Canyons School District

Student with Suicidal Ideation- IMMEDIATE ACTION CHECKLIST

A student who presents with a desire to end his/her life requires immediate attention.

1. **Signs and Symptoms- Check all that apply**

* Any report from student or adult that the student may be suicidal
* Suicidal talk or writing with friends, peers, adults etc.
* Giving away items
* Saying farewell
* Excessive fatigue
* Sudden changes in personality
* Use of drugs or alcohol
* Self-destructive behavior (may or may not indicate suicidal ideation
* Other- \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **Action Plan- for teacher or other school personnel**

* Immediately refer student to school psychologist, school counselor, school social worker or administrator if any of the above or other indicators are present. If student is actively suicidal, send for help. Do not leave student alone.

1. **Action Plan for counselor, school psychologist, social worker or administrator:**

* Always have face-to face contact with student. If student is at home call parents and police immediately.
* Directly interview student in a safe and non-threatening environment. Be calm and have a quiet demeanor when questioning student.
* Reassure student that you care about them and that help is available
* Do not leave student alone. Do not send back to class.
* Start questioning with general questions and then get more specific.
* Practical questions…change as needed.
  + Have you been feeling sad or depressed?
  + How long have you been feeling this way?
  + Has anything been happening in your life that is making you sad?
  + Are you having problems sleeping?
  + Has your appetite changed recently? Gaining or losing weight?
  + Have you been using any substances such as drugs or alcohol to help you cope?
  + Have you had thoughts of killing yourself during this time?
  + When do these thoughts occur?
  + What do you think about doing to yourself?
  + Have you ever acted on your thoughts?
  + What stopped you from doing it?
  + How often are these thoughts occurring?
  + When was the last time you had these thoughts?
  + Can you promise that you will not hurt yourself?
  + Have you taken any steps toward acquiring guns, pills, etc.?
  + Do you have a plan to end your life?
  + When and where would you do this?
  + What effect do you think your death would have on your friends or family?
  + What help would make it easier for you to cope with your current thoughts and plans?
  + What do you have to live for? What do you see yourself doing in 5 years?
  + How does talking about this make you feel?

It is important to determine if the student has suicidal thinking. Then you need to assess the suicidal intent- consider means of committing suicide, lethality, availability or access, and intent.

* Consult with another counseling team member, school psychologist and principal. Do not attempt to manage a suicidal student alone.
* Call School Psychology Coordinator at 801-826-5163 / 801-580-4706 or CCGP Coordinator at 801-826-5096 / 801-647-8049 for support or consultation.
* **Always contact the parent or legal guardian. Confidentiality cannot be kept! Discuss with the parent:**
  1. Seriousness
  2. Specific intent or plan
  3. Need for close monitoring
  4. Need to remove weapons, alcohol, prescription and non-prescription drugs from house
  5. Need for psychiatric evaluation, emergency room or hospitalization
  6. How to contact EAP if insured or available mental health services
  7. Provide suicide hotline number on card
  8. Get signed FERPA for follow-up but indicate this does not take the place of getting outside counseling or psychiatric consultation.
  9. If the parent refuses to seek help for a student under the age of 18 who you believe is in danger of hurting themselves, you may need to call DCFS and report that the child is being medically neglected.
* Follow up. Check with family and student that help has been obtained. Consider need for contacting mobile crisis unit, police or DCFS.
* Maintain confidentiality but observe friends, siblings and peers for possible suicidal ideation. If they are aware of the suicide ideation/attempt check up on them.
* Document the entire process, especially all contacts with parent.
* Debrief with a colleague or your team. Supporting a student with suicidal ideation can be scary and exhausting.

Notes