

TO
WRITE
LOVE
ON HER
ARMS*

BETWEEN THE BELLS

DEAR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION,

Recently, a student, parent/guardian, and/or community member has expressed interest in bringing the To Write Love on Her Arms (TWLOHA) high school program, **Between the Bells**, to your campus. TWLOHA is a non-profit movement dedicated to presenting hope and finding help for people struggling with depression, addiction, self-injury, and suicide. TWLOHA exists to encourage, inform, inspire, and also to invest directly in treatment and recovery.

We are equipping high schools across the United States to participate in a week-long program on their campus designed to create important conversations about mental health. We believe that the conversations and connections we build in between class bells, during a class period, and after school are key to helping show students that it's OK to ask for help and that they are not alone.

We often hear from high school students, sharing stories of the many kinds of challenges they are facing—battles with addiction, academic-related anxiety, difficult home lives, bullying, navigating depression, and struggles with everything from self-injury to eating disorders and even thoughts of suicide. We know that **every 40 seconds someone dies by suicide** around the world. **It is the second leading cause of death among young teenagers and the third leading cause of death for 15-24-year-olds in the United States.** The Youth Risk Behavior Survey from the CDC reported that more than 4 in 10 students felt persistently sad or hopeless, and 1 in 5 seriously considered attempting suicide. And we know that 50% of all mental illnesses start by age 14. But we also know that we can do something about this.

This is where we need your help. Over the next few pages, you will find information about **Between the Bells** and how you can bring it to your school. It is our goal to reach as many high school students by providing easy but powerful activities for your campus. We know the countless hours you put in on a daily basis and we want to make this process both simple for you and life-changing for your students.

Please review the attached **Between the Bells** information and do not hesitate to send us an email at highschool@twloha.com if you have any questions. We would love to make this free program available to your students!

With Hope,
TWLOHA

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ABOUT BETWEEN THE BELLS

Between the Bells is a one-week interactive program designed for students in grades 9-12 to spark authentic conversations about mental health and to remind those struggling **they are not alone**. The program raises awareness and educates students about common mental health challenges, what help and resources exist, and how they can play a key role in challenging the lie that says we can't talk about these things.

Between the Bells is more than a "spirit week" or an awareness campaign, it's a spark to create necessary conversations and is designed to **move students toward hope**.

WHAT DOES A BETWEEN THE BELLS WEEK LOOK LIKE?

TWLOHA provides teachers and administrators with a week-long guide of unique activities that can be scaled to fit each school's needs and various participation levels. Some of the daily activities, called Daily Action Steps, can take 15 minutes or less and some of the suggested activities can be incorporated throughout the entire day or the full week to create as much opportunity for a school-wide conversation.

EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- The Between the Bells Launch Video
- "What I Need to Hear" Response Wall Activity
- Learning About Available Mental Health Resources and Building Self-Care Plans

Administrators and teachers are given access to an online portal after they've registered for the program, which includes a planning timeline, activity instructions, and resources to help advisors shape and navigate conversations about mental health.

TWLOHA will also provide each school with a Between the Bells Program Kit that includes materials that coincide with the week's activities including posters, sticky notes, bracelets, FIND HELP resources and information, and resource cards. These items carry messages of hope and connect students to tools for finding local mental health resources.

Over the last few years, mental health rates have been on the rise among high school students. TWLOHA knows how needed mental health awareness and conversations are, so right now, thanks to several partnerships and grants, any high school in the U.S. that registers will receive the program **at no cost**.

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WHEN CAN I LAUNCH BETWEEN THE BELLS AT MY SCHOOL?

The program is designed to be flexible with each school's individual calendar. While we have a few suggestions on when it is best to implement the program, it can be adapted to fit any school schedule.

We do encourage schools to begin planning their Between the Bells week at least one month out from their start date in order to give themselves plenty of time to plan their week. The online portal provides a suggested timeline that schools can use to help plan.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

If you'd like to register to bring **Between the Bells** to your school or you need more information, please visit www.twloha.com/highschool. If you have any questions, you can reach out to our team at highschool@twloha.com.

BUT WHAT ABOUT MIDDLE SCHOOLS?

Middle school is a transformative period. For students, this is a time and place where they are growing, developing, and figuring out who they are. Between balancing homework loads, after-school activities, friendships, home life, and more, middle school can be a fun and exciting time, but it can also be difficult and overwhelming. It's a period when students may begin to struggle with their mental health, too. And many times, they are unable to even communicate what they are feeling. To help start conversations about mental health with middle school students, we have created the **Middle School Resource Page**. This page features free activities that any teacher or school staff member can implement with students in grades 6-8. Our hope is that these activities can serve as a bridge to conversations about mental health and can help students understand that it's OK to talk about mental health. Please pass these resources along to middle schools in your area!