

# Dumas ISD

# Crisis Intervention Plan

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## Statement of Purpose

Crisis can occur for school age children in many ways, including the death of a student, death of a teacher, natural disaster or a community disaster. Any crisis event affects students, teachers and parents in a variety of ways. Dumas ISD is committed to providing for the emotional and physical well-being of students and faculty when unpredictable events occur. During a crisis, a team can further this emotional well-being of students in several ways:

1. Local staff members may be in need of personal support during a crisis.
2. The crisis team functions, as the local school needs it to, from individual counseling with students, to meeting with entire classes, to consulting with local staff members.
3. Team members are flexible enough to meet the needs of the particular school within the framework of that school's crisis plan.
4. A crisis team member can serve as a consultant to an administrator or counselor, rather than having an entire team travel to the school.

It will be the goal of the crisis team to help schools return to normal relatively soon while caring for the emotional needs of the school community. The team will help schools with the initial crisis, leaving them to better care for students in the following days.

## Definition and Intent

**A Crisis** is a sudden, generally unanticipated event that profoundly and negatively affects a significant segment of the school population and often involves serious injury or death.

**Crisis Management** is that part of a school division's approach to school safety which focuses more narrowly on a time-limited, problem-focused intervention to identify, confront and resolve the crisis, restore equilibrium, and support appropriate adaptive responses.

The intent of the Crisis Management plan is a central component of comprehensive **School Safety**. The most important consideration in both Crisis Management and Safe Schools efforts is the **health, safety and welfare** of the students and staff. A comprehensive Safe Schools Plan places a strong emphasis on prevention using strategies which range from building design to discipline policies and programs which improve school climate.

## Procedures

### Immediately Following Notification of Crisis

The school administrator or designee should implement the following procedures when the school is notified of a near-death or fatal crisis situation:

- ***Tell the person providing the information not to repeat it elsewhere this includes school, home, social media, etc.*** Explain the school's need to verify the information and have any

announcement of the event come from the designated school personnel. If there is concern regarding the likelihood of compliance with this request, it may be useful to keep the reporting person in the office (or have that person come into the office if he or she called the information) until appropriate steps can be taken.

- ***Tell office staff members NOT to repeat or give out any information within or outside school until specifically instructed to do so.*** Have them direct all inquiries to the administrator or designee until told otherwise. In schools using student office help, it may be useful to request that only adults answer the school telephone for the remainder of the day.

In case of reporting student death, verify the reported incident by calling the police liaison.  
**DO NOT DISTURB THE AFFECTED STUDENT'S FAMILY.**

The timing of the notification of a crisis may alter the order of the initial steps taken. For example, if the school is notified in the morning, all procedures should be implemented on that day with emergency faculty meetings scheduled for lunch and after school. If notification is received at night or on the weekend, ask the person providing the information not to spread the information further until the situation is verified.

### **Following Verification of Crisis**

The following actions are listed in a priority order. In actuality, several things will happen simultaneously. It is critical, however, that #1-10 occur **BEFORE THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT (#11) IS MADE.**

Once verification of a crisis has occurred, the administrator and/or crisis response team designee(s) must attend to the following:

1. Notify the Superintendent or other appropriate division administrators of the event. Have that person notify the media liaison if appropriate.
2. Convene the Crisis Response Team. Do not unnecessarily alarm others.
3. Have an administrative assistant or other designee notify the school's LSSP and/or counselors. If the affected student was in a special education or other special program, notify the appropriate program coordinator.
4. Notify faculty through email, text message or face to face communication so that they will have time to process the event before students are informed. If at all possible, hold a faculty meeting where questions can be answered and staff support can be provided. ***Tell them not to say anything to students yet and after the students are notified then only***

*Speak of facts not rumors or speculations.*

5. Prepare a formal statement for initial announcement to the entire school. Include only facts (this could be the press release) and note that additional information will be forthcoming. Also prepare statements for telephone inquiries.
6. Identify students, staff and parents likely to be most affected by the news (e.g., due to their relationship to the deceased/injured, recent or anticipated family losses, personal history with similar crisis, recent confrontations with the affected student). These persons are targeted for additional support.
7. Determine if additional district/community resources are needed — or are needed to “stand by” — to effectively manage the crisis, and notify them if appropriate.
8. Assign team members in the building to:
  - a. Provide grief support for students in designated building areas. Try to have more than one area available for this purpose. Have the adults on duty in these areas keep lists of students they see. Make sure the parents/guardians of these students are notified regarding the impact of the event on their children.
  - b. Review and distribute guidelines to help teachers with classroom discussion.
  - c. Stand in for any substitute teacher in the building or for any staff member unable or unwilling to deal with the situation during the announcement and subsequent discussion.
  - d. Coordinate and greet all auxiliary support services staff members and take them to their assigned locations. Provide a sign-in/out sheet for them.
  - e. Assign a counselor, psychologist, social or other designated staff member to follow a *deceased student’s class schedule or the deceased staff member’s schedule* for the remainder of the day.
9. Station staff/student support members as planned prior to making the announcement.
10. Announce the crisis over the public address system or by delivering a typed statement to every classroom before the end of the period. Include locations of in-building support such as location of counselor or additional support.

**Once the announcement is made, assigned staff members will perform the following:**

1. Monitor the students leaving the building without permission. Redirect them to support services. If unable to intercept, notify a family member expressing the school's concerns.
2. Notify parents of students closest to the deceased/injured.
3. Notify bus drivers — especially those who drive the buses usually traveled in by the injured or deceased student, or who are experiencing the most severe shock.
4. Notify feeder schools regarding siblings or other students predicted to be strongly affected.
5. Discuss with family about the collection of deceased student's belonging from his/her locker or other sites at the end of the day. This ensures that the student's belongings get to his/her family.
6. Officially withdraw a deceased student from the school attendance rolls.

**Crises Occurring During Summer or Holiday Periods**

If a school administrator or other crisis response team member is notified of a crisis during the summer (or when affected students are off-track if they attend year-round schools), the response usually will be one of limited school involvement. In that case, the following steps should be taken:

1. Institute the phone tree to disseminate information to Crisis Response Team members and request a meeting of all available members.
2. Identify close friends/staff most likely to be affected by the crisis. Keep the list and recheck it when school reconvenes.
3. Notify staff or families of students identified in # 2 and recommend community resources for support, as appropriate.
4. Notify general faculty/staff by letter or telephone with appropriate information.
5. Provide update at faculty meeting held prior to student's return to school.
6. Be alert for repercussions among students and staff. When school reconvenes, check core group of friends and other at-risk students and staff, and institute appropriate support mechanisms and referral procedures.

Crises that occur during vacation or when students are off-track require fewer responses from the school.

# **Crisis Management Planning**

## **Definitions**

1. “Crisis” shall include but not be limited to situations involving the death of a student, staff member, or a member of a student’s immediate family by suicide, substance abuse, illness, or accident. The principals shall have the authority to determine what a crisis incident is and to convene the Crisis Management Team.
2. “Critical incidents” shall include situations involving threats of harm to students, personnel, or facilities. Critical incidents include but are not limited to natural disasters, fire, use of weapons/explosives, and the taking of hostages. Such incidents require an interagency response involving law enforcement and/or emergency services agencies.

## **Crisis Management Team**

An Individual School Crisis Management Team shall be established at each school to meet the demands of crisis incidents.

1. Membership: The crisis team shall consist of an immediately accessible core group who have the knowledge and skills to act in any emergency and shall include the principal, assistant principal, one or more school counselors, nurse/clinic attendant, school psychologist, one or more selected teachers, and a person to record events/minutes of meetings. Additionally, the Police Department (school resource officer, D.A.R.E. officer, or other person designated by the Police Chief), Mental Health Services, Fire Department, and County Emergency Rescue Services shall be asked to consult with the school team. A roster of team members will be posted in each school administration office.
2. Purposes: The Crisis Team shall implement and adapt appropriate action from the Crisis Management Plan to address the specific events of the crisis. Roles and responsibilities of team members and consultants will be established in the school’s written Crisis Management Plan.

## **Crisis Management Plan**

Each school Crisis Management Plan will include provisions for Pre-planning, Intervention/Response, and Post-emergency activities, including the establishment or designation of the following:

1. Explicit procedures for each crisis incident.

2. Crisis headquarters and command post outside the school facility in the event evacuation is necessary.
3. Chain of command in the event a key administrator is not available.
4. Spokesperson to the media. This person will be the principal or designee and is responsible for gathering and confirming all pertinent information about the incident and for informing the school division's public information officer prior to any media release. The spokesperson will also designate a media reception area when deemed appropriate.
5. Network of key communicators. It is the responsibility of these key individuals to convey approved information to others. This network may include phone trees to notify staff of emergency incidents and special meetings which may occur before or after school hours, and various counselors designated to support groups such as students, faculty, and parents.
6. Communication plan within the school and to the community. The best means of communication may vary with the crisis. However, the plan must provide for communicating with teachers as soon as possible. When appropriate, well-informed representatives should be ready to go into classrooms. Avoid giving news via assembly or public address systems as results can be unpredictable when giving shocking news to large groups of students. To ensure accuracy and avoid rumor, information to students must come directly from internal memoranda or statements written specifically for that purpose and approved by the principal. News is best given to students in class so they can ask questions of a person they know. Questions from parents should also be addressed from pre-approved fact sheet.
7. Critical Incident Management. Critical incident response will be in accordance with the Memoranda of Understanding executed between the Dumas ISD and the Departments of Police, of Fire, and of Emergency Services.
8. Arrangement for support services. One individual from the Crisis Management Team will be designated to contact the school board office and to contact, as needed, other community resources such as Mental Health Crisis Services. The school board office will arrange for assistance as needed from additional school psychologists, school social workers, and other school counselors and to contact Mental Health Crisis Services. School arrangements should include the designation of meeting spaces, provisions to request on-call services to meet unexpected demand, and provision of long term follow-up.
9. Bring closure to the crisis. This activity will vary depending on the crisis. But it is imperative to recognize officially the end of the crisis and the beginning of the healing

process.

10. Evaluation of the crisis plan. Response to each crisis incident will be reviewed and evaluated at the conclusion of each crisis. Crisis Management Team annually will evaluate the plan and its effectiveness and make modifications as needed.

### **Crisis Management Inservice**

The Crisis Management Plan shall be reviewed annually with the full school staff and shared with all transient staff, nurse/clinic attendants, secretaries, cafeteria staff, custodians, and bus drivers. Schools are encouraged to provide inservice on specific crisis related topics such as substance abuse code violations, neglect and abuse, and suicide prevention. Approved by School Board

## **Overview and Rationale**

### **Overview**

Dumas Independent School District has developed procedures for dealing with existing and potential student and school crises. The Comprehensive Crisis Management plan includes Intervention Procedures, Crisis Response Procedures, and Critical Incident Procedures. An important component of the Plan is a set of interagency agreements with various county agencies to aid timely communication and help coordinate services between the agencies and individual schools or the entire school division.

Intervention Procedures provide a systematic process for identifying, referring, and assessing students who may be suicidal or represent a potential threat to others. Crisis teams established in each school provide immediate intervention with referred students. Team members have been trained to assess the seriousness of the situation and respond according to specific guidelines. The team gathers information from other sources, chooses a team member to interview the referred student, develops a plan, directs the student and family to appropriate help, appoints a case manager, and provides follow-up. Additionally, schools regularly provide inservice training to faculty and staff about recognizing students in crisis and on referral procedures.

Crisis Response Procedures guide staff in responding to more frequently occurring crises such as deaths of students or teachers and other traumatic events which can affect the school community for days. These procedures are intended to be time-limited, problem-focused interventions designed to identify and resolve the crisis, restore equilibrium, and support productive responses. The crisis team uses crisis response procedures to help administrators:

- gather information;
- establish communication with the family;
- disseminate accurate information to faculty and students;
- intervene directly with students most likely to be affected;

- increase the available supportive counseling for students and staff; and
- guide students in helpful ways to remember the deceased.

Critical Incident Procedures help school personnel handle potentially dangerous events such as an armed intruder in a school and other life-threatening events. The school division has developed a Plan which emphasizes a coordinated interagency approach. A Code Blue has been established in all school buildings to provide a uniform method of warning staff and students of high risk situations involving imminent danger to life or limb.

#### Interagency Agreements

Dumas Independent School District has entered into agreements with various county governmental agencies, including mental health, police, and fire departments. The agreements specify the type of communications and services provided by one agency to another. The agreements also make school division personnel available beyond the school setting in the event of a disaster or traumatic event taking place in the community.

