
In response to a student or staff suicide completed **in** school:

The principal should:

1. Secure area, call for police.
2. Make contact with the family as soon as possible.
3. Inform faculty and student body of the untimely death (suicide) through a prepared statement, or
4. Call a faculty meeting as soon as possible.

In response to a student or staff suicide completed **outside** of school:

The principal should:

1. Call a meeting with the Crisis Response Team.
2. Gather information from primary sources.
3. Call a faculty meeting as soon as possible.
4. Inform faculty and student body of the untimely death (suicide) through a prepared statement.
5. Make contact with the family as soon as possible.
6. Invite close associates to a group meeting at a specified site with an appropriate counselor.

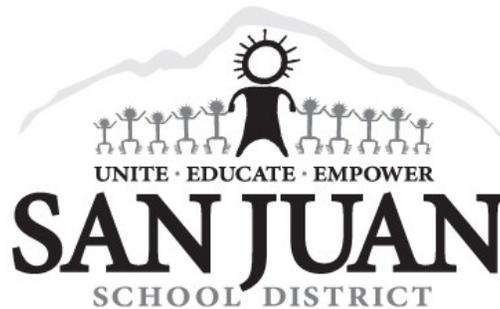
Anticipating Post-vention Issues

Informing students and faculty of the death:

Make the announcement as soon as possible; the longer the announcement is delayed, the more likely for misinformation to circulate. As students begin to process loss, allow those students who need more time to come to a designated support room in the school to talk. Students do not have to be directly tied to incident to be affected. If the student is not at school, schools should verify that adult supervision is available. Identify, with staff, those students who may be especially “at-risk”.

Holding special assemblies and/or memorial services.

Commemorative events are discouraged. Any school observance offered to one student **MUST** be provided for any student who dies, regardless of the circumstances of death. It is appropriate for the administration to call the family of the victim and express sympathy as soon as possible after receiving the news of the death. It is encouraged to send school administrative and/or teacher representatives to services held for the student.



**CRISIS
RESPONSE
Handy
Reminders**



Douglas E. Wright
Superintendent
435-678-1211

Tony Done
Crisis Response
Team Coordinator
435-678-1222

Principal's Roles

- Verify facts
- Call SJSJ Crisis Response team Coordinator Tony Done 678-1222
- Call family & express sympathy
- Instruct secretaries on how to answer all calls regarding the crisis
- Meet with Crisis team members.
- Hold a faculty meeting as soon as possible.
- Assign Crisis Team member to assist distraught teachers and/or any substitute teacher (s).
- Talk with teacher (s) of students.
- Announce death to students.
- Update secretaries on crisis response plan.
- Prepare a letter to be carried home (elementary only).
- Refer media to the Superintendent
- Locate locker belongings, school-work etc, and give to family.
- Inform students about funeral arrangements when information becomes available.
- Identify a school representative to attend the viewing and funeral.
- When needed, call a community follow-up session with Crisis Team, parents and students.

Suicide Prevention Guidelines:

DO:

- Learn to recognize the clues to suicide: depression, helplessness, threats or words of warning, withdrawal, isolation, excessive stress, giving away possessions, etc.
- Advise parent of your concern and maintain records of interactions when talking with a troubled student and parent.
- Trust your own judgment.
- Listen and understand the feelings behind the words. Take every feeling the student expresses seriously.
- Tell others. Immediately refer all students you feel are suicidal to the principal, counselor and/or Crisis Team member
- Remind the student that suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem.

HELPFUL HINTS

DO:

- Be honest with students
- Identify friends & at-risk students
- Invite parent to participate
- Consider effect of crisis on test performance.

DON'T:

- Ignore it
- Lower the flag
- Hold assemblies
- Memorialize at school or cancel school
- Allow students to check-out without time in crisis counseling
- Allow media in crisis counseling sessions.

Faculty Meeting Agenda

1. Give current factual information about the crisis event.
2. Introduce Crisis Response Team and explain how they will support the students and staff during the day.
3. Include key points and rationale, including the death needs to be acknowledged in a sensitive way; every student is a valued member of the school community, and facts are given to dispel rumors.
4. Tell faculty which method you have selected to inform student body of the crisis event.
5. Review possible student reactions.
6. Explain the teacher's role in helping their students cope with grief and loss.
7. Empathize with faculty members. They may also be grieving.
8. Address media concerns for teachers and students.
9. Allow time for questions from faculty.

Scholastic Children & Grief website:

<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3754826>