

Teaching parents about online risks

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As a school resource officer, Keizer Police Sgt. Trevor Wenning has seen a number of reports about bullying and thoughts of suicide by young people.

He's also seen a direct connection between those reports and social media. For that reason, he's created a social media workshop for parents so they can better understand social media behavior and risks.

Silverton Together is hosting "Youth & Technology: Are Our Children At Risk?" a social media informational geared for parents with children ages 10 to 17 years. Presented by the Keizer Police Department, the workshop takes

place at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 28, at the Community Center, 421 S. Water St.

"Parents need to know what is happening online these days and how they can better monitor and protect their children," Silverton Together Program Coordinator Jan Holowati said. "Social Media is a topic that comes up in every parenting class that contains parents of children over 10 years of age. Parents are having problems with discovering what their child is doing online and how to control what they are doing online."

Wenning itemized a number of issues he's detected over time, including cyberbullying, sexting and harassment. One common scenario he described is where teen couples share nude photos, then a breakup occurs and the bitter repercussion involves the scorned sharing

or posting the ex's photo.

"There are a lot of sex crimes that are associated with sexting," he said.

The workshop aims to sort out the various social media scenarios.

"I go over the crimes with the parents and give them examples of how their juvenile son or daughter could end up in the justice system from illegal online behavior," Wenning said.

Wenning said if more parents monitor social media, it would free up school resource officers to focus on weightier issues.

"I feel strongly enough about it that I'm trying to get the word out – and it's free," he said.

For information, contact Holowati at 503-873-0405 or janh@wavecable.com.

Poetry

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icas en Espanol, a bilingual presentation, will air poems by three Latin American poets, in original Spanish and English Translation, at Mt. Angel Abbey Coffee Shop.

That evening, attendees can hear from the author and some of the poets who created the recently published book "Durable Goods: An Appreciation of Oregon Poets." Author Erik Muller and three poets will speak from 7 to 9 p.m. at the White Steeple Gallery.

The festival's finale on Sunday, Feb. 25 features readings from five poets, from 1:30-3:30 p.m., at Mt. Angel Abbey Library Auditorium.

For more information, call 503-269-7895 or log on to www.silvertonpoetry.net.

Suicides

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considered suicide over the previous 12 months.

Statewide, in 2015, there were 695 hospitalizations of youth 24-and-under for self-inflicted injury/attempted suicide, according to the OHA report.

Following the January suicide in Silverton, counseling and crisis teams met with students at Silverton High and Central Howell schools to provide support. A memorial service was held at the high school Feb. 8.

After last year's suicide, district administrators invited students from grades 7-12 and their parents to come hear a presentation by Oregon mom Angie Welty and her young adult son, Cody, a suicide attempt survivor, about mental health.

"I became very humbled about what mental illness really is and what it looks like," Angie Welty said in a radio interview with KINK 101.9. "Because, as a mom, it's not what you think it is."

Silver Falls' day-to-day suicide prevention efforts are more of a long-term campaign, Bellando said. This year most district staff will receive two hours of training in the QPR – Question, Persuade, Respond – approach to prevention.

"This is an evidence-based model, which teaches how to recognize the signs, how to ask the questions and

Warning signs of suicide

- Talking about wanting to die
- Looking for a way to kill oneself
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no purpose
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious, agitated or recklessly

what to do after that," said trainer Kristilyn Woolner, suicide prevention consultant with Willamette Education Service District. "This training really stresses asking questions directly, not in a roundabout way."

She tells trainees to "assume you're the only one who knows," when someone is suicidal – to act, rather than expecting that someone else will.

This fall, the high school also called in representatives from Oregon Youthline, a 24-7 phone teen crisis helpline, to explain their services in freshman health classes.

Another tool for preventing suicide is Silverton High's two-tiered risk assessment protocol. A targeted conversation with a possibly suicidal student constitutes a Level 1 risk assessment. Roughly

- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings
- The more of these signs a person shows, the greater the risk. Warning signs are associated with suicide but may not be what causes a suicide.

an hourlong conversation between a student and counselor, this screening is designed to expose risk factors.

"We ask about withdrawal, hopelessness, conflicts with family or friends or any recent losses," said freshman class counselor Kevin Ortega. "Some of the risk factors are suicide ideation, intent, means and a plan."

Parents or guardians are notified and included in the process because, "we can keep eyes on students at school, but it's crucial to have an adult helping keep them safe at home," Ortega said.

If a Level 1 assessment reveals substantial risk factors, Silverton High turns to experts with Marion County Health for help: "By definition, Level 2 care means bringing in outside mental health workers," he said.

What to do

If someone you know exhibits warning signs of suicide:

- Do not leave the person alone
- Remove any firearms, alcohol, drugs or sharp objects that could be used in a suicide attempt
- Call the U.S. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255)
- Take the person to an emergency room or seek help from a medical or mental health professional

Information provided by www.ReportingOnSuicide.org

These professionals with Youth and Family Crisis Services, a new youth-specific division, will come to the high school – or even a student's home – to meet with a whole family to refer a student to services ranging from inpatient programs to professional care.

New this year to Silverton High, Ortega said he's impressed by the school staff's ability to track and help at-risk students with a personal touch that defies the large size of the student body. Harder to spot are those students who appear to be succeeding but feel so depressed they may be silently considering suicide.

"I hope we can erase the stigma surrounding talking about mental health," Woolner said. "It's a community effort to save our children."

February 23, 2018 at Silverton Wine Bar & Bistro MEET THE BROKERS



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Come meet the brokers of Cascadia Mt. Realty! Christy Marsing Barber, Joshua Gorrell and Joshua Barber will be in the banquet room of the Silverton Wine Bar & Bistro, Friday, February 23, 2018, from 5:00 to 6:00 pm and would love to meet you! This casual event will have a no-host bar and appetizers will be provided. Enter to win one of our prizes!

SEE YOU ON FEBRUARY 23RD!



Have mortgage questions?

Dara Moody and Gretchen Russell of Mortgage Solutions will be on hand to answer any of your lending questions.