

Your Health Matters

STOP SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Another tragic school shooting this month, this one in a Maryland high school, is a sobering call to action against youth violence. We are left reeling, wondering, “How could this have been prevented?” How can we prevent this in Montgomery County schools?

While we don’t always know when and where violence will erupt, or who will cause it, there are often warning signs we can be watchful for. People who are at risk of hurting themselves or others often show signs ahead of time. One warning sign doesn’t necessarily mean a person will break into an act of violence, but warning signs over a period of time may mean that person is moving down a pathway toward self-harm or violence.

Each of us have opportunities to intervene in that path, and get help for that person. Our actions can prevent future violence from occurring and save lives.

On December 14, 2012 a gunman opened fire in Sandy Hook Elementary School. Several family members who lost loved ones formed Sandy Hook Promise, a national non-profit organization that works to provide programs and practices that protect children from gun violence.

They have developed a powerful video called “Tomorrow’s News” which shows the devastating impact of gun violence in our schools and the many opportunities each of us have to prevent it. They warn the video may make some people uncomfortable, but add, “We don’t think anyone should ever feel comfortable about gun violence.”

Watch their video on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/ZvRQ1StsYGw>.

As we observe National Youth Violence Prevention Week, March 19 – 23, let’s commit to watch for signs that may lead to violence – to reach out and speak out to protect our children, our families and our communities, and to get help for those in need.

The Montgomery County Health Department loves taking care of your family, and works every day to protect, promote and improve health in our community. To learn more, call 573-564-2495 or visit us online at www.montgomerycountyhealth.org or on Facebook or Twitter @healthyMOCO. ■

