

Dear Parent:

We are pleased to announce that Tappan Zee High School and South Orangetown Community Awareness of Substance Abuse, SOCASA have chosen to participate in STEPS, a new and exciting program developed by the New York University Child Study Center with a grant from New York State.

STEPS (Screening, Treatment, and Education to Promote Strength) offers parents and teens a variety of specially designed web resources, including articles, interactive activities, and health quizzes covering a wide range of mental health and general health topics. Some of the topics included are stress and anxiety, depression and suicide, alcohol and drugs, relationships, and health and eating issues.

STEPS offers two parallel web sites – one for teens and one for parents. The program is free-of-charge and may be explored from any computer with internet access. The enclosed brochure tells you more about what is offered by ParentSTEPS and provides an access code that you will need to initially register on the site. This access code identifies only which school your child attends. It **does not** identify individual students or families. You can find out more details about the program at www.PromoteStrength.org.

Here are just a few highlights from ParentSTEPS:

- Is your teen too angry or too sad or too anxious? Fill in a brief (and anonymous) questionnaire about your child and find out.
- Is your child just a normal, moody teenager or does your teen need some help? What should you do if you think your child is drinking or using drugs? How do you stop arguing and improve your communication with your teen? How do you balance your teen's need for privacy and your concerns for your child's safety? Take a look at the articles and get some answers to these questions and more.
- How have other parents dealt with some of the difficulties of raising a teen in today's world? Participate in discussions with other parents and get support and guidance on problems that families share.
- Have more questions you'd like to ask an expert? Chat on-line with a STEPS clinician or get specific questions answered by e-mail
- Would you like more detailed feedback about your child's mental health? Explore STEPS Mental Health Screening.
- Want to know what's going on in your community or let other families know about some great opportunities for teens? Go to the community section of ParentSTEPS.

Your child will receive a similar brochure at school describing the TeenSTEPS website. You might also be interested to know that STEPS provides an opportunity for high school students to become STEPS Fellows and complete a project that would make them eligible to receive a STEPS college scholarship award.

We are really excited that Tappan Zee High School and SOCASA are able to offer this innovative program to our community and we hope that you and your family will find it to be beneficial. If you have questions please feel free to contact Susan Maher, Co-Director of SOCASA (TZHS) or Vickie Shaw, Co-Director of SOCASA (SOMS).

Sincerely,

Jennifer L. Amos
Principal
Tappan Zee High School

Susan Maher
Co-Director SOCASA

Vickie Shaw
Co-Director SOCASA