

## **Part 2 - Section 5 DEATHS OR SUICIDE**

### **PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING INTERVENTION WITH TROUBLED STUDENTS**

**Violence prevention and response plans must provide for effective intervention for troubled children. These plans must utilize all the resources available throughout the school system and the county government and in the community.**

#### **SHARE RESPONSIBILITY BY ESTABLISHING A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CHILD, SCHOOL, HOME AND COMMUNITY.**

Coordinated service systems should be available for children who are at risk for violent behavior. Effective schools reach out to include families and the entire community in the education of children.

#### **INFORM PARENTS AND LISTEN TO THEM WHEN AN EARLY WARNING SIGN IS OBSERVED.**

Parents should be involved as soon as possible. Effective and safe schools make persistent efforts to involve parents by: informing them routinely about school discipline policies, procedures, and rules, and about their children's behavior (both good and bad); involving them in making decisions concerning school-wide disciplinary policies and procedures; and encouraging them to participate in prevention programs, and crisis planning.

#### **MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY AND PARENTS' RIGHTS TO PRIVACY.**

Parental involvement and consent is required before personally identifiable information is shared with other agencies, except in the case of emergencies or suspicion of abuse.

#### **DEVELOP THE CAPACITY OF STAFF, STUDENTS, AND FAMILIES TO INTERVENE.**

Many school staff members are afraid of saying or doing the wrong thing when faced with a potentially violent student. Effective schools provide the entire school community—teachers, students, parents, support staff—with training and support in responding to imminent warning signs, preventing violence, and intervening safely and effectively.

#### **SUPPORT STUDENTS IN BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS.**

Effective school communities encourage students to see themselves as responsible for their actions, and actively engage them in planning, implementing, and evaluating violence prevention initiatives.

#### **SIMPLIFY STAFF REQUESTS FOR URGENT ASSISTANCE.**

Many school systems and community agencies have complex legalistic referral systems with timelines and waiting lists. **Children who are at risk of endangering themselves or others cannot be placed on waiting lists.**

### **MAKE INTERVENTIONS AVAILABLE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.**

Too frequently, interventions are not made available until the student becomes violent or is adjudicated as a youthful offender. Effective schools build mechanisms into their intervention processes to ensure that referrals are addressed promptly, and that feedback is provided to the referring individual.

### **USE SUSTAINED, MULTIPLE, COORDINATED INTERVENTIONS.**

It is rare that children are violent or disruptive only in school. Thus, interventions that are most successful are comprehensive, sustained, and properly implemented. They help families and staff work together to help the child.

### **ANALYZE THE CONTEXTS IN WHICH VIOLENT BEHAVIOR OCCURS.**

School communities can enhance their effectiveness by conducting a functional analysis of the factors that set off violence and problem behaviors. In determining an appropriate course of action, consider the child's age, cultural background, and family experiences and values. Decisions about interventions should be measured against a standard of reasonableness to ensure the likelihood that they will be implemented effectively.

### **BUILD UPON AND COORDINATE INTERNAL SCHOOL RESOURCES.**

In developing and implementing violence prevention and response plans, effective schools draw upon the resources of various school-based programs and staff.

Taken from "Early Warning," *Timely Response*, U.S. Department of Education.

## **IN CASE OF DEATH OR SUICIDE: Contact Crisis Management Team and have a meeting. Contact the Safe School Officer and CENTER UNIFIED District Office.**

### **Gather information:**

- Student's schedule and emergency card.
- Names of student's best friends and siblings and schools they attend.
- Name of witnesses, if any.
- Student's class schedule and list of administrators and guidance staff members.
- Notify student services staff members assigned to your building.
- Designate rooms to be used for group counseling.
- Hold a staff meeting as soon as possible. If the event occurred during off school hours, this meeting should take place as soon as the staff returns to school. Keep school personnel updated on the events and circumstances.
- Advise teachers to speak to distressed students privately and to send them to counseling.

**Announce loss to the entire school, providing facts that will reduce rumors. If possible, this is best done by student services personnel and administrators meeting with individual classes.**

- Make arrangements for counselors or administrators to visit selected classes as needed and to speak personally to staff members.
- Be visible in the school.
- End the day with a short staff meeting to review the facts of the incident and the role of the staff in further coping with the loss.
- Allow the staff the opportunity to share experiences and suggestions.