

# Appendix H

## Sample Agenda: Goals for Initial Staff Meeting

PROVIDE A MINIMUM OF ONE (1) HOUR TO ENGAGE IN THE FOLLOWING:

### Part 1 of 5: Sharing the Facts:

- Introduce Crisis Response Team members;
- Share accurate factual information about the death, honoring any requests for privacy from the family;
- Avoid oversimplifying the causes of suicide and presenting them as inexplicable or unavoidable. Do not use words "committed suicide" or "failed suicide." Mental health professionals request we say instead "died by suicide," "ended his/her life." "death by suicide". Suicide is a tragic event and not a crime;
- Emphasize recent treatment advances for depression and other mental illness;
- Explain plans for the day, including the locations where crisis counseling and other supports will be delivered. If possible, provide snacks along with art and writing supplies for creative expression that may be preserved for the student's family;
- Remind staff of student and staff dismissal protocols for the funeral;
- Remind staff of risk factors and warning signs and to use Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) or its equivalent as situation warrants. Contact BHRS regarding QPR Training at [BHRSPreventionandOutreach@marincounty.org](mailto:BHRSPreventionandOutreach@marincounty.org);
- Inform staff of any outside agencies/individuals who will be providing support on campus;
- Inform staff where services are available on campus for students who have been identified to be at risk; and
- Announce the availability of an End-of-Day meeting designed for staff to debrief and obtain any necessary support;

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## Sample Agenda: Goals for Initial Staff Meeting (continued)

### **Part 2 of 5: Messaging to Students**

- Convey what information can be relayed to students. Avoid detailed descriptions of the suicide including specific method and location;
- Provide appropriate staff (e.g., homeroom teachers and/or advisers) with a Talking Point Guided Notification (Appendices D - F) and arrange coverage for any staff unable to effectively read the statement. Explain that the talking points have the most impact if read and personalized in their own words;
- Prepare staff for student reactions and questions by providing staff with "Tips for Talking About Suicide" (Appendix P | PAGES 85-88) and "Facts about Suicide in Adolescents" (Appendix Q | PAGE 89);
- Work to control rumors and provide known facts;
- Work to avoid tributes by friends, school wide assemblies and sharing information over school's PA system that may romanticize the death. Positive attention given to someone who has died (or attempted to die) by suicide can lead vulnerable individuals who desire such attention to take their own lives;
- Remind staff that all students must be sent in pairs/groups or escorted by an adult. No students are to travel alone when seeking additional support services;
- Remind staff that how they respond to the crisis can have a strong impact on students; therefore, they need to project that they are in control and are concerned about their students' mental health; and
- Remind staff that they can play an important role in identifying changes in students' behavior and work to develop a communication and documentation plan to alert support providers of students who are having difficulty.

### **Part 3 of 5: Provide Support to Staff**

- Allow staff an opportunity to express their own reactions and grief;
- Share that substitute teachers have been secured to replace any teacher/s too impacted by the loss to teach;
- Identify any staff member/s who may need additional support and refer them to appropriate resources;

# Appendix H

## Sample Agenda: Goals for Initial Staff Meeting (continued)

### **Part 3 of 5: Provide Support to Staff (continued)**

- Advise staff that trained professionals/counselors will intentionally seek out those faculty and staff who had direct or close contact with the deceased student to check-in;
- Again, identify staff uncomfortable notifying students of the death. Designate CRT members or counselors to support those staff members in their classrooms throughout the school day;
- Inform teachers that roving substitute teachers are available for those who may need a break. Identify protocol for requesting relief from a roving substitute;
- Emphasize that this will have an affect on the school community and to make sure teachers take care of themselves;
- Provide staff with resources to support their personal needs related to coping with grief and loss; and
- Ensure staff impacted are aware of local mental health resources provided through their public/private agencies.

### **Part 4 of 5: Interacting with Parents, Visitors, and the Media**

- Share with staff how to best handle parent inquiries and plans for communicating with parents, including who parents should contact for further information and resources;
- Share location designated for parents who come to campus to ask questions and express concerns to congregate and to be addressed by identified CRT member;
- Identify which Crisis Response Team member has been designated as the media spokesperson and instruct staff to refer media inquires to this team member; and
- Provide staff with district policy regarding unauthorized visitors on campus and how to best address the presence of unknown individuals during postvention response.

### **Part 5 of 5: Follow-up**

- Finally, send a follow-up email at the conclusion of the staff meeting that includes a summary of the information shared/discussed in the meeting and any additional details that were not available at the time of the meeting, such as a listing of local resources.

# Appendix H

## Sample Agenda: Goals for End-of-Day Staff Meeting

**It can also be helpful for the Principal and/or Crisis Response Team coordinator to have an all-staff meeting at the end of the first day. This meeting provides an opportunity to take the following steps:**

- Offer appreciation of the staff;
- Review the day's challenges, including any students of particular concern;
- Debrief, share experiences, express concerns, and ask questions;
- Check in with staff to assess whether any of them need additional support, and refer accordingly;
- Disseminate information regarding the death and/or funeral arrangements;
- Discuss plans for the next day;
- Remind staff of the importance of self-care; and
- Remind staff of the importance of documenting crisis response efforts for future planning.