Crisis Prevention and Intervention Tools
Crisis Prevention and Intervention

(This Quick Training Aid was excerpted from the center’s clearing house: A Resource Aid Packet entitled: Responding to Crisis at a School, 2000, UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools, Department of Psychology, P.O Box. 951563, Los Angeles, CA 90095, pp. 22-23.)

Crisis Response Checklist

In the midst of a crisis, it is hard to remember all the specific steps and preparatory plans that have been discussed. Each site and each person responsible for crisis response needs to have a checklist that provides a ready and visible reference guide for use during a crisis. Such a checklist is also an important training tool. The following is an outline of what such a checklist might cover.

I. Immediate Response

Check to be certain that

- appropriate "alarms' have been sounded
- all persons with a crisis role are mobilized and informed as to who is coordinating the response and where the coordination/emergency operation center and medical and psychological first aid centers are located

This may include coordinators for

- overall crisis response
- communications
- first aid (medical, psychological)
- crowd management
- media
- transportation
- phone trees are activated
- team leader and others clarify whether additional resources should be called in (from the District or community --such as additional medical and psychological assistance, police, fire)
- all assignments are being carried out (including provisions for classroom coverage for crisis response team members and for any instances of a staff death)
- corrective steps are being taken when the response is inadequate
- all communication needs are addressed by implementing planned means for information sharing and rumor control (e.g. Public Address announcements, circulation of written statements, presentations to staff/students/parents in classes or in special assemblies)

This includes communications with

- Staff
- Students
- Fire
- Home
- Media
- Crisis Team
- Police
- District office and other schools
- Community

A-20
plans for locating individuals are implemented (e.g., message center, sign-in and
sign-out lists for staff and students)

specific intervention and referral activity are implemented (e.g., triage, first-aid.
search, rescue. security. evacuation. counseling. distribution of information about
resources and referral processes -including teen talk and suicide prevention lines
and interviews to assess need for individual counseling)

support and time out breaks for crisis workers are implemented

informal debriefings of crisis workers are done to assess how things are going
and what will be required in the way of follow-up activity

II. Follow-up Activity

In the aftermath, check to be certain that

continuing communication needs are addressed (clarifying causes and impact;
debunking rumors, updating facts, providing closure; updating information on
available resources)

if relevant, family contacts are made to learn funeral and memorial service
arrangements, and to determine if there is additional assistance the school can
provide (School-related memorial services for gang members, suicides, etc. are
controversial; clear policies should be established in discussing crisis response
plans.)

crisis-related problems continue to be monitored and dealt with (including case
management of referrals and extended treatment)

facets of crisis response that are no longer needed are brought to an appropriate
conclusion

debriefing meetings are held (to appreciate all who helped, clarify deficiencies in
crisis response, and make revisions for the next time)

crisis response plans are revised and resources enhanced for dealing with the next
crisis

additional training is planned and implemented

appropriate prevention planning is incorporated (e.g., at least to minimize the
impact of such events)

For more from this Resource Aid Packet see
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/resource.htm#crisis
Psychological First Aid: Responding to a Student in Crisis

(This Quick Training Aid was excerpted from the center’s clearing house: A Resource Aid Packet entitled: Responding to Crisis at a School, 2000, UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools, Department of Psychology, P.O Box. 951563, Los Angeles, CA 90095, p. 31.).

Pynoos and Nader (1988)* discuss psychological first aid for use during and in the immediate aftermath of a crisis (providing a detailed outline of steps according to age). Their work helps all of us think about some general points about responding to a student who is emotionally upset.

Psychological first aid for students/staff/parents can be as important as medical aid. The immediate objective is to help individuals deal with the troubling psychological reactions.

(1) Managing the Situation

A student who is upset can produce a form of emotional contagion. To counter this, staff must
- present a calm, reassuring demeanor.
- clarify for classmates and others that the student is upset.
- if possible indicate why the student is upset (correct rumors and distorted information).
- state what can and will be done to help the student.

(2) Mobilizing Support

The student needs support and guidance. Ways in which staff can help are to
- try to engage the student in a problem-solving dialogue.
- normalize the reaction as much as feasible.
- facilitate emotional expression (e.g., through use of empathy, warmth, and genuineness).
- facilitate cognitive understanding by providing information.
- facilitate personal action by the student (e.g., help the individual do something to reduce the emotional upset and minimize threats to competence, self-determination, and relatedness).
- encourage the student’s buddies to provide social support.
- contact the student’s home to discuss what’s wrong and what to do.
- refer the student to a specific counseling resource.

(3) Following-up

Over the following days (sometimes longer), it is important to check on how things are progressing.
- Has the student gotten the necessary support and guidance?
- Does the student need help in connecting with a referral resource?
- Is the student feeling better? If not, what additional support is needed and how can you help make certain the student receives it?