#### Rationale

Dumas Independent School District Crisis Management Plan procedures provide benefits for students, parents, and the school division. The procedures provide an organized, systematic method for helping students. Staff members know under what circumstances and how to refer a student for help. Crisis Team members operate within specific guidelines to make collaborative decisions, sharing the responsibility of these often difficult, stressful situations. Parents and other members of the community are assured that the school division has established procedures which provide for needed intervention with troubled students and better prepare schools to respond to crises.

The school division benefits through increased legal protection. Systems that have not established crisis management procedures have been found liable for their absence. While no set of policies rules out the potential for legal problems, establishing guidelines on the best professional practices provides a margin of protection against liability.

The interagency agreements have fostered stronger collaborative relationships and have led to improved communication about students and family events that could impact the schools.

## **Annual Start-Up Procedures for All Schools**

### *Annual Start-Up Procedures*

1. Confirm membership of the crisis team.
2. Send a list of team members to the Community Relations Office.

3. Decide on a coordinator and substitute for synchronizing suicide intervention, critical incident, and postvention procedures.
4. Plan at least two crisis team meetings. It is mandatory that crisis teams meet prior to the beginning of the school year and one other time during the school year to review procedures, especially critical incidents, and check equipment such as crisis boxes.
5. Inform faculty of crisis members. Print intervention, crisis response and critical incident procedures in the faculty handbook.
6. Review critical incident communication codes with faculty and staff.
7. Update faculty phone tree.
8. The team needs to not only review procedures annually, but should go through at least two scenarios using the Postvention Steps form. The key to successfully handling an incident is the preparation before the event.
9. Meet with new staff members annually to inform them of intervention, crisis response critical incident procedures, emphasizing the referral process for crisis intervention.
10. Hold a general faculty/staff inservice on intervention, crisis response and critical incident procedures every several years.

*(This example is an adaptation based on Chesterfield County Public Schools Crisis Management Plan.)*

## **Assigned Roles**

### **Central Office Crisis Planning and Response Team**

*Assigned Roles for School Division Staff during a School Emergency*

#### **Superintendent**

- Direct all operations of the division in the management of the emergency.
- Gather information from all aspects of the emergency for use in making appropriate decisions about the management of the emergency.
- Assess the emergency situation and assign tasks based on the overall needs for managing the emergency.

- Direct all activities of division and school staff in the management of the emergency.
- Collect and disseminate information to the media. Be aware of deadlines, the need for information accuracy, and other issues related to the media and the performance of their jobs.
- Plan and coordinate press interviews to help the news media meet deadlines.
- Create and disseminate press releases.
- Stay in contact with the leaders of the emergency service agencies and the law enforcement agencies working with the emergency.
- Authorize the release of information to the public.
- Keep School Board informed of emergency status.
- The Assistant Superintendent for Instruction will assist Superintendent and serve in this capacity in the absence of the Superintendent.

### **Assistant Superintendent for Instruction**

- Establish and implement plan for crisis; form and coordinate crisis teams.
- Maintain active file of helping agencies within the community; the names of contact person will be included.
- Maintain active file of community persons, such as counselors, doctors, psychologists, ministers; information regarding services and follow-up services will be included.
- Create letters to notify parents of continuing care that is available to students; available care will include local and state agencies, as well as school-based care.
- Develop information sheet for parents, teachers, and others; information will include topics such as talking with students, signs of depression, and others relating to crisis stress.
- Develop schedule for activities for the first day of school following the crisis with support services.
- Maintain follow-up activities such as referrals for help outside the school services setting.

- Report immediately to the local hospital if students or adults are being sent to that hospital for treatment. If more than one hospital is admitting students or adults, coordinate communication among those hospitals and the division. Assign and direct other division staff to assist in those hospitals.
- Coordinate communication between the hospital and the division office.
- Meet and talk with the parents of students and spouses of adults who have been admitted to the hospital.

### **Assistant Superintendent for Business**

- Plan and initiate arrangements for food for building personnel.
- Notify risk management of emergency.
- Coordinate with director of transportation as needed.
- Arrange for the payment of monies needed to respond to emergency situations; authorize purchases and payments for such resources.

### **Assistant Superintendent for Personnel**

- Media and Press Release

### **Principals**

#### *School Crisis*

- Be familiar with central office support available to principals.
- Make school crisis plan, crisis management handbook, and emergency management kit readily available to appropriate staff.

#### *Division Crisis*

- Remain at respective schools until the end of the school day.
- When all students and staff members have left campus for the day, be prepared to report to the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction.
- Perform tasks assigned by the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction.

## **Crisis Response Team**

### **Responsibilities**

The DISD School Crisis Response Team, under leadership of the principal, is responsible for the following:

1. Establishing a protocol for dealing with crises and critical incidents.
2. Establishing a systematic approach for identifying, referring, and intervening with students identified as at-risk for suicide or other destructive behaviors.
3. Orienting staff to procedures and training to fulfill designated roles, including conducting drills.
4. Providing information to students, staff, and community on Crisis Management referral procedures.
5. Providing assistance during a crisis in accordance with designated roles; providing follow-up activities.
6. Conducting debriefing at the conclusion of each crisis episode to critique the effectiveness of the building's Crisis Management Plan.
7. Conducting periodic reviews and up-dating of the Crisis Management Plan; conducting related updated staff training.

### **Duties of Members of Crisis Response Team**

Duties of members of the crisis response team are as follows:

- A. The **Principal** will coordinate and supervise emergency management activities at the school. Assignments include:
  1. Continuity of administration.
  2. Development of a comprehensive school emergency management program.
  3. Designation and training of a school Crisis Team.
  4. Designation of an Emergency Operations Center or command post (may be changed by responsible county public safety officials.)
  5. Monitor developing situations such as weather conditions or incidents in the community that may impact the school.
  6. Keep county officials, division staff and school personnel informed of developing situations and initiate emergency notifications and warnings.

7. Direct emergency operations until public safety officials arrive on scene. Serve as a liaison to public safety personnel once they arrive on the scene.
8. Implement evacuation procedures and measures to control access to affected area.
9. Authorize the release of information to the public.
10. Coordinate use of building as public shelter for major emergencies occurring in the county.
11. Provide damage assessment information to the Superintendent of Schools. In major emergencies, damage assessment information will be forwarded to the Emergency Services Coordinator for determination of local emergency status and request for federal assistance.
12. Coordinate disaster assistance and recovery.

B. The **Crisis Team** is trained in intervention and postvention procedures. Team members include the principal, counselor, teachers, school nurse and school social worker – assign the appropriate staff.

The Team has responsibility to:

1. Develop and implement procedures for prevention, intervention and postvention at all grade levels.
2. Establish a systematic approach to identifying, referring and assessing students at risk of suicide or other behavior that would endanger themselves or others.
3. Disseminate information to students, staff and community on referral procedures.
4. Provide training for teachers and staff. Conduct drills.
5. Assist the Principal in controlling emergency situations.

C. **Teachers** are responsible for implementing appropriate procedures to protect students.

These responsibilities include:

1. Evacuation – Prepare classroom emergency kit. Direct and supervise students en route to pre-designated safe areas within the school or to an off-site evacuation shelter.
2. Student assembly – Maintain order while in student assembly areas.

3. Student accounting – Verify the location and status of every student. Report to the principal or designee on the condition of any student that needs additional assistance.
4. Establish a partner system to pair teachers and classes so that some teachers can assist with other tasks such as first aid, search and rescue, or community relations.
5. Remain with assigned students throughout the duration of the emergency, unless otherwise assigned through a partner system or until every student has been released through the official “student release process.”

D. **DISD Officer** – The school staff will release information to the parents and to the general public only through a designated PIO. This may be the Superintendent of Schools, principal or other designated individual. Duties include:

1. Identify a potential “news center” site away from emergency operations where media representatives can receive briefings.
2. Prepare public information kit including identification, maps, supplies, signs, forms, sample news releases, battery-powered radio, school information, etc.
3. Collect, verify and disseminate information to the media. Coordinate information with on-site command and the administration PIO prior to release. In cooperation with local public safety officials, considers establishing a Joint Information Center “JIC” to ensure coordination of information being distributed.
4. Establish regular time schedule for news briefings and periodic updates.
5. Provide information in appropriate format for the general public including a format for sensory impaired or non-English speaking persons, if needed.

E. **Office Manager (Secretary)** – The administrative secretarial staff has primary responsibility for emergency communications including exchange of information with school administration staff, community emergency responders (fire, police, EMS, emergency services coordinator) and internal communication within the school building. Primary responsibility for record keeping also lies with this position.

1. Establish procedures for emergency communications with school administration staff in compliance with school system plans.
2. Establish internal emergency communications including provisions for two-way communications with classrooms and with classes on the playground or other sites.
3. In an emergency, establish and maintain communications with school administration.
4. Establish and maintain communications with county emergency services coordinator, as needed in major emergencies.

5. Initiate and maintain incident log.
6. Receive and maintain student accounting forms. Take appropriate action to notify medical or search teams through 9-1-1.
7. Report status of school and students to school administration as specified.

F. **Assistant Principal** – All tasks related to student accounting and student release.

1. Establish procedures for assessing and reporting status of students in an emergency or any event that results in evacuation or relocation of students.
2. Provide instruction and practice to all teachers and staff in the student assessment and reporting process.
3. Place reporting forms and procedures in classroom “emergency kit.” Establish procedures for communicating with teachers.
4. In an emergency, receive reports from all teachers on the condition and location of every student.
5. Assign persons to investigate reports of any students missing, injured or ill, or otherwise not in compliance with student accounting reports.
6. Implement student release procedures.

G. **Maintenance Head** – Maintenance staff are familiar with the operations and infrastructure of the school building and are responsible for the stabilization of the building, controlling access, and securing the school facilities.

1. Inventory all hazardous materials, portable and fixed equipment, and utility lines in or near the school.
2. Establish procedures for isolating hazardous areas.
3. In an emergency, survey damage and structural stability of buildings and utilities and report to the principal.
4. Search the affected sections of the school for students or staff that may be confined or injured; however, do not put yourself or others at risk. This task may need to be accomplished by trained public safety professionals.
5. Implement building access control measures.
6. Secure student assembly areas.

7. Distribute supplies to student assembly areas.
8. Assist county officials in damage assessment.
9. Assist administrators in recovery procedures.

H. Librarian and staff, including volunteers, have responsibility for coordinating logistics (personnel and supplies). Duties include:

1. Pre-determine skills of staff, school volunteers, and interested parents or neighbors.
2. Establish record keeping and inventory systems.
3. Distribute supplies.
4. Register and assign adult and student volunteers.
5. Coordinate information about volunteers and donations with Public Information Officer.

(This example is an adaptation based on the Roanoke City Public Schools Safe Schools Plan.)

### **DISD CRISIS TEAM Phone Tree**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Position/Name</b>	<b>Work Phone</b>	<b>Home Phone</b>	<b>Cell Phone</b>
Principal	_____	_____	_____
*Ass't Principal	_____	_____	_____
*Ass't Principal/Team Coordinator	_____	_____	_____
*Guidance Director	_____	_____	_____
School Nurse	_____	_____	_____
School Resource Officer	_____	_____	_____
School Psychologist	_____	_____	_____
Secretary	_____	_____	_____
Teacher/Administrator/Counselor	_____	_____	_____
Teacher/Administrator/Counselor	_____	_____	_____
Custodian/Maintenance	_____	_____	_____

\* Designated back-up person(s) in the absence of the Principal and Team Coordinator

## DISD Crisis Intervention Worksheet

This document is designed to organize personnel prior to, during, and after a crisis to minimize the trauma and focus resources.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

1. Principal \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Crisis Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

1. Crisis Team Members

Phone

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Phone Tree (*previous page*)

3. School Way

4. Facebook

5. Twitter

6. Media Information (Phone Numbers)

Radio Stations

TV Stations

Newspapers

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Media Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

7. Building security; plan for monitoring entrances to building



11. Arrangements for group counseling

Location Room #	Person Responsible for Group
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

12. Follow up activities

- \_\_\_\_\_ Crisis Team Evaluation (*Located in Chapter 3*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Crisis Team Members complete Individual and Group Counseling Summary (*Located in Chapter 3*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Crisis Team Members Complete Activities Summary (*Located in Chapter 3*)

13. Staff with Skills in Medical Care

Name	Room #	Training/Certification
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

14. Bilingual Staff Members

Name	Room #	Language(s)
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____



# Administrator's Checklist

## For Responding to an Emergency/Crisis

These guidelines have been written to help those involved to think ahead and plan for situations. The suggestions below are designed to be thorough, as well as flexible and adaptable. Discretion and judgment will determine their use.

