

Lewis and Clark Community College 2024 Active Minds Send Silence Packing® Exhibit

by Jared Smilack
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GODFREY - For more than a decade, Active Minds' acclaimed [Send Silence Packing®](#) exhibit has traveled the country to end the silence that surrounds mental health and suicide and connect visitors with resources for support and action.

The 2024 display will be at Lewis and Clark Community College's Godfrey Campus from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., April 29.

The all-day exhibit includes personal stories from individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide and is designed to raise awareness about the impact of suicide, connect individuals to mental health resources, and inspire action for suicide prevention.

Passersby are invited to walk among the Send Silence Packing backpacks to see the photographs and read the stories attached to them. Many of the backpacks were donated by families who lost a loved one to suicide.

"Lewis and Clark Community College is committed to the emotional and physical well-being of our campus community," Counselor and Associate Professor Terri Austin said. "We are excited to bring this exhibit to our campus to encourage conversations and awareness about mental health and how best to support those struggling with mental health concerns."

Austin invites community members to visit this informative and inspiring event.

Since its inaugural display on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. in 2008, Send Silence Packing has reached over a million visitors and counting with messages of hope and help. Evaluation data attests to the display's impact – most visitors leave wanting to learn more about mental health and the majority tell three or more people about the display and may reach out to a friend in need or seek help for themselves as a result of experiencing it.

Active Minds also recently launched a companion exhibit designed to complement the in-person program – [*Send Silence Packing: Behind the Backpacks*](#). This virtual, immersive experience gives users an in-depth look at the impact of suicide through personal stories, stigma reduction techniques, and visual components such as videos, photos, and audio. Visitors to *Send Silence Packing* will have a chance to learn more about *Behind the Backpacks* and easily share this program with friends, family, and their communities. This can be experienced both at the exhibit and at home.

"I founded Active Minds as a freshman in college following the death of my brother, Brian, to suicide in order to end the stigma around mental health," said Alison Malmon, founder and executive director of Active Minds. "Stigma is shame, shame causes silence, and silence hurts us all. Send Silence Packing is a highly visible way to combat that stigma, increase openness, and inspire action for suicide prevention."

“Thank you, Lewis and Clark Community College for bringing the 2024 exhibit to your community to help continue to spread awareness and inspire action around mental health and suicide prevention efforts.”

Send Silence Packing: Behind the Backpacks was made possible by a generous donation from the RSM US Foundation.

More information about Send Silence Packing or Behind the Backpacks can be found at activeminds.org/ssp.

For more information about L&C’s event, please contact Terri Austin at taaustin@lc.edu or (618) 468-4125.

About Active Minds: Active Minds is the nation’s leading nonprofit organization promoting mental health awareness and education for young adults. Active Minds has a presence at more than 800 campuses, schools, communities, and workplaces nationwide, and is powered by a robust Chapter Network, the nationally acclaimed Send Silence Packing® exhibit, inspiring Active Minds Speakers, and much more. The organization is dedicated to ending the silence around and changing the conversation about mental health for everyone. To learn more, visit www.activeminds.org.

About Lewis and Clark Community College: Lewis and Clark Community College is a two-year higher education institution with multiple campuses, a river research center, a training center and Community Education Centers located throughout its more than 220,000-person college district, which reaches parts of seven counties.

In addition to offering associate degrees and certificates in nearly 40 career programs and numerous transfer options, the college has something for just about everyone – including College for Kids, a nationally accredited dual credit program for high school students, high school diploma (formerly GED®) completion and a robust workforce education and safety training program. Learn more at www.lc.edu/discover.