

Questions for Guiding Intervention Set Up

Idaho Youth Suicide Prevention Program

To ensure that a school is ready to intervene, administrators must be able to positively affirm these questions.

1. Has the school identified and trained people who are Gatekeepers?
2. Does everyone know who the Gatekeepers are?
3. Does the entire school community understand that students at risk should not be left unattended, even to get help?
4. Do personnel know to watch for messages in writings, art, doodles, journals, etc., or messages about or fascination with death or suicide?
5. Do school personnel understand that it is not their responsibility to assess the seriousness of a situation, but that all suicidal behavior must be taken seriously and reported, using the school protocols?
6. Do the protocols inform staff about what to do if there is any reason to suspect a weapon is present/readily available?
7. Have the confidentiality guidelines been provided and discussed with ALL staff?
8. Will staff receive any feedback on students who they refer for an evaluation of suicidal risk?
9. Are procedures in place that meet staff needs in the event of a crisis?
10. Does the school have a procedure to alert staff of an emergency while school is in session and do substitutes and volunteers know this procedure?
11. Have the school counselors, social workers, and other Gatekeepers or designees been trained in best practice suicide intervention, including use of questions to assess the level of threat?
12. Has a list of local, appropriate, and assessable mental health contacts in the community been created, have contacts been interviewed and assessed for willingness to work with the school designees on issues related to the student's well-being and return to school? Have the mental health clinicians been trained in assessing and treating suicide risk? Do they have experience working with youth and families?
13. If needed, will someone request emergency personnel, including police and/or ambulance? Who will make the determination? (If the student has a dangerous weapon, the police should be called.)

14. Do school procedures designate someone to contact the parent/guardian when suicide risk is suspected, regardless of assessed risk level?
15. Does the school have procedures for when the parent/guardian is unreachable?
16. Does the school have procedures for when a parent refuses to get help for their child?
17. Has someone been designated to call the agency for the parents/guardians ahead of their arrival and to follow up to see that they do arrive?
18. Does the school provide information to parents about the importance of removing lethal means?
19. Did designee request a signed release of confidentiality between the parent/guardian and mental health agency, hospital, or doctor?
20. Are there protocols concerning how to help a student re-enter school after an absence or hospitalization for mental health issues, including suicidal behavior?
21. Does the school have a system to collect all documentation related to the crisis?
22. Have all involved school personnel been debriefed and offered support if needed, and has the school reached out to offer support to the parents/guardians?
23. Will the school, parents/guardians of the student, and mental health agency(s) that are involved put together a plan to reintegrate the student, alert relevant staff, and decide how to help the student at school?
24. Are there systems/teams in place to address the needs of other students who are exhibiting high risk behaviors, especially friends and classmates of this student?
25. Will the student's teacher(s), coaches, and other contacts be reminded of the student's confidentiality rights? (The student should not be made to talk about this incident with the class.)
26. Is the school aware of Regional Case Manager and Idaho Youth Suicide Prevention Program support?

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