

Ryan's Story: Parent Evening Presentation

An Evening for Parents and Caregivers

Join John Halligan for a powerful 60-minute presentation designed specifically for parents and caregivers. This evening program complements the student assembly by providing parents with the family lessons, practical guidance, and tools needed to protect children in today's digital world and foster healthier peer relationships.

About John Halligan and Ryan's Story

In 2003, John Halligan lost his 13-year-old son, Ryan, to suicide following experiences with bullying and cyberbullying. Since then, John has dedicated his life to preventing other families from experiencing similar tragedy. He has reached over 1 million students across 2,500+ schools in the United States, Canada, and Latin America, and his advocacy led to Vermont's Bully Prevention Law (ACT 117, 2004) and mandatory suicide prevention education law (ACT 114, 2006).

What This Evening Will Cover

The parent presentation focuses on:

- **The story of what happened to Ryan** - Told with raw emotional honesty from a father's perspective
- **Family lessons learned** - What John wishes he had known before losing Ryan
- **Social media risks and realities** - Understanding the digital landscape your children navigate daily
- **Your responsibility as a parent** - Monitoring technology use, knowing your child's online world, and understanding peer dynamics
- **Warning signs** - Recognizing depression, suicidal ideation, and when your child may be struggling
- **Practical recommendations** - Actionable steps you can take immediately to protect and support your children
- **The power of communication** - Creating an environment where your child feels safe coming to you with problems

Why This Evening Matters

As parents, we cannot delegate our children's safety and well-being entirely to schools. This presentation emphasizes parental responsibility for:

- **Monitoring and managing children's technology use** - Understanding what apps, platforms, and online spaces your child accesses

- **Knowing your child's peer relationships** - Both online and in person
- **Creating open lines of communication** - So children feel comfortable sharing struggles, fears, and concerns
- **Recognizing when intervention is needed** - And knowing how to respond effectively

What Makes This Presentation Different

Unlike generic parenting seminars, Ryan's Story offers:

- **Lived experience** - John speaks as a father who has walked through unimaginable loss, not as a clinical expert
- **Unfiltered truth** - The real story of what happened, without sanitization or sensationalism
- **Practical, not theoretical** - Concrete actions parents can take, based on hard-won wisdom
- **Emotional connection** - A presentation that moves parents to action through authenticity and vulnerability
- **Balance of grief and hope** - Acknowledging the pain while emphasizing prevention and healing

Proven Impact

Parents who attend Ryan's Story report:

- Increased awareness of social media risks and their children's online activities
- Better communication with their children about bullying, mental health, and peer pressure
- Greater vigilance in monitoring technology and peer relationships
- Deeper understanding of warning signs and when to seek help
- Renewed commitment to active, engaged parenting

Recognition and Media Appearances

John has appeared on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *Primetime with Diane Sawyer*, and PBS *Frontline*. He spoke at the United Nations Cyberhate Seminar (2009) and has received the FBI Director's Community Service Award and The Learning Channel Give a Little Award. He has published two books about Ryan's story.

Complementing the Student Assembly

While the student presentation focuses on empathy, kindness, and bystander intervention, the parent evening emphasizes:

- **Your role in prevention** - What you can do at home to reinforce the messages students hear
- **Technology and social media oversight** - Practical strategies for monitoring without invading privacy
- **Family communication** - How to create space for difficult conversations
- **Recognizing red flags** - Warning signs that may indicate your child is being bullied, is bullying others, or is struggling with mental health

Together, the student and parent presentations create a comprehensive approach to bullying and suicide prevention that involves the entire school community.

Additional Resources

For more information, discussion guides, and supplementary materials, visit:
<https://www.ryanpatrickhalligan.org/resources>

John Halligan

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This presentation is an investment in your child's safety, well-being, and future. Join us for an evening that may change how you parent in the digital age.