



Fall 2020



## A letter from the School Counseling Office

Dear Lincoln Lion Families,

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District is utilizing distance learning for the beginning of the 2020-21 school year. In order to continue providing school counseling services to our Lincoln students, the Lincoln Middle School Counselors are offering short-term virtual school counseling sessions. We are committed to providing your student with the additional support they may need during this unprecedented public health situation. To stay up to date with all counseling related resources and outreach, please review our [Online School Counseling Program](#).

### Confidentiality

As a general rule, Lincoln Middle School Counselors will keep the information your student shares with us in our sessions confidential, as would be expected in a traditional school setting. There are, however, exceptions to this rule that are important for you to understand before your student shares personal information with us in a virtual school counseling session. In some situations, we are required by law or by the guidelines of our profession to disclose sensitive information.

#### Confidentiality cannot be maintained when:

1. Your student discloses a plan to cause serious harm to themselves.
2. Your student discloses a plan to cause harm to others.
3. Your student discloses they are being harmed by someone else.

An exception to this rule is when a student gives the School Counselor permission to share what has been discussed with a trusted adult, such as a parent/guardian, teacher, or principal.

### Risks of Virtual School Counseling

There are many benefits of the virtual school counseling services that we provide; however, there are potential risks with this technology as well.

1. The video and/or phone connection may not work or it may stop working during the virtual counseling session.
2. Due to the nature of the service, we cannot guarantee full confidentiality considering the makeup of online communication and/or lack of control over end-user security. Platforms like Google Meet and Zoom are encrypted services that are district approved. They are both very secure platforms, but we cannot guarantee full confidentiality with 100% certainty. We encourage a quiet and private space for your student where they will not be disturbed or interrupted during their virtual counseling session.

### Consent

This document serves as notice to Lincoln Middle School parents/guardians of the benefits and risks of virtual school counseling services made available by the Lincoln Middle School Counselors of Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District.



State law allows you to opt out of services provided to your child outside of academic advisement. *If you do not wish your student to participate in individual, short term, school based counseling, please notify your student's school counselor in writing as soon as possible.*

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If you have any questions regarding the counseling services, please feel free to communicate with your student's school counselor. We are grateful to be working with your students and hope to support all Lincoln Middle School families through this difficult time.

Stay healthy,

**Lincoln Middle School Counseling Department**

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## **We know this is a difficult time for everyone...**

**IF YOU HAVE AN URGENT MENTAL HEALTH NEED, PLEASE CALL 9-1-1**

**If you are feeling sad, hopeless, or depressed, please text use the hotline numbers that are open 24/7:**

- Text "hello" to **741-741**
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline: **1-800-273-8255**
- California Youth Crisis Line: **1-800-843-5200**
- Didi Hirsch Suicide Prevention: **1-877-727-4747**
- Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health: **1-800-854-7771**
- Teen Line: **1-800-852-8336**
- Trevor Lifeline (LGBTQ): **1-866-488-7386**