



**For Immediate Release  
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**Mock Teen Bedroom Helps Parents Recognize Signs Their Teen is at Risk**

*Walk-through tours at MCCPTA/MCPS's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Mental Health & Wellness Forum*

**Rockville, MD— January 12, 2019, 1:00-5:00 pm**—Montgomery County Council of Parent Teacher Associations and Montgomery County Public Schools will hold their 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Mental Health and Wellness Forum at Earle B. Wood Middle School, located at 14615 Bauer Dr. in Rockville. The forum is free and open to all MCPS parents, teachers, students and administrators. Please note, the mock teen bedroom is open to adults only.

“I watched my son fall into addiction after he injured his back at 15 and was given an opioid pain medication. We thought we were being cautious. Looking back, I saw signs of trouble, but I had no idea what I was seeing at the time,” said Laura Mitchell, Chair of the MCCPTA Substance Use Prevention Committee. The goal of the exercise is to make sure parents and teachers know the signs that a student is at risk of self-harm and/or substance use. “When you see these tell-tale things in your house, it’s your clue to start asking questions, but you have to know what to look for. The sooner you know, the sooner you can intervene and that can make all the difference in the world. It can easily be the difference between life and death. I’ve seen far too much of the latter,” Mitchell said. The interactive tour is provided courtesy of the Howard County Department of Emergency Management.

The Key Note Speaker, Jill Ortman-Fouse, former Montgomery County Board of Education, will open the forum with an impressive array of very informative sessions to follow, including:

- Mental Health First Aid Training \*Sold Out!
- BTheOne Campaign for Peer Support & Suicide Prevention
- The LGBTQ Experience
- Opioids 101
- Self-soothing and Self-harm Behaviors: Know the difference
- Teen Depression
- Treating Trauma across Cultural Diversity Stress and Anxiety
- Bullying and Violence Prevention
- Building a Culture of Trust: Lessons from Northwood HS
- Reactive vs. Proactive Parenting in the Digital World
- Mindfulness class

“What makes all this work worthwhile is the that we come together as a community to understand, reflect, and take action on youth mental health and wellness, which many say is reaching critical proportions in the county and indeed the country as a whole” says Sunil Dasgupta, MCCPTA Health and Safety Committee Chair and event organizer. Dr. Dasgupta shared, “Mental health and wellness awareness is not only for families facing these challenges. I am increasingly finding that our children need to act in peer support roles even when they are not directly affected.”

The forum will conclude by hearing from our students as Ananya Tadikonda, Student Member of the Board of Education, moderates a Student Talkback panel. As the students like to say, “Nothing about us, without us”.

The event is free and open to the public, but registration is required.

Register today at: <https://tinyurl.com/MentalHealthWellnessForum>

Speaker information available at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/180171875915731/>

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**For more information, press only:**

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