



Madeira Board of Education
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Madeira High Schoolers Hoping to Help

Eighteen Madeira High School (MHS) students are sending a message of hope they want every one of their classmates to hear. Their message is this, “We’re just a group of people who will listen, who believe in the power of kindness, and who think that your life matters.”

The five Freshman, four Sophomores, three Juniors, and six Seniors promote mental health wellness and suicide prevention in Madeira High School and the Madeira community. They comprise the school’s very first Hope Squad (Hold On Persuade Empower). Nominated by their peers for the school-based peer-to-peer self-care program, they trained at the Ohio Hope Squad Conference, hosted by Grant Us Hope. They now recognize the warning signs of suicide, know how to offer hope and understand to get help by letting an adult know if they hear or see something that concerns them. Hope Squad members are the eyes and ears of their school as they watch out for fellow students in any kind of distress.

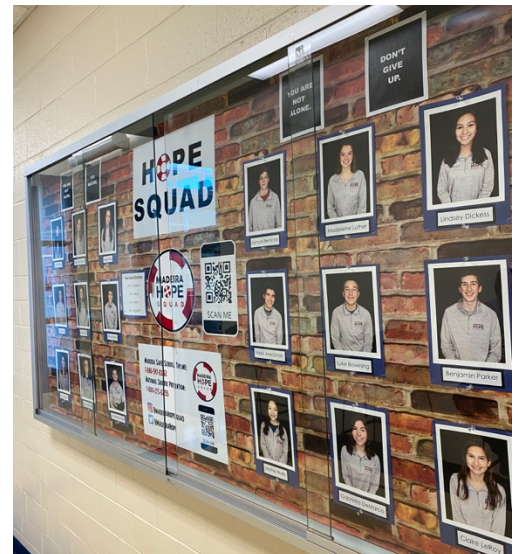


Hope Squad members (l to r): Claire LeRoy, Grace Rindels, Gabi Hugentobler, Isaac Arredondo, Ben Ramos, Ethan Henry, and Isabella Gutierrez with signs

“Training students to be Hope Squad members is part of our district counseling plan,” stated MHS counselor and Hope Squad advisor Kim Homer. “We chose Hope Squad as an outstanding mental health component of that plan.” Other Hope Squad advisors are Kelly Candella, Kelly Wing, and Jill Dulgeroff.

For the kick-off of the first annual MHS Hope Squad Week, students painted approximately 150-yard signs they put up around the school and community. Messages like ‘The Tide will Turn’, ‘It Will Get Better, I Promise’, and ‘You are Loved’ greeted students as they arrived at school, got a bagel in downtown Madeira for lunch, or walked

the halls to class. During the week there was also a school-wide assembly by mental health advocate Amy Corey, a wall sharing anonymous emotional health stories from students and staff, therapy dogs from Pet Partners of Greater Cincinnati, and cookies or lifesavers with a card handed to every student as they entered MHS. Each display, event, and activity was planned to send the same message, “You are Brave. You are Strong. You are Not Alone.”



The MHS Hope Squad board lists numbers for Madeira’s Safe Schools Tipline, National Suicide Prevention, Madeira Police, and Drug and Poison Control. It also shows other students the name and a photo of each of the Madeira Hope Squad members.

Madeira’s 2020 Hope Squad members are Luke Browning, Gabby DeMarco, Claire LeRoy, Jessie Miller, Ben Parker, Isaac Arredondo, Lindsey Dickess, Madeleine Luther, Mattie Waltz, Isabella Gutierrez, Ethan Henry, Gabi Hugentobler, Samuel Bernicke, Sophia Gugino, Ben Ramos, Grace Rindels, Johnathan Thiele, and Katie Zack.