### I. Immediate Actions to be Taken

- \_\_\_\_\_ A. Principal or designated individual will verify information regarding emergency/crisis
- \_\_\_\_\_ B. Notify affected buildings where siblings are enrolled or other family members are employed. Confirm family information from them if necessary.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C. Activate building intervention team.
- \_\_\_\_\_ D. In the event of death, remove the name from the class roll and other forms of communication. Intercept any disciplinary, scholarship, testing, or special placement notifications that may be sent to the family. Remove personal items of the deceased from lockers, desk, etc. Put personal items of the deceased in a safe place to be returned to the family at an appropriate time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ E. Secure the building. Activate plan for determining who is in the building.
- \_\_\_\_\_ F. Distribute badges to incoming personnel or visitors.

### II. Contact Family

- \_\_\_\_\_ A. Communicate with the family involved to express condolences and to check fact from rumor. Check with family before any announcements are made.
- \_\_\_\_\_ B. Explain school procedure to the family with regard to meeting with the staff in order to insure that the family's situation is handled with utmost respect and to discuss the family's wishes in handling the situation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C. Ask what facts the family would allow to be discussed. This information should be recorded.

- \_\_\_\_\_ D. Repeat the information back to the family member who will serve as the contact person for the family.

### **III. School Plan of Action**

- \_\_\_\_\_ A. Administrator's Responsibilities:

*Any or all of the responsibilities below may be delegated to the building team coordinator.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Use telephone tree to notify faculty before arrival at the school and to inform them of a special faculty meeting prior to the beginning of the school day if emergency/crisis occurs after school hours.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Meet with faculty as soon as possible after the event if emergency/crisis occurs during the school day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Include in the faculty meeting agenda:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ a. A printed statement approved by the family to be read verbatim by the classroom teacher. Decide the time the statement will be read. Emphasize need for hard facts to reduce rumors and fantasies. If family has not been reached, reassure faculty/staff that further information will be forthcoming.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ b. A handout review covering recommendations for dealing with a loss in the classroom.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ c. An announced plan for disseminating further information during the day, e.g. notes in boxes, runners, further faculty meetings.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ d. The name and location of person in the building who can be called upon for accurate and current information.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ e. An assessment of the individual faculty members' comfort levels in reading the prepared statement and discussing the situation with students.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ f. An evaluation of the need for substitute personnel from other building teams.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ g. A schedule of times and location for faculty to process loss, to share their experiences and offer suggestions. (Prior to this, buildings will have

determined who will work with students and who will work with faculty.)

- \_\_\_\_\_ h. The area that will be designated as a workroom for the team.
- \_\_\_\_\_ i. The space available for small group counseling sessions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ j. The plan for handling the media including the name of the spokesperson.
- \_\_\_\_\_ k. Any other pertinent information.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Keep all parents informed of school's activities in connection with the emergency/crisis, i.e., letters to parents, parent meetings, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ B. Faculty Responsibilities

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Read prepared statement at the designated time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Provide an opportunity for students to discuss the incident and express their feelings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Acknowledge emotions through discussion and involvement in constructive activities in the classroom.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Discuss strategies for students dealing with the media. Tell them the media may approach them but they do not have to talk to them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Identify those who were close friends or who have suffered a similar loss and would like an opportunity to attend a group or individual meeting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Identify students obviously in distress and talk them or have another student help escort them to a group or individual counseling activity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Request assistance from the building coordinator if a class has a large number of distressed students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Shorten and re-structure assignments when appropriate. Postpone and reschedule tests as needed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Know evacuation procedure. If evacuation becomes necessary, keep roll book at all times for accountability purposes. **THIS IS IMPERATIVE.**

\_\_\_\_\_ C. Team Responsibilities

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Coordinator – must be appointed by the building principal at the beginning of each school year.

\_\_\_\_\_ a. Consults with principal when a possible crisis or emergency situation occurs.

\_\_\_\_\_ b. Coordinates Plan:

- Use of assistance from other buildings
- Substitute Personnel
- Room Assignments
- Meeting Times
- Notification
- Media Coordinator and Staff Communications
- Phone Chain and Other Communication

\_\_\_\_\_ c. Manages monitoring and documentation process

\_\_\_\_\_ d. Organizes daily debriefing sessions

\_\_\_\_\_ e. Distributes identification badges to all incoming personnel

\_\_\_\_\_ f. Delegates any of the above responsibilities

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. TEAM

\_\_\_\_\_ a. Assists the principal and /or coordinator with developing specific plan for responding to the crisis.

\_\_\_\_\_ b. Accepts the responsibilities delegated by the building coordinator or principal.

\_\_\_\_\_ c. Consults with and supports (on an as needed basis) the affected building's staff in reacting to and dealing with the crisis.

\_\_\_\_\_ d. Provides direct support services to staff and students in distress.

\_\_\_\_\_ e. Makes referrals to building coordinator for those needing follow-up support from outside resources.

- \_\_\_\_\_ f. Monitors the situation after the crisis has subsided and provides other follow-up services.
- \_\_\_\_\_ g. Collects data to submit to team leader.
- \_\_\_\_\_ h. Relays confidential information to personnel director that pertains to the loss.
- \_\_\_\_\_ i. Anticipates and manages other building, family, and community needs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ j. Assists other buildings when approved by the associate superintendent responsible for communication.

\_\_\_\_\_ D. Responding to the Media:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Prepare a plan for communicating with the media before an emergency/crisis occurs, which includes:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ a. Who will be the contact and spokesperson.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ b. Where the media will be located within or outside the building.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ c. Who will be responsible for the building security with respect to the media (they should not be allowed to disrupt the management team or the classroom activities).

\_\_\_\_\_ E. Responding to Parents/Community

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Activate plan for working with the media.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Install additional telephone lines, if necessary, in assigned workroom.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Be calm, patient, and courteous when dealing with callers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Reassure parents that the emergency/crisis management team is at work to keep their children safe.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Give all callers the same information, which includes these topics.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ a. In answer to “What’s going on?” “What happened?”, read the prepared statement which was

read in the faculty meetings. Update information as often as possible, but make certain all persons answering the phone have the same printed information.

\_\_\_\_\_ b. In answer to “What are you doing to keep my child safe?” enumerate measures presently in operation.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. Thank the parents for calling.

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. Give time and place, if parent meetings are scheduled.

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. Ask if parents have received letters, if letters, were sent.

\_\_\_\_\_ F. Follow Through

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Ongoing monitoring

\_\_\_\_\_ a. Staff and building team should monitor, for as long as needed, all students and staff for continued distress and their need for further intervention.

\_\_\_\_\_ b. Documentation

\_\_\_\_\_ c. Evaluation

# RESOURCES

## **Guidelines for Understanding and Responding to a Crisis**

1. Here are some of the emotions you may observe in your students (or in yourself) following a tragedy:

- Numbness, shock, denial – After a sudden death, you don't want to believe it has happened; you had no preparation for its occurrence.
- Confusion – Why did this happen? I don't understand the circumstances. How could this happen to someone I know?
- Fear – Could something like this happen again? Will something like this happen again?
- Grief – Sadness, crying, a deep sense of personal loss.
- Anxiety – A Difficulty in explaining or understanding the tragedy; things are not the same at school or in my class.
- Depression – Emptiness, unhappiness.
- Guilt – An irrational feeling of responsibility for the event. What could I have done to prevent it?
- Anger – Why did someone do a violent, senseless thing? Why did others let it happen? Anger can be directed toward a specific person or persons or be a more general feeling of anger.

2. Here are some of the changes in behavior that you may see. Most, if not all of these changes, will be temporary. Children are resilient and do bounce back.

- Lack of concentration – inability to focus on school work, household chores, or other leisure activities.
- Lack of interest in usual activities – Their minds is preoccupied with other thoughts and feelings and what would usually be very enjoyable may not have much appeal.
- Greater dependency – A need to feel protected may result in their wanting to do more with you or not have you away from them for long periods of time; some kids may not want to be alone.
- Problems with sleeping and eating – Difficulty going to sleep, occasional bad dreams or a decreased or increased appetite are common physical reactions to a stressful event.
- Overly quiet or overly talkative or a combination – Adults may need to talk about a tragic incident over and over again, asking questions that may be unanswerable but needing to ask them anyway. This repetition is often a healthy way of working through the grief process; on the other hand, a student may not want to talk about it much with you, preferring to discuss it with friends, classmates, parents – those who may have been closer to the tragedy; or the student may not want to talk with anyone about it.

3. Here are some things that teachers and parents can do to help a child through this difficult time.

- Listen – Don't interrupt, he/she needs to be heard.

- Accept feelings – They are valid feelings for this student, even though your feelings may not be similar ones.
- Empathize – Let the child know that you recognize his/her sadness, confusion, anger, or whatever feelings he/she has about the tragedy.
- Reassure – The student is not responsible for what happened.
- Accept – The student may not want to talk about the trauma right away. Let him/her know you are willing to listen whenever he/she wants or needs to talk about it.
- Be tolerant of temporary changes.
- Maintain as much of a sense of routine as possible.
- Provide additional activities if the students seem to have excess energy.
- Don't hesitate to ask for help. This help can be sought from other parents, the school staff, or an outside professional.

*Adapted from Robert L. Lewis, Ph.D Clinical*

*Psychologist, Clayton MO*

## Suggestions for Visits to Classrooms

1. Briefly explain why you are there.... “If you are wondering why there are some strange-faced adults in the building today, it’s because we are all counselors who care and were invited here by your counselor/principal because of the death of (person’s name). We care about what you are going through and know it is tough. Because we were not as close to the person as you are, we are not suffering the way you and the teachers are – we just want to help out in any way possible.” Emphasize that the teams or individual team members are not there to take the place of local counselors, administrators or clergy, but that you are there to assist and help in any way that you can.
2. If you are following the schedule of the deceased, it’s important to recognize the “empty chair.”
3. Let all kids know that whatever they are feeling is okay. It may be anger, sadness, fear, confusion, guilt – anything, or even a mixture of these and/or other feelings.
4. Help them realize that different people will express feelings in different ways and that is okay. Grieving is a personal journey; not everyone will grieve in the same manner. “Try not pass judgment because someone else does not seem to be hurting or suffering as much as you are.”
5. Help the students understand that some people may not have “known (use the deceased’s name) or been “close” to them but what they have heard today may bring back memories of a similar loss or recent experience. It is acceptable for them to be dealing with their own feelings of sadness.
6. Help them understand that the intense sadness or hurt will not last forever. “Life will go on and the terrible hurt you are feeling right now will not hurt quite as much after some time passes. You won’t forget (person’s name), or course, but time will help and just because we have to go on with school, schedules, jobs and everything else does not mean you care less for the person who died.”
7. Encourage expression of present feelings, but accept the silence.
8. Inform students of the opportunities to meet and share in smaller groups.
9. Compliment them for being supportive of each other and really helping each other.
10. If possible and it seems appropriate, walk around the campus with one to two students. Physical activity helps some students.
11. Invite students to write, draw, or speak about the student who died.
12. Do not be too structured. Allow students to sit close together, sit on the floor or on a desk or table if it’s safe. Sitting in a circle is a good way to draw people close together.

This will develop intimacy and make members of the group feel together and equal.

13. Let students talk to one another.
14. If there is a community wide crisis let students tell what has happened at their homes and how they felt.
15. Help them eventually share about some of their positive experiences they have had (use the person's name) – fun time, etc.
16. Ask students to think of at least three words that would describe the victim(s) and go around the circle and share these words. Don't force participation, most will want to share.

## Discussion Suggestions

The following may be used as ways to encourage a discussion if the students are hesitant to speak, or items to anticipate in the course of discussion.

1. It's hard to say what we feel, but it's important to do so.
2. Is it OK to feel \_\_\_\_\_, since I didn't even know them?
3. What do I tell outsiders when they ask me, "How can you stand to go to the school?"
4. Is it OK for me to cry?
5. Why are things back to normal?
6. Is it OK for me to be happy – I don't have strong feelings, didn't know the victims, was absent..."

### DO's

1. Do listen to the students and wait after you've asked a question to give them adequate time to respond.
2. Do allow students the opportunity to express any and all thoughts regarding the incident without judging or evaluating their comments.
3. Do be aware of your voice tone, keeping it low, even, and warm.
4. Do help the students see that everyone shares similar feelings (i.e., "We're – Not You're) all stunned that something like this could happen here" or "A lot of us (not you) are feeling angry.").
5. Do expect tears, anger, resentment, fear, inappropriate language (often due to tension and discomfort), stoicism (apparent non-reaction).
6. Do expect some students to become phobic and have sudden overwhelming concerns that may seem illogical to you but are very real to them.
7. Do be aware that this death could bring about the resurfacing of other losses for students.
8. Do encourage students to sit in a circle, or to make a more intimate grouping in which to have this discussion.
9. Do stress the confidential nature of the feelings and thoughts expressed in the discussion.
10. Do use your own thoughts and ideas as a means to encourage discussion, not as a means

for alleviating your own feelings.

