

Crisis Intervention Due to Death *Action Plan*

Contact district personnel to notify of incident and request support	•	
Plan for the first school day after incident		
Create <i>Fact Sheet</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe facts of incident to be read by teachers to each class • Include information about support services available • Consider including information about the grief process and teacher roles 	
Arrange for “floater subs” to relieve teachers in need of support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine how teachers can access the subs 	
Arrange for <i>student support area</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffed by counselors/ Psychological Services staff • Arrange for check-in and check-out system 	
Arrange for <i>faculty support area</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffed by counselors/ Psychological Services staff 	
Call teachers, if possible, prior to return to school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use calling tree • Notify of incident and faculty meeting prior to school to discuss plans • If the death occurs during school hours, hand deliver <i>Fact Sheet</i> to all teachers with instructions of how to share with students 	
Identify those most at risk and assign a “supporter” for these individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most highly impacted might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Close friends ○ Individuals who have experienced previous loss ○ Those directly exposed to the trauma (e.g., witnessed the death) 	
Assess impact on other campuses and arrange for support if needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children of deceased • Friends of deceased 	

Crisis Intervention Due to Death *Action Plan*

Hold faculty meeting before school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review facts of incident ● Distribute <i>Fact Sheet</i> and request that it be read to each class ● Discuss grief process and what to expect from students and adults ● Describe support services available ● Encourage keeping regular routine as much as possible ● Notify of debriefing session after school 	
Hold debriefing session after school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How did things go? ● What support is needed for tomorrow? 	
Develop plan for ongoing support and follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emotional support for staff and students 	
Assist students and staff with need to support family and honor deceased	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cards ● Scholarship ● Food for family ● Memorial activities (not recommended for suicides) 	
For the Death of a <i>Staff Member</i>		
Call parents of students in deceased teacher's classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Notify of incident ● Ask them to discuss with their child ● Inform them that support services will be available 	
Select special sub for deceased teacher's classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If possible, select someone who is known by the students and can remain for a significant period of time until permanent replacement is found ● Consider sub's ability to handle students' grief 	
Designate a support team to follow deceased teacher's class schedule and talk to each class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Express support for students ● Acknowledge difficulty of situation ● Share a few memories of teacher, if appropriate ● Review grief process 	

Crisis Intervention Due to Death *Action Plan*

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify students most in need of additional support 	
For the Death of a <i>Student</i>			
	Call parents of students in deceased student's classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Notify of incident ● Ask them to discuss with their child ● Inform them that support services will be available 	
	Designate a support team to follow deceased student's class schedule and talk to each class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Express support for students ● Acknowledge difficulty of situation ● Share a few memories of student, if appropriate ● Review grief process ● Identify students most in need of additional support 	

Crisis Intervention Due to Death

Action Plan

Understanding and Responding to Grief Reactions*

- Grieving is a process that everyone experiences differently. When individuals grieve, they bring the unique factors of their family and faith support systems, past experiences with loss or trauma, developmental and cognitive abilities, and any pre-existing mental health problems to the grieving process. Although both individuals and the school community at-large may experience the general stages of grief, they may not necessarily experience these stages in the same timeframe or order. The stages of grief include, emotional numbness, anger, disorganization, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.
- Grief reactions may affect a student's school performance and his or her behavior at home. Reactions to grief may include denial, anger, sadness, anxiety, fear, confusion, inability to concentrate, difficulty sleeping, and guilt.
- The death of a peer can be particularly distressing to students. Although most preadolescents and adolescents have a mature understanding of death (e.g., its irreversibility and universality), they often view themselves as invincible and not subject to the "rules" that govern others. The death of a peer may not only constitute the loss of a classmate but also may point out the reality of his or her own mortality. In addition, young people may have had no experience in coping with death or have unrealistic perceptions of what grief entails because of overexposure to death as entertainment in movies and television.
- Grief is a normal and necessary response to loss. However, persistent or very intense grief responses may require attention from trained professionals. Individuals should be referred for extra help if symptoms significantly impair functioning or last for more than two months after the loss.
- Teachers play an important role in assisting students through the grief process. By following the guidelines listed below, teachers can support their students and guide them through this very difficult time:
 - Provide accurate information to students
 - Lead classroom discussions that focus on helping students to cope with the loss
 - Dispel rumors
 - Answer questions without providing unnecessary details
 - Recognize the varying religious beliefs held by students
 - Model an appropriate response (It is OK for kids to see you cry!)
 - Give permission for a range of emotions
 - Identify students who need counseling and refer to building support personnel
 - Provide activities to reduce trauma, such as artwork, music and writing
 - Respect the student's need to grieve
 - Avoid telling the child to "Move on" or "Get over it".
 - Affirm the person, regardless of academic performance
 - Stick with the regular routine as much as possible, but set aside the curriculum as needed (Students are comforted by routine.)
 - Share information with students as it becomes available (e.g., funeral arrangements)

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*This information could be printed on the **Fact Sheet** to support teachers as they interact with students in grief. (Source—www.NASPOonline.org)