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5351. PUPIL HOMICIDE PREVENTION

School personnel must take seriously all suggestions, demonstrations, or communications of potential harm to a student teacher (e.g. hit lists, verbal threats). It is essential for school personnel to increase their sensitivity to and awareness of the other subtle signs of harmful ideation and/or gestures of destructive-behavior. When confronted with an actual situation in which life threatening behavior or ideation is present, immediate mobilization of all appropriate resources is paramount. No staff member should hesitate to inform appropriate personnel when homicide is a possibility. Pupil confidentiality does not apply when the pupil threatens others.

A collaborative team consisting of the Building Principal, Assistant Principal, Child Study Team members, school counselors, school nurse and other appropriate school personnel will be available for any potential homicidal crisis.

A staff member may gain information from a variety of sources. The staff member must realize that any information conveyed through sources other than the individual is important and must be investigated. Any information concerning homicidal threats in school and outside of school should be forwarded immediately through use of the procedures outlined below.

Procedures

A. Response to Homicidal Ideation

1. Any suggestion, demonstration or communication of an intention to harm another person must be taken seriously.
2. The professional staff member who suspects that a pupil has homicidal tendencies will immediately notify the pupil's counselor or Child, Study Team (CST) case manager if applicable. If not available, a counselor on duty, the Student Personnel Services (SPS Supervisor), school psychologist, school social worker, and Principal or Assistant Principal shall be notified. The Principal or designee will make the Superintendent aware of the situation.
 - a. In the elementary schools, the Principal will notify the school counselor and the psychologist and/or social worker. The Principal will also make the Superintendent aware of the situation.
 - b. The counselor will meet with the pupil. Collaboration with other team members is always advisable.
 - c. If after meeting with the pupil, the counselor deems the situation to be serious but not a crisis (for example, the pupil says, "I sometimes think about killing my teacher."), the counselor shall:
 - (1) Keep the pupil under continuous adult supervision until the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) picks up the pupil.

- (2) Contact the pupil's parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) by phone to apprise them of the situation. If the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) cannot be reached, the Principal or designee will be notified in order to continue attempting to contact the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s). The Principal or designee will inform the school police officer or the local police to ensure parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) contact is made.
- (3) Recommend that a mental health professional be consulted or the pupil be taken to a crisis center or any other appropriate emergency facility. Appropriate signed releases will be secured in order to communicate with the outside treating clinician.
- (4) Have the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) sign a written statement that referral information has been received and he/she agrees to seek immediate assistance from a mental health professional. In the event that the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) do not agree to implement these steps or in the event that contact cannot be made with the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s), the Division of Youth and Family Services should be contacted. A written assessment of the pupil will be provided to DYFS as requested.
- (5) Follow up with the pupil and parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) to monitor the pupil's status. If necessary, the counselor will consult with the school psychologist and/or social worker.
- (6) In the event that medical clearance has not been provided, the Principal in consultation with the counselor and/or psychologist/social worker, may consider postponing the pupil's return to school until appropriate contact has been made with the outside treating clinician. This will be done after appropriate signed parental release has been secured.
- (7) Upon return to school, a plan of periodic monitoring of the pupil by the counselor and/or CST manager (when appropriate) should include input from the outside treating clinician and parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s). This will be done after securing appropriate signed parental release of information form.

B. Response to Homicidal Threat

1. If after meeting with the pupil the counselor deems the situation to be a crisis and that another person is in imminent danger (i.e. the pupil says, "I'm going to kill my teacher today.") the counselor shall:
 - a. Keep the pupil under continuous adult supervision.
 - b. Begin the chain of communication by notifying the SPS Supervisor. The SPS supervisor will notify the school psychologist and/or social worker, the Building Principal/ Assistant Principal, and the school nurse. The Principal will notify the Superintendent.

In the event that a pupil names a specific person(s) whom he/she plans to harm, the targeted individuals(s) will be notified. If a pupil is targeted, his/her parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) will also be notified. Counselors will be available to meet with the intended victim(s) to provide support.

- c. Refer the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) to a crisis intervention center or other appropriate emergency facilities. The parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) shall sign a written statement that referral information has been received and agrees to seek immediate assistance from a mental health professional.

If the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) does not agree to implement these steps or contact cannot be made with the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s), the school psychologist or school social worker will meet with the pupil and contact the Division of Youth and Family Services. A written assessment of the pupil will be provided to DYFS as requested.

2. Appropriate signed releases will be secured in order to communicate with the outside treating clinician.

A team decision will then be made by the school psychologist, social worker, SPS Supervisor, counselor, Principal/ Assistant Principal, and Superintendent regarding the pupil's reentry into school.

3. Once the pupil has begun the psychotherapeutic treatment, the counselor, in consultation with the school psychologist and/or social worker, will follow-up with the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) to monitor the pupil's status.
4. Upon return to school, a plan of periodic monitoring of the pupil by the counselor should include input from the outside treating clinician.
5. The Counselor shall maintain a written log of concerns about the pupil and actions taken.

C. Response to Homicidal Attempt

The superintendent or designee will generate an action plan in conjunction with the Haddon Township Crisis Plan with school administrators, counselors, psychologists/social workers, and the Core Team. Also, follow steps in the Suicide Policy.

D. Response to a Completed Homicide

The Superintendent or designee will generate an action plan in conjunction with the Haddon Township Crisis Plan with school administrators, counselors, psychologists/social workers, and the Core Team. Also, follow steps in the Suicide Policy.

Adopted: December 17, 2009