Santa Paula Unified School District

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Suicide Prevention Response Protocol

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Suicide Prevention Response Protocols

Purpose

Thank you in advance for reviewing this important information and taking the steps to keep our students safe.The Santa Paula Unified School District is committed to ensuring that all students are safe within the school setting and understands that suicide prevention is the responsibility of all employees. Santa Paula Unified School District has prepared this resource to provide district staff with the knowledge and tools necessary to respond to students exhibiting possible signs of suicidal ideation/behavior. The goals of the site suicide prevention practices are to reduce the incidence of suicide and suicide attempts, and to increase awareness and skills of staff, students and their families in addressing imminent safety concerns.

Scope

This guidance applies to all members of the school site Suicide Prevention Response Team (SPRT) and contains best practices as well as procedures related to suicide screening and reentry processes in the Santa Paula Unified School District. The District supports safe learning and care for our students by providing clear guidelines in responding to signs of suicidal ideation/behavior.

Resources

Staff Resources

FOR IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY: CALL 911

Staff Resources	Contact
Ventura County Crisis Team	**(866) 998-2243**
Ventura County Child and Elder Abuse Reporting Hotline	**(805) 654-3200**
School Resource Officers (not currently assigned to school sites)	**SPHS: Mario Escalante (805) 826-2930** **Isbell: Jacob Miramontez (805) 826-7315**
Student Support Services Consultation: **Director -Dr. Andres Santamaria** **Program Administrator - Michelle Phillips**	 **(805) 933-8898** **(805) 933-8905**

Student/Family Resources

FOR IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY: CALL 911

Student/Family Resources	Contact
Ventura County Crisis Team	**(866) 998-2243**
Santa Paula Police Department Dispatch	**(805) 525-4474**
Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (24/7)	**Call or Text 988**
Crisis Text Line	**Text “HOME” TO 741741**

Consultation

Professional Consultations

Consultation with supervisors, mental health providers, and mental health related organizations is a part of professional practice as we care for the health and safety of our students. Students who are at risk of self-harm or suicide deserve our best thinking. More possible situations exist than can be addressed in a protocol. Students may exhibit self-harm or suicidal behaviors in ways and at times that we cannot anticipate. Document these consultations in the process of your decision-making and provision of services.

Consultation with Parents

While a student is not in the school setting, a parent may share information regarding student statements or behaviors indicating possible suicidal ideation or a risk of self-harm. In these circumstances, provide Student/Family Resources provided in this protocol. If the parent needs immediate assistance, a call to the Santa Paula Police Department Dispatch may be appropriate. Maintain contact with the parents to ensure appropriate support when the student returns to school.

Upon student’s return to school, since you have been alerted to possible suicidal ideation or risk of self harm:

- If the student has not been hospitalized - follow the suicide screening protocol below.
- If the student has been hospitalized - follow the reentry protocol below.

Suicide Screening

Preparation for Suicide Screening

Preparation begins before an in-person screening is conducted. Santa Paula Unified School District has adopted the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS) to assist with assessing the risk of suicide through a series of simple, plain-language questions that anyone

can ask. This tool helps identify whether someone is at risk for suicide, assess the severity and immediacy of that risk, and determine the level of support that the student needs. The C-SSRS is a short questionnaire that can be administered quickly in the field by responders with no formal mental health training, and it is relevant in a wide range of settings and for individuals of all ages (https://www.samhsa.gov/resource/dbhis/columbia-suicide-severity-rating-scale-c-ssrs).

To gain a better understanding of suicidal statements and behaviors, please see the directions/link below to complete the 30- minute Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS) training seminar*:

1. Click the following link: http://c-ssrs.trainingcampus.net/
2. Click "Register" on upper right hand corner
3. Complete your profile and create password
4. Login to Blue Cloud using your email and password
5. Click MY ACTIVITIES
6. Click the top training link: "RFMH-AA001-ENGLISH-USA-The Suicide Scale C-SSRS"
7. Complete the training and upload a copy of the training certificate to the C-SSRS Certificates folder.

* All members of the site Suicide Prevention Response Team (SPRT) must complete the online C-SSRS training every two years.