11. Do expect that other feelings of loss may emerge.
12. Do give accurate information about the incident. If you don't know an answer, say so. Do squelch any rumors that may exist by either giving the facts, or researching what the "facts" are and reporting back.

#### DON'T's

1. Don't give "should, ought, or must" statements (i.e. "You shouldn't feel like that. " "We mustn't dwell of this.")
2. Don't use clichés (i.e., "Be strong." "It could have been worse.")
3. Don't ask questions without being ready to listen.
4. Don't try to make them feel better; let them know that it's okay to feel what they're feeling.
5. Don't isolate anyone – each will need to feel a part of the group.
6. Don't expect the students to "get over" grief/recovery process within a certain time.
7. Don't assume a person is not grieving/reacting just because they don't look or act like it. Let them know you are available at any time (i.e., six weeks or three months from now), **IF YOU REALLY ARE.**
8. Don't let students interrupt each other, allows each person to finish his or her own statement.
9. Don't repeat what you have heard outside of the school setting. Stick to what has been communicated to you by the crisis team and/or administration. It is important for you to model and practice the elimination of rumors.
10. If you are a faculty member in the school of the deceased and have children in the school or know neighborhood children who attend the school, don't share any confidential facts/information within earshot of these children.

## **Tips for Students in Crisis**

1. Remember that everyone reacts to pain and stress in different ways. Don't expect everyone to act or feel the same. Also, don't expect the pain to last the same amount of time for everyone.
2. In the case of death, remember that friends and family will need your care and concern long after the funeral is over.
3. Don't be afraid to ask for help if you aren't sure if you can cope.
4. Take care of yourself. Eat well; get plenty of sleep and exercise.
5. Try some of these ideas to help you handle stress and grief:
  - Talk to someone
  - Cry
  - Write a letter
  - Ride a bike
  - Keep a journal
  - Clean your room
  - Dance
  - Help someone else
  - Listen to music
  - Run
  - Rearrange your room
  - Read a book
  - Create something
  - Go for a walk
  - Draw
  - Plant something
  - Dig in the dirt
  - Yell at your pillow
  - Set some goals
  - Get a neck rub

## **Tips for Working with Upper Elementary Students in Crisis**

All of us, at some time in our lives, experience a trauma or crisis. It may occur in various forms: an earthquake, a tornado, a fire, a car accident, severe physical injury, or the death of a friend, teacher, or love ones.

When events of this nature happen, we have what is called a grief response. No two people grieve in the same way, but the emotions or feelings are similar in everyone.

Each of us grieves differently and at our own individual pace. Grieving is hard work. You may feel sad, hurt and cry a lot. Crying is okay.

Your behavior may be influenced by your feelings. Here are some emotional responses that are expected and normal.

- Denial – “No...no, it can’t be.”
- Anger/resentment
- Guilt – “It must be my fault. If only I hadn’t said what I said. I never said, ‘I love you’.”
- Numbness or shock.
- Tears – Lots of tears.
- Life seems out of balance.
- Disbelief
- Nightmares, sleep disturbance/bad dreams
- Sadness
- Feeling deserted
- Forgetfulness
- Increased substance use
- Withdrawing from friends and/or family
- Nervousness, anxiety: “What will I do now?”
- Loneliness/depression
- Self pity
- Hostility/on edge
- Sorrow
- Self doubt
- Fears of going crazy
- Easily excitable
- Asking questions – the same questions – over and over.

## **Topics for Discussion at Teacher Meeting**

1. Attached is a copy of “Young People and Grief.” This information may be helpful to you as you help students deal with their feelings.
2. Present facts as they are known. Stick to what the school has given you as information to present. Do not offer your opinions and/or what you may have heard/rumors from other sources.
3. Discuss procedures and support that will be available.
4. Discuss use of hall passes as means of student’s getting from class to support rooms. Emphasize the need for sensitivity in approaching students who may be in the hall. Emphasize the importance of monitoring exists. Be alert to students who may be in need of emotional support.
5. Explain that members of the Crisis Team will follow the victim’s schedule in order to speak to classes. Explain that other team members will be available for other classes if needed.
6. Go over how to take care of teacher feelings (your own) and emphasize that support rooms and support are available.
7. Inform teachers of the mandatory debriefing meeting at the end of the day.
8. Discuss staff and students handling of the press.
9. Inform teachers to notify Crisis Team members of names of students who may be high-risk.
10. Inform teachers to refrain from discussing death in terms of religious beliefs.
11. Reassure staff members that it is acceptable for them to have the need to grieve. If they are having a difficult time, they should ask for someone to cover their responsibilities until they are able to resume.
12. Emphasize the importance of watching each other, as well as the students. Don’t be afraid to “refer” a colleague if you see that they are having a difficult time. No one will be judged for the emotions they are experiencing.
13. Remind that staff members that the bells may not ring as usual based upon the needs of the students. Let them know that they are to keep their students until the bells or someone directs them differently.

## Teacher's Handout – All Levels

1. A support room has been set up in \_\_\_\_\_ for those students who need to and/or additional support. Members of the Crisis Team will be available for individual and group support. PLEASE LET STUDENTS KNOW WHERE THEY CAN GO FOR HELP, and follow the directions given for releasing them and monitoring their coming and going to these rooms. It is best to have students escorted to the various locations.
2. Please be especially observant for those students who experience a high level of distress and/or whose behavior indicates a strong grief reaction (see description of possible grief reactions in “Young People and Grief”). Bring or have students escorted by a staff member to the support room. Names of students who should be monitored or seen for follow-up support should be given to counselors.
3. Counselors and members of the Crisis Team are available to come to classes to talk about common reactions to loss, to provide support, to answer questions – whatever you might need. Please contact \_\_\_\_\_ if, at any time, you would like someone to come to your class.
4. If students ask questions or want to talk about their feelings, it is usually a good thing to let that happen for an appropriate period of time. During the discussion, some things you might include are:
  - a. reinforce the idea that people grieve in different ways. All responses are OK – there is no “normal” way to feel.
  - b. reinforce that people grieve for different reasons. It is acceptable for someone to have grief feelings even if they didn't personally know the victim. What they heard may have resurfaced previous or recent experiences of their own.
  - c. talk about what they can do with their feelings
    - talk with people they trust
    - encourage talking with parent/guardian
    - encourage talking to school staff
    - inform them of the support room
    - let them know it is fine to seek out help
  - d. discuss what they can do to help each other
    - reach out to each other/listen to each other
    - accompany an upset friend to talk to someone
    - let an adult know if a friend is very upset and might need to be sought out
  - e. Consider using an activity as suggested in the packet on Dealing with Death.
5. Students may be encouraged to write letters or cards or other expressions of care that can be brought to the counseling center for delivery to the family.

6. State and reinforce the stability of a routine: “School will go on.” Allow appropriate time for sharing of feelings and discussion, but return to scheduled instructional activities each day.

7. See counselors for additional materials if necessary.

8. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

- Recognize and acknowledge your own feelings of loss and grief.
- Talk to someone you trust about your feelings. The staff support room is in \_\_\_\_\_.
- Be realistic about what you can do. Maybe you need to take some time for yourself. Do it.
- Stick to a schedule as much as you can. It provides stability and the comfort of a normal routine when your feelings are out of control.
- Give yourself permission to mourn. No matter what the nature of your relationship, there is loss. Give yourself the same latitude you give your students.
- Be kind to yourself. You don’t have to “get it all together” right away. You don’t have to do it all, be strong for everyone, or take care of everything. Treat yourself with the same gentleness and understanding you would anybody else.

## Handling Crisis Situations Tips for Teachers

1. Be honest. Before classes find out all the information you can and, according to the instructions from administration, share facts with students.
2. Give as much information as the students need to know. Cognitive and emotional development will determine how much and in what manner to share.
3. Allow time for students to express feelings, thoughts, and to ask questions. The amount of time will vary with the situation, age groups, and individual group concerns.
4. Look for signs of distress in individual students use your school's process to refer students who are of concern. It might be in small groups or individual counseling, but be sure concerned students get attention.
5. Allow time for a break or recess after discussing and sharing. In cases of a continuing crisis, remember to allow times for breaks.
6. Listen to your students' feelings.
7. Remember that everyone experiences and reacts to grief and crisis in a different way. There is no one-way to act.
8. Some students may express various religious beliefs about the death. Remind students that this is a time to honor the deceased and not a time to pass judgment. If a student seems to have a need to discuss a specific religious belief, encourage them to talk with a parent, family member, or member of the clergy.
9. In case of death, discuss ways to express sympathy with the class. This is often a first time experience for young people, and ways to express sympathy and the funeral process can be confusing. Death and crisis are a part of living, and this can be a valuable learning experience.
10. In case of the death of a classmate or teacher, its best if the desk can be left empty to help students acknowledge the death. The same is true for a student's locker. Sometimes students are more angry if they are not given time to grieve. Removing the contents of a desk and/or locker should be left to the family. This should be arranged by the school's administrator.
11. Keep students informed. If it is an ongoing situation, let your class know any relevant information as soon as you receive it, even if it means interrupting the class occasionally.
12. In the case of the student's death, remove their name from your roster to prevent accidentally calling out their name during upcoming roll calls by you or a substitute.

## **Tips for Parents of Students Who Are Experiencing Crisis**

1. Keep your child informed and updated, keeping in mind the developmental and cognitive level of the child. Children need to feel involved and as in control as much as possible.
2. Watch for signs of distress. Loss of appetite, aggression, acting out, being withdrawn, sleeping disorders, and other behavior changes can indicate problems.
3. Send your child to school if possible. The stability and routine of a familiar situation will help young people feel more secure.
4. Remember that everyone reacts to stress and/or grief in different ways. There is no one-way to act in a crisis situation.
5. Allow children the opportunity to express feelings. It is important to validate these feelings.
6. A good diet and plenty of exercise are important for children who are under stress. Encourage your child to eat well and get plenty of exercise.
7. Be honest about your own concerns, but stress your and your child's ability to cope with the situation.
8. Respect a child's need to grieve.
9. Provide somewhere private and quiet for your child to go.
10. Be available and listen to your child.
11. Remember to take care yourself.
12. Obtain outside help if necessary.

## **Tips for Counselor/Crisis Team Members When Assisting in a Crisis Situations**

1. Keep your life in balance.
  - a. Eat well and get plenty of exercise. A good diet and exercise is important when under stress.
  - b. Balance work and rest.
  - c. Stick to a schedule as much as you can. It provides stability and the comfort of a normal routine when your feelings are out of control.
  - d. Avoid new major projects or decisions.
2. Be realistic about what you can do.
3. Recognize and acknowledge your own feelings of loss and grief.
4. Give yourself permission to mourn. No matter what the nature of your relationship, there is loss. Give yourself the same latitude you give your students.
5. Meet with fellow Crisis Team members and be supportive of each other or form a support group with fellow counselors or staff members.
6. Be kind to yourself. You don't have to "get it all together" right away. You don't have to do it all, be strong for everyone, or take care of everything. Treat yourself with the same gentleness and understanding you would anybody else.
7. Debrief with the Crisis Team members and/or administration before going home.

# Caring for the Caretakers

## *Debriefing*

The demands of responding to a crisis are intense and place the caretakers, regardless of training or previous experience, under a great deal of stress. It is strongly recommended that crisis team members who have been involved in a crisis have the opportunity for “debriefing,” preferably with a trained crisis team from another school. For team members, the debriefing is an opportunity to express feelings and receive emotional support; for the other team, the debriefing is an opportunity to learn and to become better prepared for crises.

## **Symptoms of Reaction to Crisis or Disaster in Adults**

### *First Reactions:*

1. Numbness, shock, difficulty believing what has occurred or is in the process of occurring. Physical and mental reactions may be very slow or confused.
2. Difficulty in decision making. Uncertainty about things; it may be difficult to choose a course of action or to make even small judgement calls.

### *Ongoing Reactions:*

1. Loss of appetite, difficulty sleeping, loss of interest or pleasure in everyday activities.
2. Desire to get away from everyone — even family and friends.
3. Emotional lability; becoming irritable or upset more quickly than usual.
4. Feelings of fatigue, hopelessness, helplessness.
5. Digestive problems; headaches or backaches.
6. Difficulty accepting that the crisis has had an impact or accepting support from friends and the community.

## **Some Things That Can Be Helpful for Crisis Team Members and Other School Staff**

- Take time to relax and do things you find pleasant. Getting away for a few hours with close friends can be helpful.
- Stick with your regular routine for a while; avoid making changes, even if it appears to be a positive change.
- Get regular exercise or participate in a regular sport; activity soothes anxiety and helps you relax.
- Keep your days as simple as possible; avoid taking on any additional responsibilities or new projects.
- Tap sources of assistance with your workload — have students, instructional assistants, or volunteers help grade papers, take care of copying, or help with other time-consuming tasks.
- If symptoms of stress persist beyond a few weeks or are severe, seek professional help.

