

INSTRUCTION

Suicide and Crisis Prevention and Response Procedures

A. Suicide and Crisis Prevention

Suicide prevention strategies may include, but are not limited to, efforts to promote a positive school climate that enhance students' feelings of connectedness with the school and each other, and is characterized by respectful relationships among students and staff.

The district recognizes the need to offer mandatory training per RCW 28A.410.226 for school personnel who will respond to a student in crisis. The suicide, crisis prevention and response training will include information regarding risk and protective factors, a review of district policy and procedures, and the sharing of confidential information. The district will also provide a health education program.

1. Student Responsibility

The district will encourage students to notify a staff member when they experience suicidal thoughts, or intentions, or when they suspect, or have knowledge of another student's despair and/or suicidal thoughts or intentions.

2. Staff Training

The district's suicide prevention training will help staff identify and respond to students at risk for suicide. The training will be offered under the direction of a district counselor/psychologist and/or in cooperation with one or more community mental health or public health agencies and may include information on:

- a. Identifying risk factors such as previous suicide attempts, history of depression or mental illness, substance use problems, bullying and harassment, family history of suicide or violence, feelings of isolation, interpersonal conflicts, a recent severe stressor or loss, family instability and other factors;
- b. Warning signs that may indicate suicidal intentions, including changes in students' appearance, personality or behavior;
- c. School and community resources/services; and
- d. District procedures for intervening when a student attempts, threatens, discloses the desire to commit suicide or displays other indicators.

3. Principal/Designee Prevention Planning

School administrative teams will designate specific individuals to be promptly contacted regarding a suicide threat including the school counselor, psychologist, nurse, Superintendent or designee, the student's parent/guardian and, as necessary, local law

enforcement or mental health agencies. The student support team will develop a re-entry plan, including a student/staff support plan for use after a suicide attempt.

B. Intervention

Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions he/she will take proper steps to support the student, promptly notify the principal or school counselor and request that appropriate school staff conduct an initial risk interview. The principal or counselor will then notify the student's parents/guardians as soon as possible, unless notification of the parents will jeopardize the student's safety. The district may also refer the student to mental health resources in the community.

C. Parent Responsibility

If a student is determined to be at risk, the principal or designee will contact the parent/guardian and:

1. Ask the parent/guardian whether he or she is aware of the student's mental state;
2. Ask the parent/guardian how he/she will obtain mental counseling or appropriate support for the student;
3. Provide names of community counseling resources, and offer to facilitate the referral if appropriate;
4. Determine the parent's/guardian's intent to seek appropriate services for the student; and
5. Discuss the student's re-entry into school.

D. Post-Event

In the event that a death happens or a suicide occurs or is attempted, the principal or designee will follow the crisis intervention procedures contained in the school crisis intervention plan. After consultation with the Superintendent or designee and the student's parents/guardians about facts that may be divulged in accordance with the laws governing confidentiality of student record information, the principal or designee may provide students, parents/guardians, and staff with information, counseling and/or referrals to community agencies as needed. School administrators may receive assistance from school counselors or other mental health professionals in determining how best to discuss the suicide or attempted suicide with students and staff. Following a suicide, the district will also assess the impact within all schools and the local community and provide appropriate information and support.

E. Communications

The district's suicide prevention policy and procedure and the crisis intervention plan will be available through the student, staff, volunteer and parent/guardian handbooks, on the district website and in school and district offices. All requests for specific information regarding an incident will be directed to the building principal or designee.

F. Resources

The district will utilize school counselors, the crisis telephone hotline, physician/health care providers, mental health specialists, coaches and youth leaders, parents and clergy as resources for prevention and intervention. Community resources include:

1. Prevention Resources:

- a. Washington Youth Suicide Prevention Program, www.yspp.org, 206-297-5922;
- b. Washington State Department of Health, www.doh.wa.gov/preventsuicide; 360-236-2800;
- c. Snohomish County Government, www.snohomishcountywa.gov/Get-Help-Now; 1-800-584-3578 or 425-258-4357; and
- d. 211 System – This is an information referral service, it assists with providing resources in your community.

2. Crisis Response Resources:

- a. Emergency Response: 911
- b. Local Crisis Hotline: Snohomish County Government, www.snohomishcountywa.gov/Get-Help-Now; 1-800-584-3578 or 425-258-4357
- c. National LifeLine: 1-800-273 and Talk (8255)
- d. Local Community Mental Health Center: Community Health Center of Snohomish County, 425-789-3789

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