Initial Response

A student should be assessed if they are observed or reported to have made any suicidal statements or engaged in suicidal behavior. ***Statements*** *reference harm to self, direct & indirect suicide threats.* ***Behaviors*** *include any acts of intentional self-harm (including cutting) or actions in preparation to self-harm. Every indirect and direct statement or self-injurious behavior should be assessed.*

NEVER LEAVE STUDENT UNATTENDED

Report any safety concerns to an administrator/designee immediately or as soon as practicably possible. Contact should be made directly as email may not be read. In cases where suicide risk also contains elements of threat to others, a concurrent threat assessment should be conducted by an administrator.

- Identify the Suicide Prevention Response Team (SPRT) members who will participate in the screening. Determine the lead who will complete the screening. Optimally, the team will consist of two of the following personnel to facilitate continued monitoring of the student and communication with school staff, emergency responders, and the student's family:

School Counselor, Intervention Counselor, Wellness Center Counselor, School Administrator, School Psychologist, Mental Health Counselor, District Associate Mental Health Therapist, District Nurse.

Please note: Once a suicide risk is identified, a suicide screening must be completed. The following discussion may inform the decision to conduct the screening with one or two staff present.

- If there is prior knowledge or report of a suicide risk (such as a BARK alert or teacher/student/staff report), every effort should be made to include a second person to join during the screening process.

- There may be instances where the screening may occur with only one staff person. For example, a student may disclose suicidal ideation during the course of a counseling session. In this case, adding a second person may be disruptive to the screening process.
    - If the C-SSRS indicates a high risk a second person must be identified.

- Secure student in a private location and supervise at all times. If student supervision and security is a concern, campus security may be contacted to provide support.
    - A second person needs to be available if there are necessary actions to be taken after the screening (i.e assisting with student supervision, parent notification, consultation with administration, calling the Crisis Team, etc.).

Suicide Screening Completion

All documentation forms cited in this protocol should be filled out completely. The following documents provide a guide to help the assessor obtain information quickly and reliably. If a student receives special education services, the student's case manager and school psychologist should be informed of the suicide screening.

The SPRT lead completes the C-SSRS to determine level of risk and coordinates the response..
Parents are to be informed of incidents and screening regardless of the level of risk identified.

1. **Demographic Information** - Print demographic page out of Q

2. **C-SSRS / C-SSRS-Spanish** - Ask the screening questions directly to the student at risk.

3.
4. **Determine the Level of Risk** - Document on the C-SSRS.

5. **Course of Action** - Determine the action plan based on the results (See Quick Look Chart below).

Quick Look Chart

SCREENING PROTOCOL BY LEVEL
If the student answers "no" to questions 1 and 2: Discontinue administration of C-SSRS. Provide appropriate resources. Conduct a follow-up meeting with the student, as appropriate.
Level 1 (Low Risk)
☐ Contact parents and inform them of safety concerns. Complete Parent Notification (English) / Parent Notification (Spanish). Based on consideration of parent input and the student's mental health needs, determine if the student may return to class or be released to the parent. ☐ Consider a Safety Plan to share with teachers, nurses, health tech, and the designated site administrator. A SH/SI Event Email Template is provided. ☐ If a student has community based services, obtain a Release of Information for community mental health provider(s) to update provider(s) and collaborate. ☐ Depending on student needs, site based counselors provide social-emotional support, provide check-ins and refer to community agencies as necessary. ☐ Confirm linkage to community based services. Collaborate as appropriate.
Level 2 (Medium Risk)

- ☐ Contact parents and inform them of safety concerns. Complete Parent Notification (English) / Parent Notification (Spanish).
- ☐ Create a Safety Plan and share with teachers, nurses, health tech, and the designated site administrator. A SH/SI Event Email Template is provided.
- ☐ Depending on student needs, site based counselors provide social-emotional support, provide check-ins, and refer to community agencies as necessary.
- ☐ If a student has community based services, obtain a Release of Information for community mental health providers to provide assessment information and collaboration.
- ☐ If community based services are required, obtain a Release of Information and complete VCBH, Logrando, or other community referral.
- ☐ Confirm linkage to community based services. Collaborate as appropriate.

