

SERIES 400 – STUDENTS

Student Health and Welfare - 450

Suicide Prevention and Intervention Program (457)

It shall be the policy of the Norwalk-Ontario-Wilton School District to provide educational leadership and assistance to the community in dealing with the significant social concern presented by teenage suicide. Classroom instruction shall be designed to help prevent suicides by promoting the positive emotional development of students. When prevention efforts are not successful, the district will respond quickly and compassionately when a student threatens or attempts a suicide and when a student dies unexpectedly. Any employee who in good faith attempts to prevent suicide by a student is immune from civil liability for his/her acts or omissions in respect to the suicide or attempted suicide.

The district will also support staff training and curriculum development in the area of teenage suicide. The core leadership team will consist of, but will not be limited to, the guidance counselor, the school psychologist, and the building principals. Curriculum development and teacher in-services shall consist of training in suicide prevention, intervention, and post suicide intervention techniques. The goal is to promote a healthy environment where students can succeed and to minimize the adverse effects that threatened or attempted suicide may have upon students, families, and community.

Prevention

The Norwalk-Ontario-Wilton School District will implement Suicide Prevention Curriculum at the secondary level starting with the 2007-08 school year. This curriculum will be evaluated on an annual basis with the analysis from the appropriate classroom teachers, the guidance counselor, school psychologist, and the 7-12 building principal. Involved staff will receive appropriate in-servicing to successfully implement the suicide prevention curriculum.

Intervention

Appropriate individuals who should refer suspected suicidal behavior include all district employees, parents/guardians, students and any other individual involved in the educational process of the youth. Any student exhibiting suicidal behavior should be referred to any core leadership team member. The team member should contact the student's parent(s), guardian immediately. At this point, school personnel and the parent(s)/guardian of the student are to assess the situation and at the appropriate time, make a referral to the proper community resource agency. (social services, law enforcement) If the student's parent's refuses to take the problem seriously, school district personnel will refer it to the proper protection agency.

Suicide Prevention and Intervention Program (457) (Continued)

If the student's life is in imminent danger, school personnel has at their discretion, the right to contact law enforcement or local emergency services prior to contacting the parents.

School personnel involved with the suicidal student behavior will keep a written log outlining all actions taken by the school. After the immediate crisis has been resolved, the core leadership team will meet to discuss and evaluate the situation, and define on the appropriate role for the school to take from this point forward in assisting the student. All teachers involved with the student will be given appropriate information regarding the student so that they may assist that student properly in their daily contact and daily instruction of the student.

Post Suicide Intervention Techniques

Communication

- The staff of the school district will utilize its phone tree so that all school personnel are aware of the situation, and the plan of action.
- Requests for information regarding the death shall be directed to the appropriate administrator. No other school personnel should respond to media requests.
- The appropriate administrator will contact the immediate family of the deceased.

Action Plan for Staff

- School should not be dismissed following the incident. Students who wish to attend the funeral may do so with Parent/guardian permission.
- The appropriate administrator will meet with all staff to provide facts, respond to questions, and to plan activities.
- The core leadership team will meet to define a plan for working with students, staff, parents or guardians.
- The core leadership team and others involved in the action plan will debrief their own actions and evaluate the actions that were taken.

Working with Students

- An appropriate staff member should present the facts to the students. Information can be given in individual class sessions whenever practical. Information should also include school activity information and opportunities for assistance as needed.
- Extra assistance will be brought in from outside the school to aid in working with groups, or individuals after an incident. All students will have access to this assistance.

**Suicide Prevention and Intervention Program (457)
(Continued)**

- Students close to the victim should be identified and monitored to offer further assistance as necessary.

Assistance to Families

- Families of the deceased should be informed of grief support services and other school assistance efforts.
- Suicide prevention information should be made available to all families.

Assisting Other Schools

- In the event that other schools need assistance in the event of any school death, the Norwalk-Ontario-Wilton School District will allow the guidance counselor and/or school psychologist to assist that school and their students in dealing with the tragedy.

Legal Reference: Section 118.01(2)(d)7, 118.125, 118.126, 118.295 Wisconsin Statutes

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