Another form of "first aid" involves helping needy students and families connect with emergency services. This includes connecting with agencies that can provide emergency food, clothing, housing, transportation, and so forth. Such basic needs constitute major crises for too many students and are fundamental barriers to learning and performing and even to getting to school.

A Crisis Screening Interview

This Quick Training Aid was excerpted from: Adelman and Taylor, *Responding to a Crisis at a School*, 2000, UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools, Department of Psychology, P.O Box. 951563, Los Angeles, CA 90095, p. 21-24.

Interviewer ___________________________ Date ______________

Note identified problem:

Is the student seeking help? Yes  No

If not, what were the circumstances that brought the student to the interview?

Student's Name ___________________________ Age ______ Birth Date ______

Sex: M  F  Grade__________  Current Class______________________________

Ethnicity______________________________  Primary Language________________

We are concerned about how things are going for you. Our talk today will help us to discuss what's going O.K. and what's not going so well. If you want me to keep what we talk about secret, I will do so --except for those things that I need to discuss with others in order to help you.

In answering, please provide as much detail as you can. At times, I will ask you to tell me a bit more about your thoughts and feelings.

1. Where were you when the event occurred? (Directly at the site? Nearby? Out of the area?)

2. What did you see or hear about what happened?

3. How are you feeling now?
4. How well do you know those who were involved?

5. Has anything like this happened to you or any of your family before?

6. How do you think this will affect you in the days to come? (How will your life be different now?)

7. How do you think this will affect your family in the days to come?

8. What bothers you the most about what happened?

9. Do you think anyone could have done something to prevent it? Yes No
   Who?

10. Thinking back on what happened.
    
    |                      | not at all | a little | more than | very little |
    |----------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|------------|
    | how angry do you feel about it? | 1         | 2       | 3         | 4          |
    | how sad do you feel about it?    | 1         | 2       | 3         | 4          |
    | how guilty do you feel about it? | 1         | 2       | 3         | 4          |
    | how scared do you feel?           | 1         | 2       | 3         | 4          |
A Crisis Screening Interview

11. What changes have there been in your life or routine because of what happened?

12. What new problems have you experienced since the event?

13. What is your most pressing problem currently?

14. Do you think someone should be punished for what happened?  Yes  No
   
   Who?

15. Is this a matter of getting even or seeking revenge?  Yes  No
   
   Who should do the punishing?

16. What other information do you want regarding what happened?

17. Do you think it would help you to talk to someone about how you feel about what happened?  Yes  No
   
   Who?
   How soon?

18. Is this something we should talk about now?  Yes  No
   
   What is it?
19. What do you usually do when you need help with a personal problem?

20. Which friends and who at home can you talk to about this?

21. What are you going to do when you leave school today?

*If you are uncertain, let's talk about what you should do?*
Center for Mental Health in Schools
List of Resources and Tools

This Center response is from the website at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu. To access the online version and view documents, visit the website, click "Materials Developed by the Center" on the left, and then click on "Quick Find" and scroll down in the list of to Crisis Prevention and Response.

- Quick Training Aid: School-Based Crisis Intervention
- Resource Aid Packet: Responding to Crisis at a School
- Technical Assistance Sampler: A Sampling of Outcome Findings from Interventions Relevant to Addressing Barriers to Learning:
  - Crisis Teams, Response and Aftermath (PDF Document, 10K)
  - School Environment Changes and School Safety Strategies (PDF Document, 12K)
  - Curriculum Approaches to Preventing Crisis Events (Social and Personal) (PDF Document, 25K)
- Introductory Packet: Violence Prevention and Safe Schools
- Problem Response and Prevention
- Guides to Practice: Common Psychosocial Problems of School-Age Youth
- Hotline Numbers
- Technical Aid Packet: School-Based Consultation, Referral, and Management of Care
- QuickFind on Grief and Bereavement
- QuickFind on Post-traumatic Stress
- QuickFind on the Enabling Component

