

Mental Health Crises and Non-Crises Response Protocols

Hello All,

This email is intended to follow up the Suicide Prevention training, with a concrete protocol as to how to respond to mental health-related situations that may arise during the school year. Mental health concerns observed in the classroom, can be categorized into two different response protocols. The protocol will depend on whether it is a crisis or non-crisis. Below are some samples (but by no means exhaustive):

CRISES CONTACT ADMINISTRATION: IMMEDIATELY BY PHONE	NON-CRISES CONTACT COUNSELING STAFF: AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BY EMAIL, PHONE, OR IN-PERSON
Suicidal ideation or intent, expressed directly or indirectly by the student, a peer, or parent.	A one-time elevated expression of emotion—May or may not necessarily require a counseling referral, but good information to communicate!
Homicidal ideation or intent, expressed directly or indirectly by the student, a peer, or parent.	A repeated pattern of emotional struggles
<i>Current</i> self-injurious behavior (cutting)	Past self-injurious behavior (if unsure then <i>CALL ADMIN</i>)
Behaviors in class that may cause injury to self or others.	Attendance issues impacted by mental health
A panic attack	Self-reported history of mental health issues
Substance use/abuse on campus that could place student or others at risk or harm (i.e. attempting to operate a car following use/intoxication).	History of or ongoing high-risk behaviors associated with substance use/abuse.
Child abuse that is of an immediate threat. Student is afraid to go home, parent is threatening to come onto campus, etc. (Also must make mandated report—see below)	Child abuse that is not an immediate threat. (Also must make mandated report—see below)
<i>Any of the above</i> , followed by the student leaving the classroom, whereabouts unknown	Student absent from class after a particularly difficult event.

Student Privacy/Confidentiality

Regardless of whether the student is involved in a mental health crisis or non-crisis, they should be engaged discreetly with sensitivity to the nature of the situation/their condition. If contacting admin to report a crisis, please use a muted voice and maintain privacy by stating, "I need an administrator's support immediately in room X." The student should not be left alone, nor be allowed to go to the restroom unsupervised at any time. Teachers may follow up with the student's Academic Counselor with continued concerns.

CPS/Mandated Reports

Remember, child abuse is responded to via a "mandated report." This requires that **you**, the initial receiver of the information, directly contact Youth & Family Services (CPS) (415) 473-7153, and follow by completing and **faxing (415) 473-7162 [this http://ag.ca.gov/childabuse/pdf/ss_8572.pdf](http://ag.ca.gov/childabuse/pdf/ss_8572.pdf)** form. We are all mandated reporters, and must make these reports if we have a "reasonable suspicion," that abuse is occurring or has occurred. Please reach out to counseling after making the report to ensure the student receives support as necessary/appropriate.

After Hours Crisis/Non-Crisis Response

Crises or non-crises should be responded to in a similar manner. For example, if you are correcting student work at home in the evening/over a weekend, and you see suicidal remarks made, you should immediately contact the San Rafael Police Department to report. The police will likely do a "welfare check," and ensure the student is safe. **Please notify Admin of the situation, following your contact with the police.** If a non-crisis arises after-hours send the Academic Counselor an email, and follow up with an in-person check in at the next possible time. ****It is not advised that school staff give a student their personal phone number. Boundaries should be clearly expressed at the onset of school. Teachers are not expected to provide mental health services, though they may be among the first staff to recognize and refer students to receive on-campus support.***

Please use common sense. If you are unsure how to proceed, please contact admin immediately to consult and/or report the event of concern. *It is better to communicate than hold on to important information!*

Thank you for all you do!

*Nicole Janson, LMFT, Mental Health Clinical Supervisor
San Rafael City Schools*