

Suicide

Suicide Prevention

Suicide rarely happens without some warning to someone. Staff and faculty need to take all comments about suicidal thoughts seriously. Especially if details of a suicide plan are shared. If a student suggests he/she is thinking about committing suicide in the near future:

- Notify the principal.
- Notify a trained district counselor or psychologist (under no circumstances should an untrained person attempt to assess the severity of suicidal risk).
- Ask counselor or psychologist to notify the student's parent/guardian, or other emergency contact.
- If parent/guardian or emergency contact can not be reached, notify Mental Health, Child Protection or police.
- The school office should maintain a confidential record of action.

Emergency Intervention

- Show concern but avoid being consumed by the student's emotional distortions.
- Listen with genuine interest. Ask the student questions in a calm, straightforward manner.
- Accept and encourage appropriate expressions of grief or anger.
- Help the student clarify the issues that are bothering him/her.
- Don't leave the student. Accompany him or her to the school counselor, psychologist or principal.
- Notify the principal and the student's parent or guardian.
- Document actions taken.

If A Suicide Occurs In Class

- Call the sheriff's office. Have as much information ready as possible.
- Evacuate the room, leaving crime scene as is.
- Gather affected students in one room for care. Gather witnesses in another room for police questioning. Do not allow them to leave until police arrive. Assign staff to stay with them.

Handling Peers of a Suicide Victim

- An emergency faculty meeting will be called and teachers will be informed.
- A crisis center will be set up where counselors will be available for individual or small group counseling.
- No public address system should be used to inform the student body. If close friends of the

victim are not aware of it, they should be notified privately first. After the teachers and close friends have been informed, the teacher, counselor or other crisis team members should address the class.

- Teachers will allow students who are upset to come to the crisis center.
- If a student wants to leave school, they must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Students should not be left alone at home.

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