



Hello Smith Families, Community, and Staff,

With the recent tragic event in Parkland, Florida, we are once again reminded of the value of community coming together to deal with the personal emotions, concerns, and questions such tragedies raise. We are also reminded of the impact that action as a community can play in preventing future tragedies.

We appreciate that within the Smith community there are varying beliefs on what the “right” course of action is to prevent tragedies like this one, and that the decision of which action to take is a personal one. We also believe and respect that it’s a family decision to determine the level of exposure and discussion you have with your kids about events in the news and your own family values.

One thing we are confident in is that we, as a Smith community, value kindness.

In line with our [Mission Statement](#) as an organization, the Smith PTSA Board of Directors has voted to join several other PTSAs and community groups to participate in and spread the word about **“Wear Blue for Kindness” day on March 14th, 2018. We invite you to join us.**

This idea was started by the McAuliffe Elementary PTSA, and we as a board feel this is an age-appropriate, universal way that we can take immediate action to raise awareness, encourage family conversations, and strengthen connections in our community. We also feel this gives an outlet for families that want to “do something” but may not want to participate in the National Walkout events that are also planned for that day.

We have discussed with Principal Warner that the “Wear Blue for Kindness” complements the actions she and the rest of the staff at Smith are taking in the “Kindness Campaign” they are kicking off at school, and gives students and staff an opportunity to express their commitment to kindness by choosing to wear blue.

Wear Blue for Kindness Day Details

Who: Parents, Students, Teachers, Staff, and Community Members

What: Wear BLUE (color of peace), perform random acts of kindness, look out for those who are lonely, reach out to make new friends, and discuss as a family how kindness makes a difference

When: March 14th, 2018

Where: Anywhere you are that day

Why: Support the power of kindness, and make a statement that we are a community that is committed to creating a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment in our schools

Other Events, Resources, and Opportunities we want to make sure you are aware of:

- Also on March 14th, from 10:00am-10:17am there is a **“National Walkout”** planned at schools across the nation
 - As a private citizen, one of the Smith concerned parents has registered Smith as a site that parents (who may also choose to sign their kids out of school to participate) and community

members may gather (off school grounds) for 17 minutes in remembrance of the 17 people who lost their lives at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

- Organizers of this event have selected the color ORANGE as the color to wear to support this movement
 - This event is not endorsed by the Smith PTSA, however we want you to have access to the details should you choose to participate, and so you can discuss as you feel appropriate with your child as there may be a visible “orange” presence and they may have classmates pulled out of the classroom by parents to participate
 - For more information: <https://actionnetwork.org/events/enough-national-school-walkout-56?source=email&>
- **National PTA Resources:**
 - The National PTA has released several position statements and resolutions. At this time, these are not endorsed by the Smith PTSA. In the future, if we as a board recommend endorsement, Smith PTSA members would have the opportunity to discuss and vote on them at a publicized General Membership Meeting.
 - [National PTA Advocate for Gun Safety and Mental Health Services to Protect Children Press Release](#)
 - Position Statement: [Gun Safety and Violence Prevention](#)
 - Position Statement: [Firearms](#)
 - Resolution on the [Sale, Resale and Destruction of Firearms](#)
 - Resolution on [Violence Prevention](#)
 - Resolution on [Firearm Safety and Awareness](#):
 - Position Statement: [Early Identification and Interventions for Children with Mental Health Needs](#)
 - **Support and get involved in Smith PTSA Sponsored Programs:** You'll be a positive role model, show kids that they are valued, increase sense of belonging, and expand circle of safe adults for kids to go to if they need help. However best fits your interest, time availability and comfort level, we invite you to volunteer.

Here is a sample of programs to support that are made possible by the gift of your time and financial donations to the Smith PTSA:

- [Watch D.O.G.S.®](#), a K-12 program, that invites fathers, grandfathers, uncles, or other father figures to volunteer at least one day, all day, at their child's/student's school during the school year
 - [Explore Art](#) and Read Naturally classroom volunteers- ask your child's teacher how you can get involved
 - Help at an event or on a committee or become a Committee Chair. To find out more visit <http://smithptsa.org/Page/Volunteer/volunteeropportunities> or email volunteer@smithptsa.org
 - Emergency Prep Committee: Our committee chair, continues to do a tremendous job working to ensure our students and teachers have supplies that would be helpful in the event of an emergency, if this an area you are interested in contributing time to, please contact emergencyprep@smithptsa.org
- **Get involved in the Smith PTSA Organization**
 - Our [Nominating Committee](#) is currently accepting nominations for the 2018-2019 Elected Board Positions.

- To be eligible, candidates must have been a member of this PTSA for at least 15 days prior to being elected. Individuals are welcome to recommend themselves. For information about a position, reach out to a current member of the board (contact information by position [HERE](#)) or contact nominations@smithptsa.org.
- Nomination form is available [HERE](#) *Deadline for Nominations: March 30, 2018*
- [Become a 2017-2018 Smith PTSA Member](#) if you are not already
 - Members have a voice and vote on actions we take as a PTSA
 - A portion of your membership dollars go to our State and National PTA/PTSA which advocates for key legislation to support children. When we have 100% membership, we send a strong message that our school and district are made up of parents who are concerned and involved.

Thank you, we hope you will join us in **Wearing Blue For Kindness on March 14th**, and encourage you to get involved to make a difference in a way that aligns with your personal views.

Sincerely,
Your Smith PTSA Board