



Suicide Prevention Policy Overview



Purpose for the Policy

AB 2246: Policy adopted by the state that mandates that all school districts adopt a suicide prevention policy. That includes prevention, intervention, and postvention components. The policy must also include yearly trainings for all staff to understand the warning signs and procedures.

Prevention

First portion of the district policy
and will include the following
components

- Policy Implementation
- Education
 - Student
 - Parents
 - Staff

Myths

- Those who attempt suicide really want to die
- Those who have attempted suicide are at low risk of actually dying by suicide
- Suicides occur with little or no warning

Protective Factors

Character traits and attributes
that help students

- Feeling safe a secure environments
- Having social supports
- Feeling connected
- Being cognitively flexible
- Willing to obtain treatment
- Strong spiritual or religious ties
- Being physically healthy
- Involvement in extracurricular activities
- Being hopeful
- Having coping strategies
- Having resilience

Risk Factors

- There is no single predictor of youth suicide
- Risk factors come together as a perfect storm
 - Eight Risk Factors
 - Alcohol and Substance Abuse
 - Accessibility to Weapons and Firearms
 - Depression/Comorbidity
 - Previous suicidal behaviors
 - History of Trauma/Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)
 - Hopelessness
 - Impulsivity
 - History of non-suicidal self-injury

High Risk Groups

- Prior Suicide attempts
- Self-Injurious behaviors
- Students impacted by suicide
- Students who have suffered traumatic experiences
- Disabilities
- Mental Health Disorders/Depression
- Substance Abuse
- Homeless Youth/Foster Youth
- LGBTQ Population
- Bullies and Victims



What causes suicide?

- There is no one cause of suicide and kids are not suicidal 24/7 so we must be vigilant in responding at all levels of risk
- Situational crisis or certain precipitating events can trigger suicidal ideation.
For example:
 - Loss (Death, divorce, transience, romance, dignity)
 - Victimization/exposure to violence
 - School crisis (disciplinary, academic)
 - Family Crisis (abuse, domestic violence, running away, argument with parents)
 - Exposure to suicide
- Typically there are two factors that come together to prepare kid down a self destructive path

*A chronic factor such as **mental illness**, depression or substance abuse that acts as fuel ... and a **precipitating event** such as a loss, relationship conflict, academic or disciplinary crisis that ignites it.*

Warning Signs

- Isolation/no social support
- Preoccupation with death
- Students who make statements verbally or on social media:
 - “I won’t be bothering you much longer”, “I hate my life”, “I’m going to kill myself”
- Making final plans
- Suicide notes

Intervention

Steps to intervene when a student is experiencing a crisis

- Referral
- Risk Assessment
- Parent Notification/Referral to Psychiatric Mobile Response Team
- Return To School Meeting

Immediate Action: Assessing the Situation

- Counselors and Psychologists
 - Once the student is referred talk with them and assess the situation.
 - If you verify the student has expressed suicidal ideations consult with a colleague to complete the full Risk Assessment. If the student is SPED the school psychologist should be part of the risk assessment team.
- Administration should be notified and consulted throughout the process
- After the assessment is completed collaborate with team to determine next steps

Forms for Suicide Risk Assessment Overview for Crisis Team

1. Student Suicide Risk Assessment Form 26-27
2. CAT Protocol - Page 28
3. Psychiatric Mobile Response Team (PMRT) Contact Information - Page 29
4. Parent Acknowledgement Forms
 - a. Parent Contact Form - Page 30
 - b. Parent Acknowledgement Form - Page 31
5. Re-Entry Protocol - Page 32
6. Authorization for Use and/or Disclosure of Information - Page 33

Possible Steps After Evaluation

- High to Moderate Risk (Possible Outcomes)
 - PMRT Call
 - Call to Sheriff Station/MET team
 - Release to Parent for Evaluation
- Low Risk:
 - Notify parent and speak to them immediately and provide resources for follow-up
 - Continue to follow with student and parent
- Parents must always be notified:
 - As a team determine when to notify parents in the process
 - If there is potential abuse also inform DCFS

Parent Contact Information and Parent Acknowledgement Form

- Are parents available? Are they cooperative?
- Determine steps that will be taken and provide resources.
 - Parent signs Parent Acknowledgement Form if the student is released to them in lieu of PMRT.
 - Create a plan for parents who are not cooperative.
- Review questions and situation if student does not want parent contacted: If parent is a danger DCFS may also need to be called.
- Follow up with parents after student is released to them or hospitalized.

Re Entry Protocol

- Before student is released to parent or PMRT inform parents that a Re Entry meeting will need to be scheduled
- Ask parents to bring hospital documentation and return to school note
- If a Safety Plan has not been completed one should be completed with the counselor or school psychologist during the meeting
- Determine what follow up care will be provided to the student
- Give parents a Release of Information form to allow you to communicate with therapist when necessary

Postvention

In the aftermath of a death by suicide, steps will be taken to ensure the wellbeing of staff and students

- Suicide Task Force will develop an action plan
- District will handle media communication
- Parents must give consent for information to be shared
- Staff can only disclose reportable information and keep to the facts that are shared

Postvention: Memorialization

- A way for students to process and grieve in a healthy way will be developed with the support of the District Office, Crisis Team and Administration
- All Deaths need to be handled the same way
- Suggestions
 - Safe Place, Class discussion, A walk for Suicide Awareness, Mental Health Day, Temporary Memorials, Memorabilia given to the family

Recent Government Direction and Legislation

- In December 2021, US Surgeon General released an emergency public health advisory regarding the youth mental health crisis.
- In August 2022, Governor Newsom signed a bill amending the role of PPS-credentialed school counselors in the California Ed. Code to emphasize services that include “individual counseling, group counseling, risk assessment and crisis response.”
- Also in August, Governor Newsom created an initiative called “Master Plan for Kids’ Mental Health” that calls for training for teachers, developing a workforce, and hiring 10,000 more school counselors in the state.



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