

One Book, One Saint Joes *Theme of all-school read parallels current experience*

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“We All Fall Down” is this year’s One Book, One Saint Joes selection, and its theme is dealing with crises.



The story follows members of families who were either victims of violence or who caused physical and psychological damage to others.

While the challenges forced by the pandemic are not as extreme as those presented in the novel by Roger Cromier, managing crises is still at the center of how people are dealing with sudden change.

“These are challenging times for all of us,” said Diane Palumbo, Saint Joes counselor. “For adolescents there are unique challenges, and we’re working hard to make sure our students are aware of these challenges and to both support them and to encourage them to be good decision-makers.”

To that end, Saint Joes recently conducted two workshops, one for juniors and seniors and the other for freshmen and sophomores, with an activity conducted through homeroom.

“Talking with peers and adults is an important part of processing,” Palumbo said. “And with the resource of a guest speaker, homerooms held conversations on a chosen topic in preparation for a presentation they created.”



Matthew Quinn, a licensed clinical counselor and community relations coordinator for Rosecrance, a Rockford-based nonprofit specializing in mental health and addiction treatment, spoke to students about challenges facing teenagers, especially the attraction of vaping.

During his presentation, Quinn talked about the dangers of vaping and how teenagers are the prime target of marketing by the media. After sharing stories about teen vaping use, he encouraged students to educate themselves more and to help others stop vaping.

After the talk, students finalized their presentations in homeroom and presented them to other homerooms through Microsoft Teams.

“When we went remote in March, our focus was on delivering instruction via Zoom as best as we could,” said Saint Joes Principal David Hotek. “Our focus has broadened because of the uncertainty of when we will return to what was. Meanwhile, we will continue to address what we can do to meet the educational and emotional needs of our students.”