

SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Newtown Board of Education recognizes that suicide has become a leading cause of death among young children and, consequently, is a major concern to our school system and community. It is the policy of the Board of Education to actively respond in any situation where a student verbally or behaviorally indicates intent to engage in self-injurious actions or attempt suicide.

The Board of Education recognizes the need for youth suicide prevention procedures and will establish program(s) to identify risk factors for youth suicide, procedures to intervene with such youth, referral services and training for teachers, other school professionals and students to provide assistance in these programs.

It is also recognized by the Board of Education that suicide is a complex issue and that while school staff members may recognize potentially suicidal youth, they cannot make clinical assessment of risk and provide in-depth counseling, but must refer the youth to an appropriate agency for such assessment and counseling.

Therefore, any school employee who may have knowledge of a suicide threat or intent will report this information to the school principal or his/her designee, who will, in turn, mobilize a crisis intervention team. The student's family will be notified, and an appropriate referral will be made. At no time during this process is the student to be left alone.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 10-221 (e) Boards of education to prescribe rules

Adopted 6/12/90
Modified 10/10/95, 6/7/05

Suicide Prevention/Intervention

When a staff member is confronted with a situation in which a student makes a statement of suicidal thinking, or it appears that an attempt at suicide is possible, the following actions will take place:

- A. The staff member immediately will refer the student to the appropriate building administrator or his/her designee.
- B. In the event the staff member perceives that a student has taken action, which creates a medical emergency, the school nurse will be notified immediately and emergency medical procedures will be followed.
- C. The building administrator who receives the initial referral will notify the Principal and/or the school nurse and seek the intervention of appropriate staff members. The Crisis Intervention Team consisting of administration, pupil services, regular and/or special education staff may be convened also. In the event that the Crisis Intervention Team cannot be immediately convened, the administrator will directly contact at least one other member of the Team to assist in making appropriate decisions.
- D. A pupil services staff member (school psychologist, school social worker, or guidance counselor) will be involved for the purpose of establishing sequential facts and/or events leading to the crisis. At no time during this process is the student to be left alone.
- E. If the student is not found to be suicidal, the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified of the referral and of all conclusions reached.
- F. If the student is found to be suicidal, the principal or designee will attempt to make immediate contact with a parent or guardian to come to the school for a conference with appropriate medical and/or psychological service providers.
 1. During the conference, the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be advised of appropriate recommendations.
 2. Under no circumstances is a student allowed to go home alone. The student must be released only to a parent, guardian, or other responsible adult.
 3. If reasonable attempts to reach a parent, guardian, or other responsible adult in whose custody the student may be released are not successful, the case will be treated as a medical emergency and the principal and/or designee will make arrangements to transport the student to an area hospital emergency department or mental health facility.
 4. If the student requires medical attention, he/she will be transported immediately to an area hospital emergency department. The school nurse or appropriate staff member will arrange to have a parent or guardian meet the student at the hospital.
 5. The appropriate counseling staff member who is assigned responsibility by the principal or designee will write a detailed report within 24 hours.

The report shall include:

- Name of student
 - Reporter
 - Name of staff member(s) involved
 - Situation report
 - Time and date for all conferences
 - Summary of all conferences
 - Recommendations made to the parent(s) or guardian(s), student, and building staff
 - Follow-up responsibility and staff assigned
6. Follow-up contact will be in accordance with the recommendations including those activities performed to ensure the safety of the student.
7. The principal or designee will submit a copy of all reports to the parent(s) or guardian(s), the Superintendent of Schools, and the Director of Pupil Services
- G. If the parent(s) or guardian(s) refuse to come to school, the principal or designee will explain that the school may be required to file a neglect report with the Department of Children and Families
- H. If as a result of suicidal activity, the need exists for changes in the student's educational program, the school's Planning and Placement Team (PPT) will be convened. In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), the PPT will reconsider information provided by the student's mental health professional, the parent(s) or guardian(s), appropriate outside facility staff members, and if feasible, the student to plan the student's educational program.
- I. Appropriate school personnel will be designated to maintain contact with the student's mental health professionals to support programming needs and procedures.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

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Adopted 6/7/05