Relevant Publications on the Internet

- The Aftershocks of National Tragedy
- American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress online checklist for response during and after a school-based crisis
- Annual Report on School Safety
- Blueprints for Violence Prevention
- Checklist of Characteristics of Youth Who Have caused School - Associated Violent Deaths
- The Child Survivor of Traumatic Stress
- Communicating About School Safety
- Coping after Terrorism: A guide for healing and recovery
- Coping with a National Tragedy (from NASP)
- Coping with Emotions after a Disaster
- Crisis Communication Guide & Toolkit
- Crisis in the Classroom: Can Your Schools’ Security Pass the Exam?
- Crisis Intervention (Children's Law Office)
• "Deadly Lessons: Understanding Lethal School Violence" (2002)
• Disaster Handouts and Links
• Early Warning Signs of Youth Violence: Fact, Fiction, or Fad?
• Helping America Cope: A guide for parents and children in the aftermath of the September 11th national disaster
• Helping Children After a Disaster (AACAP)
• Helping Children After a Disaster (Project Rebound) (PDF Document, 529K)
• Helping Children Deal With Tragic Events in Unsettling Times
• Impact of September 11th - A Three Part Assessment Tool (NIH)
• Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 1998
• Managing Traumatic Stress: Tips for Recovering From Disasters and Other Traumatic Events
• Parents, School Safety & Gangs
• Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
• "A Practical Guide for Crisis Response in Our Schools (5th Ed.) 2002
• Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities
• Practical School Security: Basic Guidelines for Safe and Secure School
• Quick Reference Guide for School Crisis Management
• "Road to Resilience" to help people build resilience in a time or war
• School-Violence Fact Sheets (a selection of 12 fact sheets on a variety of school violence issues)
• Staff Crisis Intervention Guide
• Talking to Kids About Terrorism or Acts of War
• Teaching Students About Terrorism and Related Resources
• "Teenagers at Greatest Risk for Crime Victimization" (2002)
• Terrorism and Children
• U.S. Department of Education Web Resource to Help Schools Plan for Emergencies

Selected Materials from Our Clearinghouse

• Safe, Drug-Free and Effective Schools for All Students: What Works! A report from the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Office of Special Education.

Related Agencies and Websites

• American Psychological Association
• www.eduref.org
• Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice
• Center for Mental Health Services/Emergency Services and Disaster Relief Branch
• Center for the Prevention of School Violence
• Department of Education: Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program
• Disaster Mental Health Institute (Univ. of South Dakota)
• Education Development Center
• Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for Kids: Resources for Parents & Teachers
• Join Together
• Keep Schools Safe
• National Alliance for Safe Schools
• National Association of School Psychologists
• National Center for Children Exposed to Violence
• National Center for PTSD
• National Institute for Dispute Resolution
• National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)
• National School Safety Center
• National School Safety and Security Services
• Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
• Partnerships Against Violence Network (PAVNET) Online
• The Peace Center
• The Terrorism and Disaster Branch
• Trauma Information Pages

Relevant Publications that Can Be Obtained From Your Local Library

Crisis Response Reference Guide

The following is a cover sheet for a Crisis Response Reference Guide created for a St. Paul Public School site by Safe Schools/Healthy staff.

The information in this booklet outlines for staff the essential **FIRST STEPS** to follow in dealing with emergency situations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crisis Situation</th>
<th>Response Action</th>
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<td>Assault</td>
<td>Biohazard (HAZMAT)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Abuse</td>
<td>Evacuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas Leak</td>
<td>Hostage Situation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lockdown</td>
<td>Media Inquiry</td>
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<td>Severe Weather (Tornado)</td>
<td>Shooting Incident</td>
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<td>Suicidal Risk</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bomb Threat</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Medical Emergency</td>
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<td>Student Personal Crisis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Weapons</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The following is an outline of “Early Warning/Timely Response” Guide, adapted from a report by the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice – August 1998.

1. Qualities of Safe and Responsible Schools
2. Three-level Approach to Preventing Violence
3. Characteristics of a School that is Safe and Responsive to All Children
4. Early Warning Signs of Violence
5. Principles for Using the Early Warning Signs of Violence
6. Early Warning Signs Actions
7. Imminent Warning Signs
8. Dangerous Situations which Require Immediate Actions
9. Immediate Interventions for Dangerous Situations

The full text of this information of this public domain publication is available at the Department of Education home page at http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywrn.html

For more information contact the:

U.S. Department of Education
Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
Room 3131 Mary E. Switzer Building
Washington, D.C. 20202-2524
The following is a workshop presented to school staff by Safe Schools/Healthy Students mental health professionals.

**Early Warning / Timely Response**

**Safeguarding our Children**

Adapted from a report by the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice - April, 2000

Presenter:
Safe Schools/Healthy Students
Mental Health Staff: (Name)

School In-service
Wednesday April 24, 2002

Sponsored by:

SAFE SCHOOLS / HEALTHY STUDENTS
How Often Do You Have to Deal with an Out-of-Control Student?

Do You Know How to Intervene in a Fight without Endangering Yourself?

Attend a Staff Development Workshop on How You Can Prevent & Manage Crisis Behavior in the School

Taught by Safety Planner, Safe Schools/Healthy Students

*When*: (Date & Time)

*Where*: Name & Address

- Learn How a Crisis typically Develops and How to Respond Effectively at each Stage.
- Use Nonverbal Behavior to De-escalate a Potential Crisis.
- Learn What to Say to either Escalate or De-escalate a Crisis.
- Utilize a Team Approach to Crisis Intervention.
- Learn a Quick Problem-Solving Method to Work through a Crisis with a Student or an Adult.

THIS IS A WORKSHOP FOR TEACHERS, EA’S, TA’S, SUPPORT STAFF, ADMINISTRATORS, & ANYONE ELSE WHO WORKS WITH STUDENTS