## Post-Traumatic Stress Reactions

### Physical

Nausea

Upset stomach

Tremors (*lips, hands*)

Feeling uncoordinated

Profuse sweating

Chills

Diarrhea

Chest pain (*should be checked at hospital*)

Rapid heartbeat

Rapid breathing

Increased blood pressure

Headaches

Muscle aches

Sleep disturbance

### Cognitive

Slowed thinking

Difficulty making decisions

Difficulty in problem solving

Confusion

Disorientation (*especially to place and time*)

Difficulty calculating

Difficulty concentrating

Difficulty naming common objects

Seeing the event over and over

Distressing dreams

Poor attention span

### Emotional

Anxiety

Fear

Guilt

Grief

Depression

Sadness

Feeling hurt

Feeling abandoned

Worry about others

Wanting to hide

Wanting to limit contact with others

Anger

Irritability

Feeling numb

Startled

Shocked

## **Identifying and Responding to Imminent Warning Signs**

Unlike early warning signs, imminent warning signs indicate that a student is very close to behaving in a way that is potentially dangerous to self and/or to others.

Imminent warning signs require an immediate response.

No single warning sign can predict that a dangerous act will occur. Rather, imminent warning signs usually are presented as a sequence of overt, serious, hostile behaviors or threats directed at peers, staff, or other individuals. Usually, imminent warning signs are evident to more than one staff member—as well as to the child’s family.

*Imminent warning signs may include:*

- Serious physical fighting with peers or family members.
- Severe destruction of property.
- Severe rage for seemingly minor reasons.
- Detailed threats of lethal violence.
- Possession and/or use of firearms and other weapons.
- Other self-injurious behaviors or threats of suicide.

When warning signs indicate that danger is imminent, safety must always be the first and foremost consideration. Action must be taken immediately. Immediate intervention by school authorities and law enforcement officers is needed when a child:

- Has presented a detailed plan (time, place, method) to harm or kill others — particularly if the child has a history of aggression or has attempted to carry out threats in the past.
  - Is carrying a weapon, particularly a firearm, and has threatened to use it.
- In situations where students present other threatening behaviors, parents should be informed of the concerns immediately. School communities also have the responsibility to seek assistance from appropriate agencies, such as child and family services and community mental health.

## **Suggestions for Communicating with the Media**

The administrator in charge of school communication should work directly with building administrators on press coverage when outside media is likely to be involved. All media questions and statements may be deferred to that office. However, information of a written nature should only be released after consultation with the designated administrator.

### Before a Crisis Occurs

Prepare a preliminary plan for communicating with the media prior to a crisis situation. This plan should be short and simple. It should have activities, roles and responsibilities clearly defined. For example, it should be decided in advance.

- Who is to be called?
- Who should make the contacts?
- Who is to communicate with the media? (no one has to speak with the media)
- Where the media is to be located within or outside the building
- Who is responsible for building security with respect to the media? (they should not be allowed to disrupt the crisis intervention efforts)
- How staff is to handle contact from the media

### At the Time of a Crisis

Briefly state the known facts of the situation, but do not give name of victims or persons responsible. Do not go into depth, or say more than is needed. Do not speculate about motives or feelings. If civil authorities are involved, refer questions that require their expertise. Review what is being done to respond to the situation. In general terms, identify the support being provided to the students, their families and staff. Emphasize that the primary goal is to help the students through the crisis situation. Let the media know that the school will try to maintain or quickly return to its normal routine and schedule, based on the response of staff and students and how well people are coping. Do not give details or the names of the people involved. Try to portray people in as positive manner as possible.

## Script for Announcing Event:

1. \_\_\_\_\_(was killed, was seriously injured, is seriously ill, committed suicide). Then relate the facts that were related during the 7:30 a.m. faculty meeting or the initial faculty meeting concerning this issue. Be certain that whatever is shared has been cleared with the family of the victim(s).

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2. Options for dealing with student/class reactions.

Allow for discussion, i.e., say “how do you feel about what I just read”. What other concerns/needs do you have?

Points to consider in discussion:

- Don't be flippant.
- Don't be excitable; emotional control is an important behavior to model.
- Don't preach; preaching can produce anger.
- Don't minimize students' reactions.
- Don't use jargon; talk in language the students understand.
- Don't expect to have all the answers to students' questions and concerns.
- Don't dramatize death.

Not everyone will be comfortable leading a discussion; if help is needed, contact your building coordinator.

At the beginning of each class, teachers should allow a few minutes for students to talk about their reactions to the situation. Teachers should try to resume the normal class schedule as soon as possible.

3. How to respond to feelings students might experience.

Take every complaint and feeling the person expresses seriously. Do not dismiss or discount the person's concerns; however, reassure the person that all perspectives need to be considered.

4. Look for signs of emotional reactions over several days that may need attention and then refer to counselors or designated crisis center:

- Crying
- Major change in student's behavior
- Withdrawal from normal class participation
- Change in student's work/study habits
- Excessive daydreaming
- Increased absences
- Passivity in class
- Defiance, especially if this was not a problem before
- Lingering sadness (sadness for several days is to be expected, but IMPROVEMENT should be seen within one week to ten days)

5. Escort students in distress to a designated room for assistance.

# Young People and Grief

The grieving process is a normal, natural, and healing result of loss and pain is to be expected. Young people of all ages exhibit grief and reactions to grief. Guilt, anxiety, anger, fear and sadness may be universal, and the expressions of these emotions may vary from day to day. Helping a young person and yourself through this difficult time may often feel overwhelming; however, knowledge of common reactions to loss may help you recognize behavior for what it is – grieving.

## Possible Grief Reactions:

- Anger
- Aggression/acting out: starting fights, outbursts of temper, drop in grades, change of peer affiliation
- Explosive emotions: gentle tears, wrenching sobs, extremes in behavior
- Physiological changes: fatigue, trouble sleeping, lack of appetite, headaches, and stomach pains
- Idealization of the deceased
- Sadness/emptiness/withdrawal: overwhelmed by feelings of loss when realizes person is not coming back; feels extremely vulnerable
- Guilt/self-blame: “If only...” “Why didn’t I...?” Feels responsible for the loss; seeks self-punishment
- Disorganization: restless, unable to concentrate, uncontrollable tears, difficulty focusing
- Lack of feelings: denial; protection from pain; can be a form of numbness; may be difficult to admit and may generate guilt

## How to Help a Young Person Experiencing Grief:

- Use the terms “died/dead/death: rather than phrases like “passed away,” or “taken from us.” Give an honest age appropriate explanation for the person’s death, avoiding clichés or easy answers. Straightforward, gentle use of the words helps a person confront the reality of the death.
- Explain and accept that everyone has different reactions to death at different times. The reaction might not hit until the funeral or weeks later.
- Reassure the young person that his/her grief feelings are normal. There is no “right” way to react to a loss. Give permission to cry. Let them know it’s OK not to cry if the young person does not typically react in that way.
- 
- Permit or encourage the young person to talk about the person who has died. This is a vital part of the healing process, both at the moment of loss, but especially after the funeral.
- Do not attempt to minimize the loss or take the pain away. Phrases like “Don’t worry, it will be OK,” “He/she had a good life,” or “He/she is out of pain.” are not helpful. Grief

is painful. There must be pain before there can be acceptance and healing. It is very difficult to do, but most helpful to acknowledge the person's pain and permit them to live with it without trying to take it away or make it "better." Encourage the young person to talk about his or her feelings. Encourage communication first with family, but also be aware of other support people such as clergy, trusted adult friends, and trusted peers.

- LISTEN. Listen with your heart. Listening to the feelings of the young person is most important. Listen through the silences. Just being present, showing you care by your listening, is more important than knowing what to say or even saying anything at all.
- Help the young person decide about attending the funeral. The funeral can be a way to say goodbye, but abide by the young person's wish and express understanding if he/she chooses not to go.

A Grieving Person's Needs:

- To cry
- To be held
- To talk
- To be listened to
- To feel caring around them, to be with people they care about
- To understand how others may react

## **The Stages of Grief**

The Kübler-Ross model of grief (the five stages of grief) describes five primary responses to loss. These stages are denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Someone who is grieving may go through these stages in any order, and they may return to previous stages.

Denial: “This can’t be happening.”

Individuals may refuse to accept the fact that a loss has occurred. They may minimize or outright deny the situation. It is suggested that loved ones and professionals be forward and honest about losses to not prolong the denial stage.

Bargaining: “I will do anything to change this.”

In bargaining, the individual may try to change or delay their loss. For example, they may try to convince a partner to return after a breakup, or search for unlikely cures in the case of a terminal illness.

Anger: “Why is this happening to me?”

When an individual realizes that a loss has occurred, they may become angry at themselves or others. They may argue that the situation is unfair and try to place blame.

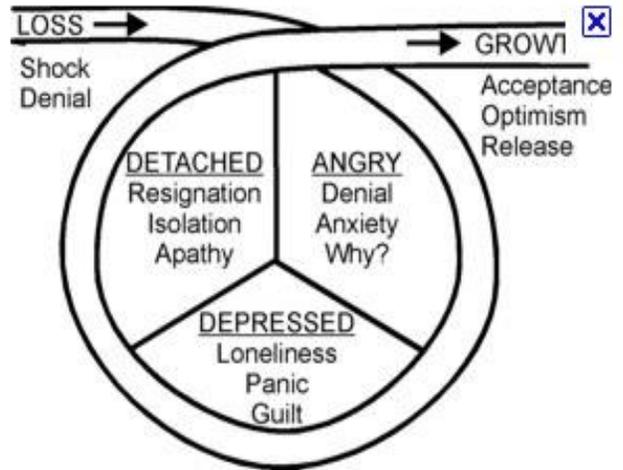
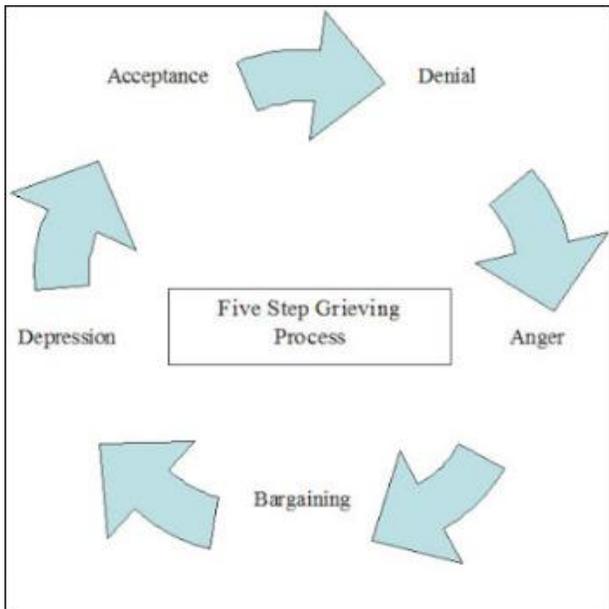
Depression: “What’s the point of going on after this loss?”

At the stage of depression the individual has come to recognize that a loss has occurred or will occur. The individual may isolate themselves and spend time crying and grieving. Depression is a precursor to acceptance because the individual has come to recognize their loss.

Acceptance: “It’s going to be okay.”

Finally, the individual will come to accept their loss. They understand the situation logically, and they have come to terms emotionally with the situation.

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### Stages of the Grief Cycle

#### "NORMAL" FUNCTIONING

- Shock and Denial**
- Avoidance
  - Confusion
  - Fear
  - Numbness
  - Blame

- Anger**
- Frustration
  - Anxiety
  - Irritation
  - Embarrassment
  - Shame

- Depression and Detachment**
- Overwhelmed
  - Blahs
  - Lack of energy
  - Helplessness

#### RETURN TO MEANINGFUL LIFE

- Acceptance**
- Exploring options
  - A new plan in place

- Dialogue and Bargaining**
- Reaching out to others
  - Desire to tell one's story
  - Struggle to find meaning for what has happened

# Books on Grief

## Parents and Adults

Lament for a Son-Nicholas Wolterstorff

How to Survive the Loss of a Child-Dr. Catherine M. Sanders

Beyond Tears, Living After Losing a Child-Erin Mitchell

Guiding Your Child Through Grief-Mary Ann and James Emswiler

When the Bough Breaks: Forever After the Death of a Son or a Daughter-Dr. Judith Bernstein

The Worst Loss: How Families Heal from the Death of a Child-Barbara Rosof

I Wasn't Ready to Say Goodbye-Brook Noel and Pamela Blair

Don't Kiss Them Goodbye-Allison Dubois

## Teens, Young Adults, and Siblings

Common Threads of Teenage Grief- Janet Tyson

For My Son's Gardner: A Personal Story of Growth and Healing After the Loss of a Child-Barbara Hahn Greene

First You Die-Marie Levine

The Grieving Teen-Helen Fitzgerald

When a Friend Dies: A Book for Teens About Grieving and Healing-Marilyn Goodman

The Empty Room: Surviving the Loss of a Brother or Sister at Any Age-Elizabeth Raebum

Straight Talk About Death for Teenagers-Earl Grollman

Facing Change: Falling Apart and Coming Together Again in the Teen Years-Donna O'Toole

The Boy Who Sat By the Window: Helping Children Cope with Violence-Chris Loftis

The Problem with Hair: A Story for Children Who are Learning About Cancer-Karen Foss

Animal Crackers: A Tender Book About Death and Funerals and Love-Bridget Marshall

Helping Children Grieve: When Someone They Love Dies-Theresa Huntley

Lucy Lettuce-Patrick Loring and Joy Johnson

# Identifying and Responding to Imminent Warning Signs

Unlike early warning signs (outlined in Section V, beginning page 65), imminent warning signs indicate that a student is very close to behaving in a way that is potentially dangerous to self and/or to others. Imminent warning signs require an immediate response.

