

SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Gloucester County School Board is committed to protecting its students from the risk of suicide.

Duties of Teachers and Administrative Staff

Any person licensed as instructional or administrative personnel by the Board of Education and employed by the Gloucester County School Board who, in the scope of their employment, has reason to believe, as a result of direct communication from a student, that such student is at imminent risk of suicide, shall, as soon as practicable and in the presence of a Threat Assessment Team member, contact at least one of the student's parents to ask whether such parent is aware of the student's mental state and whether the parent wishes to obtain or has already obtained counseling for such student.

Contacting the Parent/Guardian

If the section below titled "Abuse and Neglect" does not apply, then the staff member in the presence of a Threat Assessment Team member shall call at least one of the student's parents/guardians. When contacting a parent/guardian, the staff member should:

1. Provide his/her name and position in the school;
2. Tell the parent/guardian that they have reason to believe, as a result of direct communication from the student, that the student is at imminent risk of suicide;
3. Assure the parent/guardian that the student is currently safe;
4. State the legal requirement for the call, citing Va. Code § 22.1-272.1;
5. Ask the parent/guardian whether they are aware of the student's mental state;
6. Ask the parent/guardian whether they wish to obtain or has obtained mental counseling for the student;
7. Provide names of community counseling resources as appropriate and offer to facilitate the referral; and
8. Determine the parent's intent to seek appropriate services for the student.

Abuse and Neglect

If a student has indicated that the reason for being at imminent risk of suicide relates to parental abuse or neglect, contact shall not be made with the parent. Instead, the staff person in the presence of a Threat Assessment Team member shall, as soon as practicable, notify the local department of social services of the county or city wherein the child resides or wherein the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred or the state Department of Social Services toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline as required by Policy JHG/GEAB Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting and Va. Code § 63.2-1509. When giving this notice to the local or state department, the person shall stress the need to take immediate action to protect the child from harm.

Inability to Reach Parent/Guardian

If the staff member and Threat Assessment Team member are unable to make contact with the parent/guardian by the end of the school day, then they shall follow the school's crisis management plan.

Required Documentation

The staff member and Threat Assessment Team member shall document the phone call to the parent/guardian by recording the: (a) time and date of the call; (b) the individual contacted; (c) the parent's/guardian's response; and (d) anticipated follow-up.

Additional Concerns

If parental/guardian contact is made and, in the course of this contact, relevant issues of abuse or neglect are discovered (e.g., a parent acknowledges the child’s suicidal intent but indicates no intent to act for the well-being of the child), the staff member and Threat Assessment Team member shall report the abuse or neglect in accordance with policy JHG/GEAB Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting.

Duty to Keep Student Safe and Secure

A student who is at imminent risk of suicide shall remain under qualified adult supervision until a parent/guardian or other authorized individual accepts responsibility for the student’s safety.

ADOPTED: September 14, 1999

REVISED: November 14, 2006
November 10, 2015

LEGAL REFERENCES: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, sections 22.1-272.1 and 63.1-63.2-1509.

Va. Board of Education “Suicide Prevention Guidelines,” (Revised 2003).

CROSS REFERENCES: GEAB Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting (Also JHG)
JHG Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting (Also GEAB)
EB School Crisis, Emergency Management, and Medical
Emergency Response Plan