Level 3 (High Risk)

- ☐ Inform administration as soon as possible and take needed safety precautions, including calling 911 if needed.
- ☐ Inform parents of emergency safety concerns and the evaluation process.
- ☐ Contact the VCBH Crisis Team. Parent presence is required for assessment by the VCBH Crisis Team. See VCBH Crisis Team Protocol.
- ☐ If criteria for VCBH Crisis Team assessment is not met (VCBH Crisis Team Protocol), call SRO for assessment.
- ☐ If parents refuse appropriate care, a Suspected Child Abuse Report may be appropriate. Call 805-654-3200 to report suspected abuse or neglect. Submit the written report by fax to (805) 654-5597 or email to HSA-CFS-SCAR@ventura.org.
- ☐ If released to the parent, complete Parent Notification (English) / Parent Notification (Spanish) of screening.
- ☐ Inform parent(s) of the need for a reentry meeting if the student has been hospitalized to occur before returning to school.
- ☐ Maintain contact with the parent to obtain an estimated date the student will be discharged and return to school. **See instructions under reentry meeting for**

information regarding parent attendance and student reentry to school.

Reentry Meeting

Steps Prior to Reentry Meeting

1. The person who conducted the assessment (SPRT Lead) will maintain contact with the parent while the student is hospitalized. Contact by the SPRT Lead provides support to the family and preparation for the reentry meeting.

2. Have the parent sign a Release of Information for the hospital and make contact with the facility and obtain:
    - An estimated date of return
    - Discharge summary/recommendations
    - Hospital safety plan, and
    - What community based therapeutic referrals/supports are in place or needed

3. If the student is already receiving community services and support, have a Release of Information signed in order to share information and coordinate services. The outside provider may wish to attend the reentry meeting.

Holding a Reentry Meeting

The reentry meeting is held after the student is discharged from hospitalization and before returning to school. Efforts must be made to have a parent present for the reentry meeting, in-person or by phone. If the parent is not present, please provide documentation of attempts to contact the parent and reason for parent absence on the Reentry Meeting from. *(Note: A student cannot be denied reentry and access to their educational environment if the parent is not available.)*

1. Use the Reentry Meeting Form to document pre-meeting communication and the reentry meeting.

2. Limit the reentry meeting to 2 members of the Suicide Prevention Response Team* *(**Best practice**: the person who conducted screening should be present. If the student qualifies for special education, the school psychologist should be informed and may also be invited.)*
    a. School Counselor
    b. Intervention Counselor
    c. Wellness Center Counselor
    d. School Psychologist
    e. School Administrator
    f. District Nurse
    g. Related Service Provider for student (e.g. ERSES Therapist, DIS Counselor)
    h. Mental Health Counselor
    i. Associate Mental Health Therapist

*In considering the student's relationships and unique needs, other members of the school team may be considered (e.g., Outreach Consultant, Teacher, etc.)

3. If hospital discharge paperwork has not already been received, have the student's parent provide the paperwork at the reentry meeting or obtain a release of information for the paperwork prior to the meeting.

4. Identify school based stressors and discuss needed accommodations based on the hospital discharge paperwork and doctor's recommendation. Consult with the 504 coordinator and consider scheduling a 504 meeting if further accommodations and support may be needed.

5. Develop District Safety Plan. Share a copy of the Safety Plan and needed accommodations with the student's teachers, nurses, health techs, designated site administrator, and other staff as agreed upon. A Re-entry & Safety Plan Email Template is provided to use in sending this information.

6. If the student received special education services, notify the assigned Special Education Program Administrator and School Psychologist.

7. Ensure that the appropriate referrals have been made (i.e. Logrando, VCBH). Concurrent referral may be made to Mental Health Counselors in addition to, but not in place of the community referral.

Additional Circumstances Requiring a Reentry Meeting

A parent/guardian may inform the school of a mental health based hospitalization initiated outside of the school setting. When notified of a non-school related hospitalization, a member of the Suicide Prevention Response Team will initiate the reentry procedures above, as applicable.

Record Keeping and Next Steps

The C-SSRS, reentry paperwork, and backup documents will be held by the SPRT lead in a secure, confidential file as required by law. Notification to necessary District staff will be made by the SPRT lead using the Safety Plan developed at the reentry meeting. Safety plan will use the Student ID number to support student confidentiality.