No single warning sign can predict that a dangerous act will occur. Rather, imminent warning signs usually are presented as a sequence of overt, serious, hostile behaviors or threats directed at peers, staff, or other individuals. Usually, imminent warning signs are evident to more than one staff member—as well as to the child’s family.

*Imminent warning signs may include:*

- Serious physical fighting with peers or family members.
- Severe destruction of property.
- Severe rage for seemingly minor reasons.
- Detailed threats of lethal violence.
- Possession and/or use of firearms and other weapons.
- Other self-injurious behaviors or threats of suicide.

**When warning signs indicate that danger is imminent, safety must always be the first and foremost consideration. Action must be taken immediately. Immediate intervention by school authorities and law enforcement officers is needed when a child:**

- Has presented a detailed plan (time, place, method) to harm or kill others — particularly if the child has a history of aggression or has attempted to carry out threats in the past.
- Is carrying a weapon, particularly a firearm, and has threatened to use it.

In situations where students present other threatening behaviors, parents should be informed of the concerns immediately. School communities also have the responsibility to seek assistance from appropriate agencies, such as child and family services and community mental health.

(Source: Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools)

## Tips for Parents to Help Create Safe Schools

Parents can help create safe schools. Here are some ideas that parents in other communities have tried:

- Discuss the school's discipline policy with your child. Show your support for the rules, and help your child understand the reasons for them.
- Involve your child in setting rules for appropriate behavior at home.
- Talk with your child about the violence he or she sees--on television, in video games, and possibly in the neighborhood. Help your child understand the consequences of violence.
- Teach your child how to solve problems. Praise your child when he or she follows through.
- Help your child find ways to show anger that do not involve verbally or physically hurting others. When you get angry, use it as an opportunity to model these appropriate responses for your child-and talk about it.
- Help your child understand the value of accepting individual differences.
- Note any disturbing behaviors in your child. For example, frequent angry outbursts, excessive fighting and bullying of other children, cruelty to animals, fire setting, frequent behavior problems at school and in the neighborhood, lack of friends, and alcohol or drug use can be signs of serious problems. Get help for your child. Talk with a trusted professional in your child's school or in the community.
- Keep lines of communication open with your child--even when it is tough. Encourage your child always to let you know where and with whom he or she will be. Get to know your child's friends.
- Listen to your child if he or she shares concerns about friends who may be exhibiting troubling behaviors. Share this information with a trusted professional, such as the school psychologist, principal, or teacher.
- Be involved in your child's school life by supporting and reviewing homework, talking with his or her teacher(s), and attending school functions such as parent conferences, class programs, open houses, and PTA meetings.
- Work with your child's school to make it more responsive to all students and to all families. Share your ideas about how the school can encourage family involvement, welcome all families, and include them in meaningful ways in their children's education.
- Volunteer to work with school-based and community groups concerned with violence prevention.
- Talk with the parents of your child's friends. Discuss how you can form a team to ensure your children's safety.
- Find out if your employer offers provisions for parents to participate in school activities.

(Source: Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide for Safe Schools.)

## Action Steps for Students

There is much students can do to help create safe schools. Talk to your teachers, parents, and counselor to find out how you can get involved and do your part to make your school safe. Here are some ideas that students in other schools have tried:

- Listen to your friends if they share troubling feelings or thoughts. Encourage them to get help from a trusted adult—such as a school psychologist, counselor, social worker, leader from the faith community, or other professional. If you are very concerned, seek help for them. Share your concerns with your parents.
- Create, join, or support student organizations that combat violence, such as “Students Against Destructive Decisions” and “Young Heroes Program.”
- Work with local businesses and community groups to organize youth-oriented activities that help young people think of ways to prevent school and community violence. Share your ideas for how these community groups and businesses can support your efforts.
- Organize an assembly and invite your school psychologist, school social worker, and counselor—in addition to student panelists—to share ideas about how to deal with violence, intimidation, and bullying.
- Get involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating your school's violence prevention and response plan
- Participate in violence prevention programs such as peer mediation and conflict resolution. Employ your new skills in other settings, such as the home, neighborhood, and community.
- Work with your teachers and administrators to create a safe process for reporting threats, intimidation, weapon possession, drug selling, gang activity, graffiti, and vandalism. Use the process.
- Ask for permission to invite a law enforcement officer to your school to conduct a safety audit and share safety tips, such as traveling in groups and avoiding areas known to be unsafe. Share your ideas with the officer.
- Help to develop and participate in activities that promote student understanding of differences and that respect the rights of all.
- Volunteer to be a mentor for younger students and/or provide tutoring to your peers
- Know your school's code of conduct and model responsible behavior. Avoid being part of a crowd when fights break out. Refrain from teasing, bullying, and intimidating peers.
- Be a role model — take personal responsibility by reacting to anger without physically or verbally harming others.
- Seek help from your parents or a trusted adult — such as a school psychologist, social worker, counselor, teacher — if you are experiencing intense feelings of anger, fear, anxiety, or depression.

(Source: Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide for Safe Schools.)

# **Student Suicide Outcry**

## *Immediate Action*

In the event that a staff member has reason to believe that a student may be suicidal or represent a potential threat to others the following action is to be taken:

1. Take all comments about suicidal thoughts seriously, especially if details of a suicide plan are shared.
2. Immediately report concerns to an administrator.
3. Under no circumstances should an untrained person attempt to assess the severity of suicidal risk; all assessment of threats, attempts, or other risk factors must be left to the appropriate professionals.

## **Script for Contacting Parents about a Student Outcry**

This is \_\_\_\_\_ School Counselor.

Are you driving somewhere? If so, please pull over somewhere and stop so that I can talk to you.

I have a situation with cuz that requires your undivided and immediate attention. What I am about to say may be difficult to hear and process

\_\_\_\_\_ has shared with me that things are not going well for her right now and that she is contemplating her own life. While this is upsetting, the good news is that she is asking for help and wants you as her mom to know what's on her mind.

Is there a chance that you can come in now?

# **Response to a Suicide Attempt Not Occurring at School**

When a school becomes aware that a student or staff member attempted suicide, the school must protect that person's right to privacy. Should a parent or other family member notify the school of a student's suicide attempt, the family should be referred to appropriate community agencies for support services. Staff response should be focused on quelling the spread of rumors and minimizing the fears of fellow students and staff. As opposed to convening a Crisis Response Team meeting and alerting the student body, any services provided to the person who attempted suicide must be kept confidential and coordinated with outside service providers, such as a suicide crisis counselor or hospital emergency team.

A Suicide Attempt Becomes A Crisis To Be Managed By School Staff Only When One Or More Of The Following Conditions Exist:

1. Rumors and myths are widespread and damaging.
2. Students witness police action or emergency services response.
3. A group of the attempt survivor's friends are profoundly affected by the suicide attempt and request support.

When one or more of the above conditions exists, the following should be implemented:

1. Tell the person providing the information about the suicide attempt not to repeat it elsewhere in the school.
2. If school office staff members heard the report, tell them to repeat or give out any information within or outside school unless they are specifically told to do so.
3. Have the Crisis Response Team member closest to the survivor talk to the most profoundly affected friends and determine the type support they need.
4. Provide space in the school for the identified peers to receive support services. Provide necessary passes to release these students from class to receive services.

## **School Reentry for a Student Who Has Attempted Suicide**

Efforts to respond to suicide attempts and other traumas should be focused on making the student's return to school a comfortable one. Because families exposed to a suicide attempt experience considerable guilt and fear, they are more likely to disclose that a daughter or son has made an attempt if they know the school has a helpful, nonthreatening manner of dealing with suicide.

Because a student who attempted suicide often is at greater risk for a suicide in the months following the crisis, it is extremely important to closely monitor his or her reentry into school and to maintain close contact with parents and mental health professionals working with that student.

Assuming the student will be absent from one to four weeks after a suicide attempt and possibly hospitalized in a treatment facility, our school will follow these steps:

1. Obtain a written release of information for signed by the parents. This makes it possible for confidential information to be shared between school personnel and treatment providers.
2. Inform the student's teachers regarding the number of probable days of absence.
3. Instruct teachers to provide the students with assignments to be completed, if appropriate.
4. Maintain contact with the student to keep him/her informed of the latest developments in the school, if appropriate.
5. Seek recommendations for aftercare from the student's therapist. If the student has been hospitalized, a Crisis Response Team member should attend the discharge meeting at the hospital.
6. The Crisis Response Team member should convey relevant non-confidential information to appropriate school staff regarding the aftercare plan.
7. Once the student returns to school, a Crisis Response Team member should maintain regular contact with him/her.
8. The school should maintain contact with the parents provide progress reports and other appropriate information, and be kept informed of any changes in the aftercare plan.

# Myths and Facts About Suicide

**Myth: People who talk about suicide don't commit suicide.**

Fact: Most people who commit suicide have given clues of some type of to one or more people. It is not safe to assume that someone talking about suicide will not attempt it; the majority of those who attempt suicide have stated their intent to someone.

**Myth: Suicide happens without warning.**

Fact: While explicit verbal warnings are not always given, there are clues ahead of time. The difficulty is that not everyone recognizes the signs and symptoms that would alert him/her to the possibility of suicide.

**Myth: Suicidal people are fully intent on dying.**

Fact: Rather than specifically wanting to die, students who attempt/commit suicide often do so simple because they have exhausted their coping skills and see no other options for relief from pain.

**Myth: Once suicidal, a person is suicidal forever.**

Fact: Preoccupation with suicidal thoughts is usually time-limited. Most young people who work through a suicidal crisis can go on to lead healthy lives.

**Myth: Once a person attempts suicide, the humiliation and pain will prevent future attempts.**

Fact: Eighty percent of persons who commit suicide have made at least one prior attempt (Hafen & Frandsen, 1986). It is critical that concerned adults and peers monitor a student who has attempted suicide for several months following the attempt. Those students who receive help for their suicidal risk before they made an attempt have a better prognosis than those who were intervened upon following an attempted suicide.

**Myth: Suicidal behavior is inherited.**

Fact: As with other patterns of behavior, suicide sometimes seems to run in families. However, suicide is not a genetic trait, so it is not inherited. What can appear to be a family trait of suicide may be because family members share a common emotional environment and often adopt similar methods of coping. In a family where someone has committed suicide, suicide may be viewed as acceptable in times of distress.

**Myth: Suicide occurs more often among the wealthy.**

Fact: Suicide knows no socioeconomic boundaries.

**Myth: People who attempt or commit suicide are mentally ill/psychotic.**

Fact: Many suicidal persons historically have had difficulty in working through problems. Other people who attempt or commit suicide choose it as an option when their previously successful means of coping are not effective, and they are unable to otherwise stop the pain they are experiencing. A history of mental illness does not increase the risk of suicide.

**Myth: Talking about suicide can encourage a person to attempt it.**

Fact: On the contrary, initiating a discussion of suicidal feelings may give a suicidal adolescent permission to talk about the pain she/he is experiencing and, by so doing, provide significant relief. It is highly unlikely that discussing suicide would influence a non suicidal person to become preoccupied with the idea.

**Myth: People who attempt suicide just want attention.**

Fact: Suicide should be considered a “cry for help.” Persons overwhelmed by pain may be unable to let others know they need help, and suicide may seem the best way to relieve the pain. Suicidal behavior may be a desperate move to reach out for much needed help.

