

## **Students**

### **Suicide Prevention/Intervention**

The Thomaston Board of Education recognizes that suicide is among the three leading causes of death among young people and, consequently, is a concern to this school system and the community it serves. It is the policy of the Board of Education to actively respond in any situation where a student verbally or behaviorally indicates an intent to attempt suicide or to physically harm himself/herself.

The Board 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 that suicide is a complex issue, and that, while school staff members may recognize potentially suicidal youth, they cannot make clinical assessment of 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 the crisis intervention team as described in the district's Guide to Crisis Intervention Procedures. 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.

## **Students**

### **Suicide Prevention Procedures**

When a staff member in the Thomaston Public School System is confronted with a situation in which a student's statements or actions are suggestive of suicidal thought or potential suicidal action, or when that staff members becomes aware of a suspicion of a possible suicide involving a student, the following actions will take place:

The staff member will immediately inform the school principal or his/her designee.

In the event the staff member perceives that a student has taken an action which creates a medical and/or psychiatric emergency, medical procedures will be followed.

The Building Principal or his/her designee will activate appropriate personnel of the school's Crisis Intervention Team. A member of the Crisis Intervention Team will immediately meet with the student for the purpose of determining the risk status of the student. During the meeting, the student will be informed of the limit of confidentiality. **AT NO TIME DURING THIS PROCESS WILL THE STUDENT BE LEFT ALONE.** Following student interview the Crisis Intervention Team will meet and complete Crisis Team Meeting Minutes form.

If the student is found to be suicidal, the parents will be notified of the referral and of all conclusions reached.

If the student is found to be suicidal, immediate contact will be made with a parent or guardian and a conference will be held the same day. During the conference, the parent or guardian will be advised that an immediate mental health intervention is needed. Community resources will be identified and suggestions to parents will be provided. A Crisis Intervention Report will be completed by the most appropriate member of the team and will be given to the parents or guardian. In addition, the Building Principal or his/her designee may inform the parents or guardian that the student will not be accepted back into school until a formal mental health intervention has taken place. Under no circumstances is the student, who is determined to be at risk, be allowed to go home alone.

If the student requires medical attention, he/she will be transported immediately to an area hospital. Parents will be informed to meet the student at the hospital.

If reasonable attempts to reach the parent or guardian of the student are not successful, the case will be treated as a medical emergency and arrangements will be made to transport the student to an area hospital emergency room or mental health facility. Failure on the part of the student's parent or guardian to take the school's recommendation seriously and provide for the safety of the student will be reported to the Department of Children and Families by the Building Principal or his/her designee.

## **Students**

## **Suicide Prevention Procedures (continued)**

Follow up contact will be in accordance with the Crisis Intervention Team's recommendations. The Crisis Intervention Team member assigned to the case will maintain contact with the student's mental health professionals to support programming needs and follow-up procedures. Documentation that procedures were followed will be given to the Building Principal and/or designee and the Director of Pupil Personnel Services. If the Crisis Team determines a need exists for changes in the student's program, the school's planning and placement team may convene and consult with the student's mental health professional, the parent(s) or guardian, appropriate outside facility staff, and if feasible, the student, to plan the student's educational program.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

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