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For Immediate Release

**Suicide Prevention Resource Center and American Foundation
for Suicide Prevention List SOS Signs of Suicide® Middle
School Program as Best Practice**

WELLESLEY HILLS, MA—(November 19, 2010)—Screening for Mental Health, Inc. (SMH) is pleased to announce that its SOS Middle School Program is now listed in Section III of the Best Practices Registry (BPR) for Suicide Prevention. In order to be accepted into the BPR, the SOS Middle School Program was reviewed for accuracy, safety, likelihood of meeting goals and objectives and adherence to prevention program guidelines by a panel of experts from the Suicide Prevention Resource Center and American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Practices listed in Section III of the BPR address specific objectives of the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention.

“This is a tremendous honor and a testament of our continued commitment and dedication to providing the best mental health programs for middle schools,” says Connie DiCocco, executive director of Screening for Mental Health. “The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention list suicide as the third leading cause of death for 15 to 24-year-olds in the United States. This fact reinforces the importance and value of the SOS Middle School Program as a tool that school personnel can use to reach out to students and potentially save lives.”

Developed by SMH, the SOS Middle School Program uses a universal prevention approach to assist in identification of at-risk youth by addressing the issues of depression, suicide and self-injury. The main teaching tool of the program is an educational DVD that helps students learn how to identify symptoms of depression and suicidality in themselves, or a friend. The DVD, which is called Get Into the ACT®, encourages students to ACT by using this help-seeking technique that highlights three simple steps that students can do in the face of a mental health crisis:

- Acknowledge: Listen to your friend. Don’t ignore threats.
- Care: Let your friend know you care.
- Tell: Tell a trusted adult that you are worried about your friend.

The SOS Middle School Program is designed to meet the specific needs of middle school students and to provide tools and resources they can use to make a difference in their life or the life of a friend. Through guided classroom discussion, the program lets students know where to turn for help within the school system if they are feeling depressed or suicidal.

SMH is dedicated to promoting the improvement of mental health by providing the public with education, screening and treatment resources.

SMH pioneered the concept of large-scale mental health screening and education programs in 1991, with its flagship program, National Depression Screening Day[®]. SMH programs—both in-person and online—educate, raise awareness and screen individuals for depression, bipolar disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, eating disorders, alcohol use disorders and suicide.

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