**Myth: Suicide is most likely to occur at night as well as over the holiday season.**

Fact: Suicides can occur at any time, regardless of season, time of day or night, weather or holidays. Childhood and adolescent suicides, however, are most likely to occur in the spring, and second most likely to occur in the fall. Most childhood and adolescent suicides occur at home on weekends or between the hours of 3 p.m. and midnight (Eyeman, 1987; Indiana State Board of Health, 1985).

**Myth: When depression lifts, there is no longer danger of suicide.**

Fact: This is a dangerous misconception. The lifting of depression often accompanies the development of a suicide plan and the final decision to commit suicide. If the improvement in mood is sudden and circumstances have not changed, the risk of suicide remains high.

(Source: Association of California School Administrators)

## Accusations against staff/students

### *Dealing with Rumors*

Establishing reliable communications networks is critical for dealing effectively with a potentially detrimental phenomenon always present in crises: rumors. People are going to talk about a situation and, when accurate information is not available, rumors begin. Without facts, people begin to speculate and the speculations soon come to be thought of as “facts.” Left unchecked, rumors can become more difficult to deal with than the crisis event. They may create a negative perception of the school’s ability to manage an emergency or, even worse, a belief that the school cannot provide for the safety and well-being of the children. The most effective strategy for combating rumors is to provide facts as soon as possible. *Using Technology for Communication* Technology can be a very effective tool for communication during a crisis. Some common tools that may be used include the following:

# Sexual Assault

When a school is notified that a rape has occurred to a student or staff member, the Crisis Response Team and the school must protect the identity and right to privacy of the rape survivor and the alleged perpetrator. News of the incident should be contained as much as possible. Appropriate response by school staff will be directed at minimizing the fear of fellow students and quelling the spread of rumors. As opposed to convening a Crisis Response Team meeting and alerting the student body, services provided to the victim and her/his family should be kept confidential and should be coordinated with outside providers, such as a rape crisis team or hospital emergency room.

## **SEXUAL ASSAULT ONLY BECOMES A CRISIS TO BE MANAGED BY SCHOOL STAFF WHEN ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS EXIST:**

- A sexual assault occurs on campus.
- or
- If the sexual assault involves a staff member.

When one or more of the above conditions exists, the following should be implemented:

- Direct the person providing the information not to repeat it elsewhere in the school.
- If the rape occurred on campus, notify the appropriate law enforcement office and/or local rape crisis team.
- If office staff members heard the report, tell them not to repeat or give out any information within or outside school unless they are specifically told to do so.
- Designate the Crisis Response Team member closest to the victim to talk to her/him about the types of support he or she and the closest friends need, and the person(s) the rape survivor would like to provide that support.
- Provide space in the school for the rape survivor and identified peers to receive support services. Provide necessary passes to release these students from class to receive services.

*Sexual Assault is a crime of violence.* For the Sexual Assault survivor, it often is an experience of fear, loss of control, humiliation, and violence. Sexual Assault survivors may experience a full range of emotional reactions. It is extremely beneficial for rape survivors to seek emotional support regarding the assault.

Monitor any school intervention in a rape incident with the following checklist:  
(Source: California Association of School Administrators)

# Sexual Assault Response Checklist

School involvement in incident due to:

- Sexual Assault occurrence on campus
- Survivor's family requests school intervention
- Survivor's friends request intervention
- Rumors and myths are widespread and damaging
- Students witness police/emergency services
- Information provider/recipients enjoined not to repeat information elsewhere.
- Steps taken to protect survivor's identity and right to privacy.
- Law enforcement and rape crisis agency notified if appropriate.
- Crisis Response Team member closest to victim designated to talk with student and determine type of support and support provider desired.
- Sexual Assault survivor encouraged to seek additional support from community rape crisis agency.
- Space provided on site for rape survivor and identified peers to receive support services.
- School services coordinated as appropriate and legal with outside service providers.
- Action taken to quell rumors.
- All records related to rape incident and services provided stored in confidential file.

# **Crisis Evaluation**

## **After a Crisis Occurs**

**The evaluation forms in this section may be found helpful in writing a follow up report for the administration of a school/district. Any report could aid with revisions of adopted policies dealing with a crisis.**

Announce any meetings for parents or the community that will be scheduled. Include any other information, such as memorials or special activities that is important for the public to know.

Publicly thank any district employees, students, parents, or outside persons who played an important role in responding to the crisis and who deserve recognition. This may be most appropriate after the crisis has been resolved. The information can be part of the press release that provides an update on the situation. Press releases will need to be cleared by the school communication office.

## **Take Care of Yourself**

1. Recognize and acknowledge your own feelings of loss and grief.
2. Talk to someone you trust about your feelings.
3. Be realistic about what you can do. Maybe you need to take some time for yourself. Do it.
4. Stick to a schedule as much as you can. It provides stability and the comfort of a normal routine when your feelings are out of control.
5. Give yourself permission to mourn. No matter what the nature of your relationship, there is loss. Give yourself the same latitude you give your students.
6. Be kind to yourself. You don't have to "get it all together" right away. You don't have to do it all, be strong for everyone, or take care of everything. Treat yourself with the same gentleness and understanding you would anybody else.

# Crisis Team Evaluation

School \_\_\_\_\_

Date of follow-up \_\_\_\_\_

Respondents \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of emergency/crisis \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this evaluation of the recent services provided for your school by the Emergency/Crisis Management Team.

1. Was the service delivery of the crisis team timely?

Very \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat \_\_\_\_\_ Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ NA \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

2. Did the services of the crisis team meet your school's individual needs?

Very \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat \_\_\_\_\_ Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ NA \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

3. Did faculty consultation meet your faculty's individual needs?

Very \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat \_\_\_\_\_ Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ NA \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

4. Was the in-service to the faculty effective?

Very \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat \_\_\_\_\_ Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ NA \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

5. Was individual counseling provided to students a valuable aspect of the crisis team's service?

Very \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat \_\_\_\_\_ Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ NA \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

6. Was group counseling provided to students a valuable aspect of the crisis team's service?

Very \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat \_\_\_\_\_ Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ NA \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

## Activities Summary

School \_\_\_\_\_ Date form Completed \_\_\_\_\_

Principal \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Crisis \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Site \_\_\_\_\_,

On-site Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Team Members on Site \_\_\_\_\_

School personnel involved in direct service to students:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

Type of services provided by Team:

Team Contacts

Number of students assisted individually or in small groups \_\_\_\_\_

\*Total student contacts \_\_\_\_\_

Number of staff assisted \_\_\_\_\_

\*Total student contacts \_\_\_\_\_

Number of families assisted \_\_\_\_\_

\*Total family contacts \_\_\_\_\_

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Team Recommendations \_\_\_\_\_

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*\*Includes multiple sessions with the same individuals*

## **Memorials, Memorial Services, and Funeral**

It is the policy of the Dumas Independent School District to NOT become involved in the business of memorial services. To have a funeral or memorial service at school is highly inappropriate and can cause problems for students and family members in the future. A school gymnasium is NOT a good place to hold services and this policy will prevent this from being requested for student/faculty services. To allow an elaborate memorial for some students and not for others can be very hurtful and confusing and can be avoided with advance planning.

*Memorial and Memorial Services shall be treated as follows:*

1. Any memorial contributions generated by schoolmates will be limited to educational resources (i.e. books, videos, etc.), living memorials (i.e. trees, flowers, etc.) or items related to appropriate extracurricular activities. In no case will identifying labels, plaques, or pictures be an acceptable part of the memorial contribution by friends or families.
2. Memorial contributions made by family or friends can be directed to individual or general scholarships, educational resources, living memorials, items related to extracurricular activities or facilities. Scholarship plaques will remain as long as the scholarship is in effect.
3. No funeral or memorial service for student or faculty will be held on school property. However, the student body may participate in a brief time of remembrance. The family of the deceased will be notified.

# **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **Initial Announcement of Crisis Event**

TO:

FROM:

“We have just been advised of a tragedy involving a member(s) of our school. I am sad to announce that \_\_\_\_\_ has died/has been in a serious accident. As soon as we have more information, we will pass it on to you. People will be available in the building to help those of you who need extra support in dealing with this situation. Your teachers will advise you of the location and times available for this support.”

“As soon as we know the family’s/families’ wishes regarding we will share that information with you. We ask that all students remain in their classrooms and adhere to their regular schedules.”

(Source: Association of California School Administrators)

### **Death of a Student**

To be read to the students by the Administrator/Counselor.

John Doe died early Saturday morning. As a faculty we extend our sympathy to John's family and friends.

We encourage all students to consider the tragic nature of this death and to realize that death is final. Please let your teachers know if you would like to talk to a counselor or other staff member.

Funeral services for John will be held in \_\_\_\_\_.

(Source: Washington County Public Schools)

## **LETTERS TO PARENTS**

### **Unexpected Student Death - Elementary**

Dear Parents,

Yesterday, we learned that one of our first graders, \_\_\_\_\_, died.

Today, at school, students were notified about \_\_\_\_\_ in their class. Our School counselor and our school psychologist were available throughout the day to talk with any student that may have had a particularly difficult time dealing with the news.

We recommend that you take some time to discuss \_\_\_\_\_ death with your child. We suggest allowing your child to talk about how he/she feels and any fears or concerns he/she may have as a result of hearing this news.

If you feel that your child would benefit from talking with our School counselor or our school psychologist, please call us at the school and share your concerns.

The faculty and staff extend our heartfelt sympathies to the \_\_\_\_\_ family and to all their friends.

Sincerely,

School representative

(Adapted from letter developed by Chesapeake Public Schools)





# **Sample Agenda for School All-Staff Inservice**

I. Introductory background on development of School Crisis Management Plan

II. School Crisis Management Plan

A. Purpose of Plan

B. Overview of Plan

C. General review of roles and responsibilities

III. Typical impacts of crises

A. Shock; stages of grief

B. Restoring equilibrium

1. Importance of first 48 hrs.

2. Postvention

IV. Critical incident management

A. What are “critical incidents?”

B. Coordination with emergency services

V. Communications

A. Confidentiality

B. Rumor-control within the school

C. Communication outside school

1. With media

2. With parents and community groups

Closing discussion and questions

# Sample Information Sheet to Share With Parents

## Helping Your Child After a Disaster

Children may be especially upset and express feelings about the disaster. These reactions are normal and usually will not last long. Listed below are some problems you may see in your child:

- Excessive fear of darkness, separation, or being alone;
- Clinging to parents, fear of strangers;
- Worry;
- Increase in immature behaviors;
- Not wanting to go to school;
- Changes in eating/sleeping behaviors;
- Increase in either aggressive behavior or shyness;
- Bedwetting or thumb sucking;
- Persistent nightmares; and/or
- Headaches or other physical complaints.

The following will help your child:

- Talk with your child about his/her feelings about the disaster. Share your feelings, too.
- Talk about what happened. Give your child information he/she can understand.
- Reassure your child that you are safe and together. You may need to repeat this reassurance often.
- Hold and touch your child often.
- Spend extra time with your child at bedtime.
- Allow your child to mourn or grieve over a lost toy, a lost blanket, a lost home.
- If you feel your child is having problems at school, talk to his/her teacher so you can work together to help your child.

Please reread this sheet from time to time in the coming months. Usually a child's emotional response to a disaster will not last long, but some problems may be present or recur for many months afterward. Your community mental health center is staffed by professionals skilled in talking with people experiencing disaster-related problems.

(Source: Association of California School Administrators)

## **When a Student Dies: Guidelines for Classroom Discussion**

1. Review the facts and dispel rumors.
2. Share your own reactions with the class and encourage students to express their reactions in a way appropriate for them, noting that people react in many ways and that is okay.

*Possible discussion: What was it like for you when you first heard the news?*

3. Inform students of locations for grief support; reassure students that any adult in the building is available for support.

*Possible discussion: How can you students help each other through this?*

4. Listen to what students have to say. It is important not to shut off discussion.
5. Talk with students about their concerns regarding “what to say” to other bereaved students and the family of the deceased. If applicable, share information about the deceased’s culture (beliefs and ceremonies) which will help students understand and respond comfortably to the affected family.

*Possible discussion question: If you were a member of (the student’s) family, what do you think you would want at a time like this?*

6. If the student died of an illness and it is appropriate to do so, discuss the illness. This is especially useful for younger children who may need to differentiate between the illness of the child who died and any medical problems of others the child knows.
7. If a suicide occurs, discuss facts and myths about suicide.
8. Allow students to discuss other losses they have experienced. Help them understand this loss often brings up past losses; this is a normal occurrence.
9. Encourage students to discuss their feelings with their parents/families.

Keep in Mind —

- A “regular” day may be too hard for grieving students. Offer choices of activities.

