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**Date: 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

**Dear Parent / Guardian**

On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March the College will be presenting a performance from a project called **Acting for the Future** run by Smashing Times Theatre and Film Company which uses a professional theatre performance to promote positive mental health and suicide prevention. The project is run in association with the Samaritans, with assistance from a panel of advisors.

On this date the company also presents a monologue 'A Day Out' from the highly acclaimed **Testimonies** by Mary Moynihan and Paul Kennedy. **Testimonies** is a professional theatre performance and consists of dramatic monologues adapted from the experiences of those who have lost loved ones to suicide and from the experiences of those who have been through a suicidal crisis and survived. During the performance of 'A Day Out' the actor presents the story of the last day he spends with his friend who takes his own life and his subsequent struggles to make sense of his friend's actions. The performance is followed by a post-show discussion and a drama workshop with a registered psychotherapist and invited guest speakers from the Samaritans. Audience members are invited to the workshop and to discuss the issues raised by the performances.

If you do not want your son to attend the above or take part in the evaluation of the Smashing Times workshop (details attached), please complete the relevant section at the end of the attached document and return to Ms McManus by Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Yours sincerely,

R.E. Department

## **Dear Parent/Guardian**

As you know Smashing Times is coming to your school with their award winning participatory workshop. In another letter you have been invited to give consent for your son to take part in the workshop. This letter is inviting you to help us evaluate what impact these workshops are having on the young people who attend. Please read the information below before you decide whether or not you are happy for your son to take part.

### **What is this research about?**

We are interested in how the Smashing Times workshop impacts on young people's understanding of mental health issues including their knowledge about how and where to ask for help, and their own willingness to ask for help when they need it.

### **What is my son being asked to do?**

We are asking every young person who takes part whether they would be willing to complete a few questions before they take part in the workshop, and then again after the workshop to see whether their knowledge about mental health increases and to see whether they feel differently about asking for help in the future should they need it. There are about 20 questions to answer **before** the workshop. There are about 20 questions to answer **after** the workshop and these will be completed in school with the workshop facilitator.

### **Does my son have to take part?**

No. Answering these questions is completely voluntary and does not impact on your son's ability to take part in the workshop. If you or your son decides to take part, but then changes their mind you can withdraw from the research study by letting one of the research team know. If you withdraw from the study your son's data will be erased and not used in the final report.

### **What are you going to do with my son's answers?**

When we get the answer booklets we will assign your son a numerical code and use this to enter their data into the computer. We will keep the hard copy of the booklet safe in a locked filing cabinet at Smashing Times. When we have all the data we will write a final report with our findings. Your son's data is confidential, except when we have reason to believe that they might be at risk of harm, or if the data could be needed as part of a Garda investigation. Under the Freedom of Information Act you have the right to get a copy of your son's data. If you would like a copy of their answers just get in touch with one of the research team.

### **What do I do now?**

If you **do not** wish for your son to participate in this survey, please complete and return the attached slip to Ms Mc Manus.