March 2, 2017

To: School Principals/Administrators

From:

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Re: Sources of Strength – ***RSVP2 Study***

***Researching Sexual Violence Prevention using Resiliency, Strengths, Virality & Protective factors Study***

We are pleased to invite your high school to participate in the *Sources of Strength RSVP2 Study.* Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, this project will support implementation of *Sources of Strength*, an evidence-based youth suicide prevention program, in 24 schools across Colorado. *Sources of Strength* is a school-wide health promotion and suicide prevention program that utilizes the power of student “Peer Leaders” to change social norms around trusting adults, school connectedness, and positive coping skills. *Sources of Strength* moves beyond a singular focus on risk factors and strengthens protective factors for young individuals so that when times get hard they have strengths and supports to rely on.

***This grant funding provides the opportunity to evaluate Sources in new ways. This research grant will determine how positive changes in youth-adult connections and healthy coping norms contribute to reducing interpersonal and health problems among students including sexual harassment and violence, bullying, depression symptoms, and suicidal ideation.***

If you wish to participate in the *Sources of Strength RSVP2 Study*, please provide a letter of application by **April 12, 2017** from your school principal or superintendent, including the required elements listed on the template letter below. The letter of application will be reviewed by the Research Advisory Team and the selection of schools to participate in the study will be determined and a formal invitation to participate will follow.

Your school, along with all other schools that join the study, will be assigned to begin *Sources of Strength* training either in fall 2017 or fall 2019 after a waiting-period (for research requirements this will be a random assignment, like the flip of a coin). All schools will receive the complete two-year *Sources of Strength* program. All schools will begin participating in evaluation in the fall semester of 2017.

All schools participating in the study will receive the following:

* Individualized training from *Sources of Strength* staff on program implementation for Adult Advisors in mentoring Peer Leaders and Peer Leader training in leveraging their social networks to create positive school climate changes.
* Technical assistance from *Sources of Strength* to implement the full program throughout the project and assistance in planning for program sustainability.
* Specific feedback on how you are meeting your prevention and school improvement goals related to the Peer Leader program, including connectedness and student bonding with school staff.
* Participation in a large-scale research project may assist schools in sustaining their prevention efforts when pursuing grants or other funding opportunities.
* Summarized school data reports demonstrating impact of the research project on outcomes such as: sexual harassment and violence, bullying, depression symptoms, and suicidal ideations.
* Each school will receive a summary of key indicators, including student social connectedness, school engagement, suicide risk, bullying and sexual harassment. This data can be used to help inform the school’s prevention focus through Sources of Strength.
* An advantage to being assigned to the waiting condition is having additional time to use the research assessments to plan prevention priorities.