



NAGLE
CATHOLIC
COLLEGE
EST 1994

POLICY STATEMENT CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

**Updated: 2020
Due for review: 2024**

Aims

The objective of the Crisis Management Plan is to effectively manage the impact of a critical incident through a planned response provide support to members of the Nagle Catholic College community that leads to recovery.

The guiding principles of the plan are:

- Nagle Catholic College has a duty of care to students, staff and others who may visit the College
- Preparation for a crisis
- Ensuring any response to a crisis is coordinated and organised
- Responding to a crisis should take priority and be prompt
- The impact of those involved directly and indirectly must be addressed both immediately and long term
- Nagle Catholic College may provide pastoral, administrative or practical support
- Maintenance of stability and routine functioning within the College
- A communication process to ensure speedy, accurate and appropriate information dissemination
- Engagement with Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) and appropriate use of external support agencies
- Ensuring all staff are familiar with the crisis/emergency response procedures and their role and the expectations of them

Preparation for a crisis

The College will:

- Regularly review the Crisis Management Plan, including after any incident requiring its use
- Ensure that key staff members are aware of the Crisis Management Plan

A critical incident

A critical incident is often a sudden or unexpected event, which has a high probability of producing a physical, strong emotional or psychological distress, or threatens the safety of students and staff. A critical incident is likely to impact on the capacity for normal functioning. It can occur at the College or off site, during school time, on camp or after hours. An event considered a critical incident may be:

- Death of a student, staff member or community member
- Suicide
- Serious injury/ serious assault
- Drug overdose
- Sexual assault
- Hold up/ attempted robbery
- Student arrest
- Disappearance or removal of student

- Abduction of a student
- Bomb threat
- Accident
- Collapse/ major damage to building or equipment
- Motor vehicle collision/impact with school
- Fire in school building/bush fire
- Fumes/spills/contamination
- Outbreak of disease
- Flood/hailstorm
- Natural disaster
- Drug related incident
- Media coverage of an issue which may cause distress to the school community
- Witnessing or learning about traumatic events

An emergency can turn into a critical incident and vice versa.

Victims of a critical incident

- *Primary Victims*
These are people who have direct exposure to the incident. They may be direct witness or victim suffering injury.
- *Secondary Victims*
Those who are grieving for the dead or injured such as family and close friends of the victims.
- *Tertiary Victims*
Those who must attempt to deal with the impact of the incident such as the executive, directors of students, counsellors and teachers.
- *School Community*
Those who are affected by the incident but not directly involved, including parents/guardians, other students and teachers.
- *Indirect Victims*
People who have been involved but not directly exposed to the incident.

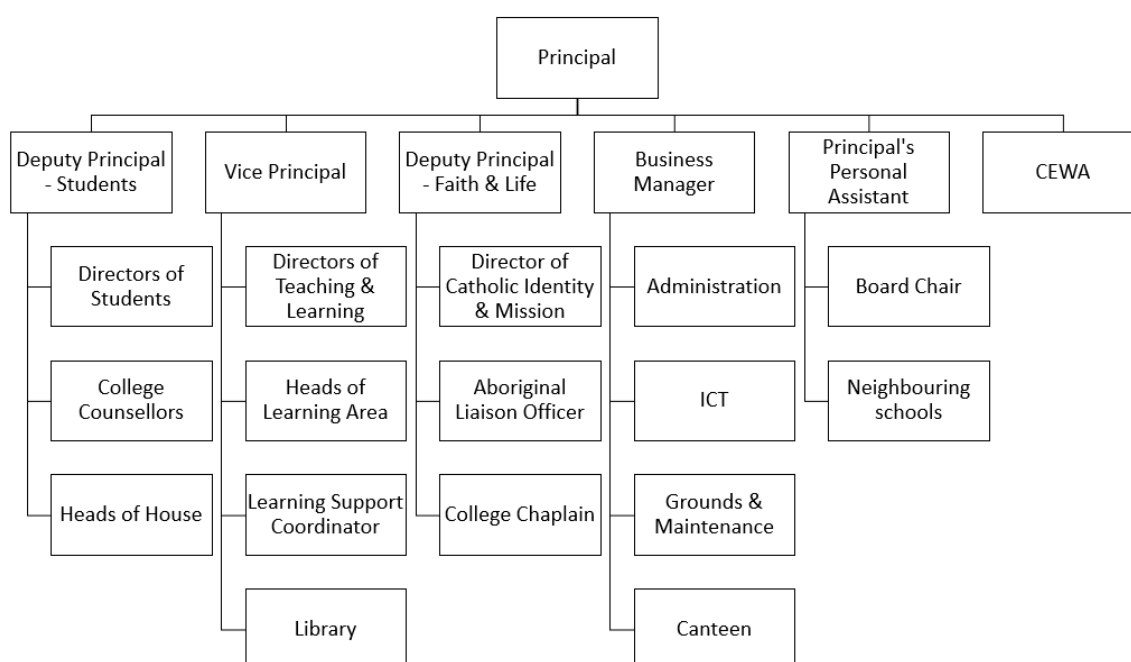
Crisis Management Team

Principal
Vice Principal
Deputy Principal – Students
Deputy Principal – Faith & Life
Business Manager
Directors of Students
Director of Catholic Identity & Mission
College Chaplain
College Counsellors
Aboriginal Liaison Officer

