

A Note To Counselors

The Romeo and Juliet Friends for Life Project is not intended as a guide for suicide intervention training. It is meant to address the issue of providing teachers and students with a common language` for exploring the impetuous actions that led Romeo and Juliet to their tragic deaths. It is hoped that these units will provide an informed basis for discussion and contribute to an atmosphere of open and sensitive communication in the classroom.

Although this packet is directed to teachers and students, counselors can play a vital role in its application and carry over potential. As observers in the classroom during the Romeo and Juliet study unit, counselors have a unique opportunity to listen to students express their views on the adolescent stress and turmoil seen in the play, gaining insight into the outlook and specific concerns of students in their school.

Counselors can provide valuable resource aid to the classroom teacher, such as reviewing with them the critical signs of suicidal behavior, their school's policies regarding responding to such behavior and their community's support services. Counselors' consultation may be sought by teachers regarding student responses, questions and concerns.

The study unit provides an opportunity for team teaching in the classroom. Counselors may wish to expand on the current issues of greatest concern to students that relate to the central theme of the play. This might be done as the issues' arise or students might be asked to list these issues for discussion following the Romeo and Juliet unit.

We hope that this unit and counselors' involvement in it will encourage more students to communicate their concerns to counselors or to other supportive adults.

Finally, there is a leadership role you and the classroom teacher can play in your school by sharing the experience of this training session and its application with colleagues and parents.