## **When a Grieving Classmate Returns**

### **First Words**

- The classmate probably feels like he/she is from a different planet when returning to school.
- There is very little you can say wrong, so talk to the classmate.
- At least say, “hello,” “welcome back,” “I’m glad to see you,” or something similar.
- The brave might even say: “I missed you,” “I’m so sorry to hear about your \_\_\_\_\_’s death.”
- Even braver friends might even make statements like “It must be incredibly tough to have your \_\_\_\_\_ die.”
- Another option: write a brief note.
- If your classmate cries, that is okay; you did not cause the grief and you can’t make the person feel worse. Offer comfort and a tissue.

### **Helping the Classmate Adjust to the Class**

- Offer to provide past notes.
- Offer to provide notes for comparison for the next week or so (your classmate’s attention span will probably vary for several weeks).
- Give the classmate your phone number to call if having problems with homework.
- Ask your classmate if you can call to check on how homework is going.
- Ask the teacher if you can be the student’s helper for a week.
- Offer to study together in person or over the phone; this might help with both motivation (grieving students frequently do not feel like doing school work) and with concentration.

### **Some Don’ts**

- Don’t shun. Speak to the student.
- No cliché statements (e.g., “I know how you feel” when nobody knows the unique relationship the classmate had with the deceased).
- Don’t expect the person to snap back into the “old self.”
- Don’t be surprised if classmate seems unaffected by the loss, everybody has his/her own way of grieving.
- Don’t be afraid to ask appropriate questions about the deceased, like “what did you and your \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy together?” (people never tire of talking about the people they grieve).
- Just because the classmate may seem to be adjusting to school again, don’t assume the grieving has stopped, nor the need for comfort and friendship.

(Developed by Ken Roach, School Psychologist, Chesterfield County Public Schools)

# **GUIDELINES/HANDOUTS FOR STUDENTS**

## **Helping a Grieving Friend**

### **First Steps**

- If you learn of a grieving friend outside of school hours, call and go over as quickly as you can, if possible; or at least call.
- If you learn of a grieving friend during school, try to see the friend or send a note until you are able to talk.
- Your presence is all that is needed; if you wish to take a flower or anything meaningful, that's all right, too.
- Offer physical comfort
- Don't be afraid to cry with your friend.
- Do not try to take away the pain from your grieving friend.

### **Communication**

- Talk about the deceased person (grieving people really like telling stories about the deceased, "Do you remember the time. . .").
- No cliché statements (e.g., "He's better off now since he now has no pain").
- Don't be afraid you will upset your friend by asking or talking about the deceased; they are already very upset and should be.
- Just sitting with your friend may be all that's needed at times; don't be afraid of silence, the griever will most likely fill it talking about the deceased.
- Offer suggestions only when advice is asked.
- Listen, no matter what the topic.
- Do not tell the griever to feel better since there are other loved ones still alive.
- Call to check on.

### **Attending a Visitation at the Funeral Home or Attending a Funeral**

- If you have not ever been to a funeral home or a funeral, expect to feel nervous.
- Go with a friend or ask a parent to accompany you, if you wish.
- If this is the first time you've seen the grieving friend, simply offer your condolences; just saying "I am so sorry about \_\_\_\_\_'s death" will open a conversation, or simply point out something special to you about the deceased.

- If the visitation or funeral is open casket, view the physical remains if you want; you do not have to.

### **Later Involvement**

- Ask your grieving friend to go places, do activities together (it's all right if he/she initially resists).
- If invitations are turned down, keep inviting.
- Call to check on and talk to.
- Continue to talk about the deceased from time to time.

(Developed by Ken Roach, School Psychologist, Chester County Public Schools)

### **Helping Grieving Parents**

This information should be helpful when interacting with the parents of a deceased friend. Always respect the wishes of grieving parents. These suggestions must fit the parents' needs and requests.

#### **First Steps**

- In the vast majority of cases the parents very much want to see the friends of their deceased child; they find it comforting.
- If you were a close friend of the deceased and you know the parents, they go visit them at their home.
- If you were a friend but had not met the parents (yet they know who you are), you might still visit the home.
- Other friends might wait until the visitation, such as held at a funeral home, or wait until the funeral.
- Regardless of the depth of your relationship with the parents, let them hear from you either by a call or a note.

#### **Communication**

- When you visit, do not worry about what to say; your presence is all that is needed. If you wish to take a flower or anything meaningful, that's all right, too.
- Don't be afraid you will upset the parents by asking or talking about the deceased; they are already upset.
- Don't be afraid to cry with the parents.
- Just sitting with the parents may be all that's needed at times; don't be afraid of silence, the parents will most likely fill the silence talking about their deceased child.

- Offer physical comfort.
- Listen, no matter what the topic.
- If you were a really close friend, the parents might be pleased for you to even visit the deceased friend's room.
- Ask what you can do for them; ask other relatives what you might do to help.
- Do not try to take away the pain from the grieving parents.
- No cliché statements (e.g., "he's better off now since he now has no pain").
- Talk about the deceased person (grieving people really like telling stories about the deceased, "do you remember the time...").
- Offer suggestions only when advice is asked.
- Do not tell the parents to feel better since there are other children and loved ones still alive.

### **Attending a Visitation at a Funeral Home or Attending a Funeral**

- Expect to feel nervous when going to a funeral home or a funeral.
- Go with a friend or ask a parent to accompany you.
- If this is the first time you've seen the parents, simply offer your condolences; just say, "I am so sorry about \_\_\_\_\_'s death" probably will open a conversation; or maybe better, simply point out something special to you about the deceased.
- If the visitation or funeral is open casket, view the physical remains if you want; you do not have to.

### **Later Involvement**

- After the funeral, continue to visit the parents; they probably will continue to want to see the friends of their deceased child.
- Call to check on and talk to.
- Continue to talk about their deceased child from time to time.

(Developed by Ken Roach, School Psychologist, Chesterfield County Public Schools)

# **When Your Teacher Has Someone Die**

## **Feelings**

- Expect you and your classmates to experience different feelings, ranging from shock, sadness, vulnerability (“this could happen to me or someone I know”), to detach or nothing. All are okay.
- Some in your class may even laugh because they are nervous hearing or talking about grief and death. This may be their way of handling it, so don’t become angry.
- Don’t be surprised to catch yourself asking how this might affect you, your grades, or your relationship with your teacher.
- It’s okay to think about other people who have died.

## **What To Do**

- Talk with somebody (a friend or parent) about what has happened. This helps make the situation seem more real and keeps you from holding everything in.
- Try to get the courage to communicate with your teacher.

## **Communicating With Your Grieving Teacher**

- Your teacher probably has a lot to do and cannot take calls from students.
- Send a card (buy or make)
- Write a note (and you don’t have to have fancy stationery).
- Just write “I’m sorry” or “I’m thinking about you” or “I hope you are okay.”
- Others may write more, even share their own experiences with grief. One student even composed a poem!
- There is nothing you can say that could make your grieving teacher feel worse.
- You are not going to remind a grieving person that he/she has had somebody die.
- Your teacher may never throw your card/note away, that’s how important your communication will be. Your parents probably still have notes they’ve received.

## **Flowers and Donations**

- They are not necessary.
- If you really want to do something, maybe you and some friends could pitch in together. Or maybe the class wants to do something as a group. It just takes one person to organize this.

# When Your Grieving Teacher Returns

## Getting Ready

- Plan some type of simple welcome back signal from the class to your grieving teacher. Consider:
  - a card signed by all the class;
  - a small banner from “second period”; or
  - some flowers from a parent’s yard, if in season; or a small, inexpensive bouquet
- If you have not communicated with your teacher, it’s not too late to have a note ready just from you. It could be waiting in the teacher’s mailbox on his/her return to school.
- Realize that the same teacher who left will return. Your teacher may initially seem a little distant or preoccupied but this should not last too long.
- Your teacher may have very poor concentration for a while after returning to work. He/she might repeat things. You may have to repeat your questions.
- Do not expect tests and homework to be returned as quickly as before; poor concentration, low motivation, and fatigue are typical grief reactions.

## On the Big Day

- Expect to feel nervous. Your teacher will feel the same way.
- Your teacher also will probably feel like he/she is from a different planet.
- A part of you will say to sneak into the classroom without being seen. You might even justify these feelings by not wanting to upset your teacher. How would your teacher feel if no one spoke? How would you feel if you had been away from school for a while and no one spoke to you when you returned?
- When you first see your teacher, at least say something simple, like, “Welcome back.”
- The class also could even let a very brave volunteer speak for the class to formally welcome your teacher back. Or the volunteer could present the card.
- Show your good behavior; use your best listening skills. Help your teacher out; it will be a tough day. Smile!
- Some teachers will return quickly to teaching; others will discuss their grief. There is no single right way.

### **What If Your Teacher Cries?**

- You do not have to do anything but be patient.
- Your class could have a brave volunteer designated to offer comfort by saying something simple, such as, “We’re supporting you.”
- The student closest to the tissue box should take the box to the teacher. This shows the class cares and says it’s okay to cry.
- At the end of class students might individually offer brief words of comfort or encouragement (“it’s okay to get upset” or “I’m glad you are back”).
- Your teacher may be embarrassed by crying, but crying can be very helpful.
- If your teacher is having a really bad day, let your school counselor or other staff member know.

(Developed by Ken Roach, School Psychologist, Chesterfield County Public Schools )

## **Some Things That Can Be Helpful for Crisis Team Members and Other School Staff**

- Take time to relax and do things you find pleasant. Getting away for a few hours with close friends can be helpful.
- Stick with your regular routine for a while; avoid making changes, even if it appears to be a positive change.
- Get regular exercise or participate in a regular sport; activity soothes anxiety and helps you relax.
- Keep your days as simple as possible; avoid taking on any additional responsibilities or new projects.
- Tap sources of assistance with your workload — have students, instructional assistants, or volunteers help grade papers, take care of copying, or help with other time-consuming tasks.
- If symptoms of stress persist beyond a few weeks or are severe, seek professional help.

## Appendix E: Resources

The resources listed below are intended to assist schools and communities in developing and enhancing school crisis and emergency management plans. The list is not exhaustive, nor is inclusion intended as an endorsement by the Virginia Department of Education.

### FEDERAL RESOURCES

FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency)

<http://www.fema.gov>

U. S. Department of Education, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS>

National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)

<http://www.ncjrs.org>

Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)

<http://www.usdoj.gov/cops>

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)

<http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org>

Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS)

<http://www.samhsa.gov/cmhs/htm>

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP)

<http://www.samhsa.gov/csap/index.htm>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH) - [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash)

Division of Violence Prevention - [www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/dvp.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/dvp.htm)

National Institute of Mental Health

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov>

## NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence  
University of Colorado at Boulder, Campus Box 442  
Boulder, CO 80309-0442  
(303) 492-1032  
[www.colorado.edu/UCB/Research/cspy](http://www.colorado.edu/UCB/Research/cspy)

Community Policing Consortium  
1726 M Street NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
Publications - 1-800-421-6770  
[www.communitypolicing.org](http://www.communitypolicing.org)

National Association of Elementary School Principals  
1615 Duke Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-3483  
(703) 684-3345  
[www.naesp.org](http://www.naesp.org)

National Association of Secondary School Principals  
1904 Association Drive  
Reston, VA 22091  
(703) 860-0200  
[www.nassp.org](http://www.nassp.org)

National PTA  
330 North Wabash Avenue  
Suite 2100  
Chicago, IL 60611-3690  
1-800-4PTA  
[www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

National Law-Related Education Resource Center  
[www.abanet.org/publiced/nlr](http://www.abanet.org/publiced/nlr)

National Safe Schools Resource Center  
[www.nwrel.org/safe/index.html](http://www.nwrel.org/safe/index.html)

National Safety Council  
<http://www.nsc.org>

National School Safety Center  
[www.nsscl.org](http://www.nsscl.org)

National Youth Gang Center  
[www.iir.com/nygc](http://www.iir.com/nygc)

Partnerships Against Violence Network (PAVNET)  
[www.pavnet.org](http://www.pavnet.org)

## STATE RESOURCES

Texas Education Agency

Region 16

## ONLINE DOCUMENTS

Annual Report on School Safety, 1998

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/AnnSchoolRept98>

Bullying Prevention Kit

<http://www.jmu.edu/cisat/vepp>

Combating Fear and Restoring Safety in Schools

<http://www.ncjrs.org/jjvict.htm>

Conflict Resolution Education: A Guide to Implementing Programs in Schools,  
Youth-Serving Organizations, and Community and Juvenile Justice Settings

<http://www.ncjrs.org/jjdp.htm>

Creating Safe and Drug-Free Schools: An Action Guide

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/actguid/index.html>

Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywrn.html>

Manual to Combat Truancy

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/Truancy>

Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising

<http://www.ncjrs.org>

Safe and Smart: Making the After-School Hours Work for Kids

[www.ed.gov/pubs/SafeandSmart](http://www.ed.gov/pubs/SafeandSmart)