Emergency Phone Numbers	
Fire, Police, Ambulance	000
Non-emergency requiring Police attendance	13 14 44
Geraldton Police Station	9923 4555
Security	9240 4122/1300 303 227
Lifeline (24 hours)	13 11 14
Crisis Care	9223 1111/1800 199 008
Sexual Assault Resource Centre (SARC)	9340 1828
Kids Help Line	1800 55 1800
Alcohol and Drug Information Service	9442 5000
Poison Information Service	13 11 26
Geraldton Regional Hospital	9956 2222

Useful Phone Numbers	
ACCESS Employee Assistance Program	1300 66 77 00
Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors (ASeTTs)	9227 2700
Centacare	9921 1433
Youth Focus	6266 4333

Crisis Management Team Communication Tree



Implementation of action plan

Immediate action

Actions are not necessarily carried out sequentially.

Crisis identified

- Information verified and all known information directed by suitable person to the Principal
- Available member of the Executive assesses situation and considers risk to students and staff and performs any necessary on-site emergency procedures or safety precautions
- First aid administered, if required
- Principal to call meeting of the Crisis Management Team as soon as possible, who will review the situation, set priorities, allocate tasks/responsibilities and coordinate an immediate response including communication

Police/Parent/Guardian contact

- Principal or delegate to liaise with emergency services in the event of death
- Principal to inform parent/guardian of serious injury
- Principal to inform Police of death and liaise with police regarding informing of parents/guardians (A member of staff, designated by the Principal and preferably known to the family, is to accompany Police and seek permission to provide appropriate information on the death to the school)
- Principal to notify CEWA
- Principal to ensure Critical and Emergency Incident Report is completed

Critical incidents in non-government schools

- Circumstances that pose a critical risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of one or more students or staff are considered to be critical incidents
- Should emergency services be called to the College this is deemed to be a 'critical incident'
- Incidents requiring school closure, lockdown, or reduction of number of students or staff attending
- Death or life-threatening injury of a student or staff member at school, following an incident that occurred while being educated, or through a related school-based activity or circumstance
- Receipt of an allegation of child abuse, including but not limited to sexual abuse, against a student by a staff member or student or other person, whether the abuse is alleged to have occurred recently or in the past
- Issuing a formal warning to a staff member or ceasing the employment of a staff member for breach of the staff Code of Conduct suspected to be grooming behaviour

Notification requirement

Non-government school Principals are required to notify the Director General of the Department of Education Services of any critical and/or emergency school incidents through CEWA as soon as practicable and, in any event, within 48 hours of the incident. The Critical Incident Report Form will be completed by CEWA and forwarded to criticalincidents@des.wa.gov.au.

Onsite Incident Considerations

- Principal determines if the school will continue to operate
- Students return to Home Room with their Home Room teacher
- Executive and all other staff gather in the Staff Room
- Home Room teacher marks roll and Deputy Principal – Students follows up on absent students
- Eyewitness and students most affected gather in the Presentation Centre with Deputy Principal – Students (A record should be kept with the names of these students – Refer to Appendix A)

Offsite incident considerations

- Offsite College events should have a Risk Management Plan, which includes crisis management
- Staff member in charge will attend to necessary emergency procedures and organise medical assistance, if required
- Staff member in charge should notify the Principal and advise of situation and action taken
- Staff member in charge should record details of the incident as soon as possible
- Principal to convene Crisis Management Team and decide on response
- If students and staff should be returned to College, the Deputy Principal - Students will oversee transportation

Crisis Management Team – Initial meeting

To be documented on the Crisis Management Team Record Sheet – Refer to Appendix B

- Allocate scribe for all meetings
- Decide if the College will remain open and, if not, what arrangements need to be made for students and staff to go home
- Plan for students/siblings/parents/guardians to be reunited
- Principal to contact parent/guardian and/or police (In the case of a death, police will inform parents/guardians)
- Gain parent/guardian/police consent to release information
- Appoint a parent/guardian contact liaison person

Possible support offered by the College may include:

- Home visits
- Flowers/Sympathy card
- Death notice
- Practical support such as meals, transport of other children to and from school
- Fee remission or refund

Informing staff:

- Refer to Appendix C for guidelines when informing staff
- To occur at a briefing
- Outline arrangement for the day
- Review reliefs to identify staff absent or offsite that need to be informed

