



GREATER LOWELL
TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

Suicide Prevention: Recognizing and Responding to Students in Need

Procedures, Information, and Resources
for High School Staff

Suicide: A Critical Issue Impacting Today's Youth

U.S. National Statistics

According to 2023 final data, suicide is the 11th ranking cause of death in the U.S. overall, but it is the 2nd leading cause of death for young people aged 15-24.

■ On average, one young person dies by suicide every **1 hour and 28.5 minutes**.

Massachusetts Focus

While Massachusetts ranks **48th nationally**, the state still recorded **658 suicide deaths** in the 2023 data.

A Call to Action

Recognizing these statistics is the first step in understanding the urgent need for early intervention and support in our schools.

Recognizing warning signs

Recognizing warning signs can save lives. Watch for these critical red flags:

01

EMOTIONAL DISCLOSURES (TAKE SERIOUSLY)

If a student discloses feeling unbearable pain, hopelessness, or like they are a burden to others, take it seriously.

02

BEHAVIORAL CHANGES (CRITICAL INDICATORS)

Behavioral changes are also critical indicators. Watch for increased alcohol or drug use, withdrawal from family and friends, losing interest in personal hygiene, or giving away prized possessions.

03

IMMEDIATE ATTENTION & REQUIRED ACTION

A recent episode of depression, expressing rage, or changes in sleeping patterns also require immediate attention. Never dismiss statements suggesting suicidal thoughts; if you notice these signs, refer to the suicide concerns procedures immediately.

Risk & Protective Factors

Understanding what increases or decreases risk is essential for student safety and support.

Risk Factors

- Loss of a loved one
- Traumatic experiences
- A sense of isolation
- Family history of suicide & mental health problems
- Access to lethal means
- Barriers to mental health treatment

Protective Factors

- Strong family & community support
- Skills in conflict resolution
- Easy access to mental health resources
- Cultural or religious beliefs that support self-preservation



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**When a student is in crisis,
your immediate response is
critical.**

1

Listen without judgment, show empathy, and take every concern seriously. Never dismiss statements that suggest suicidal thoughts.

MOST IMPORTANTLY: Do not allow the student to remain without adult supervision.

2

You must personally escort the student to the School Counseling Department. If you cannot, call the Main Office at **extension 4418 or 4420** to get an adult to escort them.

"Staying connected and offering immediate support can make a life-changing difference for a student in distress."

Student Support Reporting Flow

Following established procedures ensures students get the right help.

1

Step 1: Identify Adjustment Counselor

Check the details page on **X2** to identify the student's Adjustment Counselor.

2

Step 2: Contact School Counselor

If they do not have one, contact their **School Counselor**.

3

Step 3: Escalate to Directors

The counselor will then contact the **Director of School Counseling** at **extension 4955**. If the student is on an IEP, contact the **Director of Special Education** at **extension 4850**.

4

Step 4: Preliminary Assessment & Emergency Protocols

The designated counselor will meet with the student to make a preliminary determination of risk, contract for safety if possible, and follow the **Medical/Behavioral Health Emergency Protocols**.

Crisis & Mental Health Resources

Immediate help is available for students experiencing mental health concerns.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

24/7 HELP

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is available 24/7 via call or text.

The Trevor Project

LGBTQ+

For LGBTQ youth, The Trevor Project can be reached at 1-866-488-7386.

Hey Sam Textline

PEER-PEER

Students up to 24 years old can use the Hey Sam peer-to-peer texting service at 1-877-832-0890.

Vinfen Crisis Evaluation

FOR STAFF

For immediate crisis intervention evaluations, staff can contact Vinfen at 866-388-2242.

Asking for help is a sign of strength; knowing these resources ensures we can connect students to the life-saving support they need.

