

## SUICIDE INTERVENTION

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among school-aged children. The Board takes seriously the responsibility in assisting at-risk student in finding appropriate intervention/counseling assistance. Realizing that a student suicide can have far-reaching and long-lasting effects on the community, the Board has in place a postvention plan to assist community members in dealing with a student death.

### The Crisis Team

Members of the crisis team are selected from personnel in the District, including the principal of each building, guidance counselors, a central office staff member and the school nurse/physician, if appropriate. If possible, a consultant from the local Board of Mental Health or an area psychiatrist/psychologist will sit on the team to provide objective guidance when needed.

The crisis team receives training in the areas of suicide risk assessment, crisis management and postvention principles.

The team serves a dual role.

1. As a preventive information base, the team develops a plan for how the District and the community can best assist students who exhibit suicidal behavior. This information is shared by an appropriate presenter at an in-service for the staff of the District. The plan includes when students should be referred in the District for assistance, what role faculty members should play in this process, which outside agencies may be used for referral and the issue of confidentiality.
2. As a postvention action team, the crisis team is the “front line” for coordinating information about the suicide and putting in place the postvention plan. The following items are recommended for the postvention plan by the American Association of Suicidology School, Suicide Prevention Programs Committee.
  - A. plan in advance
  - B. select and train a crisis team
  - C. verify the report of a suicide from the medical examiner or police
  - D. hold a team meeting with a school principal (if not already on the crisis team)
  - E. assess the situations and adjust the size of the team accordingly
  - F. disseminate information to faculty, students and parents
  - G. follow the victim’s classes throughout the day
  - H. arrange for counseling rooms
  - I. invite friends to join the group or meet with team members individually

- J. check records and provide counseling for all identified students at risk
- K. provide counseling or discussion opportunities for faculty
- L. arrange for students and faculty to attend the funeral
- M. coordinate memorials
- N. make a home visit, if appropriate
- O. respond to media inquiries
- P. link with the community, as appropriate
- Q. follow up with continued counseling as needed

This plan is molded to meet the needs and expectations of the District. Legal counsel for the Board reviews the plan and any subsequent changes as appropriate.

[Adoption date: November 19, 1998]

CROSS REFS.:       EBD, Crisis Management  
                      JHC, Student Health Services and Requirements  
                      JHF, Student Safety  
                      KBCA, News Release