive strategies to maintain good mental health.

### ***Common challenges students might face include:***

- Academic pressure: New classes, higher expectations, and increased homework can lead to stress and anxiety.
- Social adjustments: Navigating new peer groups, making friends, or dealing with social hierarchies can be overwhelming.
- Transitioning to a new environment: Moving to a new school, city, or even a different grade level can cause feelings of displacement or unease.
- Time management: Balancing schoolwork, extracurricular activities, and personal life can be difficult.
- Concerns about safety: Students may worry about bullying, violence, or other safety issues at school.

### ***To support student mental well-being, consider the following strategies:***

- Open communication: Encourage students to talk about their feelings and concerns. Create a safe space where they feel heard and understood.
- Establish routines: Consistent sleep schedules, meal times, and study routines can provide a sense of stability and reduce anxiety.

- Promote healthy habits: Ensure students are getting enough sleep, eating nutritious meals, and engaging in regular physical activity.
- Teach coping mechanisms: Help students develop strategies for managing stress, such as deep breathing exercises, mindfulness, or journaling.
- Encourage breaks and downtime: It's important for students to have time to relax and engage in activities they enjoy outside of school.
- Set realistic expectations: Remind students that it's okay to make mistakes and that perfection is not required. Focus on effort and progress rather than just outcomes.
- Monitor for changes in behavior: Be alert to signs of distress, such as changes in mood, sleep patterns, appetite, social withdrawal, or a decline in academic performance.
- Utilize school resources: Schools often have counselors, psychologists, or support programs available to students. Encourage students to seek help if needed.
- Connect with school staff: Maintain open communication with teachers and administrators to stay informed about your child's progress and any concerns.



## Kick off for Sources of Strength

The Barn Dance on August 9th was an amazing success! At this free event, we had a dozen+ volunteers and over 250 attendees. Everyone had a great time dancing, eating grilled burgers and dogs and lots of yummy food donated by local businesses and community members. Special shoutout to Chris Osborne, who donated the use of his fantastic venue and all our generous businesses.

This marks the start of an exciting year of Sources of Strength. Our “Boots on the Ground” team - 30 trained peer leaders and 10 adult advisors will be meeting soon to plan a series of campaigns focusing on what our personal and collective strengths (our protective factors are represented on the colorful wheel) can do to promote a well community. We’ll also be offering an additional adult advisor training to supplement our leadership team; if you’re interested in attending, please contact Rachel at 307.329.3172

If you’d like to know more about this incredible program, stop in at any of the businesses with the wheel in the window – they have brochures/pamphlets that will tell you more! Or go to [www.sourcesofstrength.org](http://www.sourcesofstrength.org)