



June 11, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

At the request of our eighth grade graduating class, I was searching for a professional to come speak on mental health. The end of the year was quickly approaching, and I was fortunate that a co-worker connected with Attitudes in Reverse.

As stated in their literature, Attitudes In Reverse® (AIR™) is a non-profit organization that has educated over 65,000 youth about good mental health and signs of suicide since 2011. Their belief is that through education, understanding and acceptance, our youth will not be afraid or embarrassed to ask for help for a biological brain illness. Mental health disorders are no different from any other illness and no one should ever be judged or ridiculed for having an illness.

Tricia Baker was kind enough to fly to Austin without much notice, and her presentation was exceptional. Her slides defined, destigmatized, and provided recent data on mental health disorders. Our students were riveted. At the conclusion, students had the opportunity to ask questions. In addition to the information provided, students received a t-shirt and wristbands.

Most importantly students were charged with reaching out for help for themselves and for others. Just this week, we learned of two deaths by suicide: Kate Spade and Anthony Bourdain. Educating our youth is essential, and I highly recommend Attitudes in Reverse for its outstanding program.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Hersh
Head of School
Austin Jewish Academy