Informing students:

- Refer to Appendix D for guidelines regarding informing students
- Provide staff with a written statement
- Inform most affected students first
- Inform Year group affected
- If needed inform the other Year groups
- Review absentees for students who may not have been informed

Informing parents/guardians:

- Send letter to all parents/guardians – Refer to Appendix E for sample letter to ensure careful consideration of correspondence
- Make contact with parents/guardians of students directly involved or most affected

Informing College community:

- Notify and liaise with CEWA
- Liaise with other schools as appropriate

Administration issues:

- Provide instruction to administration staff regarding information disseminated – Refer to Appendix F
- Delegate staff member to respond to telephone enquiries
- Delegate staff member to sort practical arrangements for routine operation of school
- Delegate staff member to review SEQTA records and mailing lists and amend, if required

Managing media and publicity:

- Refer to Appendix G for guidelines on managing the media
- Discuss if/ how the media will be involved, in conjunction with CEWA
- Prepare factual media statement

Support and intervention:

- Identify those students and staff members most involved and or most at risk
- Offer immediate care and support to those most affected – Refer to Appendix H
- Set up a support room for students and staff
- Send the inconsolable to the established support room or the Presentation Centre
- Make direct contact with most affected students' parents/guardians
- Make arrangements for parents/guardians who attend the College, such as a recovery room
- Home Room teachers to inform students of referral process for counselling
- Refer to Appendix I for guidelines in the case of a suicide
- Consider the Employee Assistance Program for staff

Funeral/Memorial considerations:

- Consider the wishes of the family in regards to the funeral
- Plan for liturgy/mass/service at the College
- Plan for funeral attendance (students should attend with their parents/guardians)

Review

- Crisis Management Team to meet again at the end of the day

Short term action

- Return the College to normal routine
- Conduct parent/guardian meetings, if required
- Monitor student and staff absences
- Review student, staff and community needs
- Keep students, staff and community updated
- Maintain records
- Organise necessary relief/extra staff to meet teaching and administration needs
- Organise relief for funeral
- Ensure support for the Crisis Management Team
- Formal debrief of Crisis Management Plan and response

Longer term action

- Monitor long term needs of students and staff
- Ensure there is access to support
- Establish a roster of students for hospital visits
- Follow up contact with family/ families involved, to support, return personal items and discuss ongoing assistance provided
- Acknowledge those who have supported College
- Follow up condolence letters to family and thank you notes to all supporting emergency services and hospital staff

- Keep a scrapbook of sympathy cards and condolences where the College community can view
- Monitor media coverage
- Provide additional support to students and staff involved in coronial inquest or police investigation
- Refer staff who are concerned with legal liability to professional associations and CEWA legal advisors
- Alert teachers to be conscious of class content that may cause distress
- If suicide, address risk of contagion effect
- Plan long term follow up for those students most affected/ at risk
- Prepare for higher risk times such as birthdays and anniversaries
- Decide and plan for any recognition of anniversary
- Review Crisis Management Plan

Roles and responsibilities

Principal

- Oversees the implementation of the Crisis Management Plan
- Establishes facts of situation
- Calls for the Crisis Management Team to meet to discuss facts and coordinate response
- Chairs Crisis Management Team meeting and delegate tasks
- Contacts family/families to offer support and advise of action taken by the College, obtains permission and parameters for the disclosure of information
- Offers family support
- Handle media enquiries
- Prepares written statements for staff, students, parent/guardians in collaboration with College's Executive and other relevant staff
- Contacts primary schools, if necessary
- Contacts CEWA
- Liaises with Crisis Management Team regarding additional resources that may be required
- Ensures staff have annual training on Crisis Management Plan

Vice Principal

- Makes adjustments to period times to allow for students to be notified of incident during Home Room in an orderly and unrushed manner
- Liaises with the Relief Coordinator to organise relief for staff who need to go home or attend briefing sessions
- In the situation of a deceased student, arranges to have student officially withdrawn from College, asks staff to remove student's name from roll and class lists
- Implements any emergency/evacuation procedures
- Liaises with emergency staff, if needed
- Makes arrangements for recovery room for students in need of more intensive support
- Provides assistance to the Principal, as required
- Ensures security of the College and prohibits access, if needed
- Determines if outside security is required
- Takes care of a deceased staff members property, in collaboration with the staff members line manager, if applicable
- Monitors syllabus content and defers any sensitive topics

Deputy Principal – Students

- Liaises regularly with Principal
- Organises emergency transport for students and staff, if incident occurs offsite and transport is required
- Arranges an emergency staff meeting at the earliest convenient time
- Initiates the communication tree for out of hours incidents

- Provides written statement to staff for relaying information to students and introduces the College's Counsellors who will discuss strategies on presenting information to students and how to manage likely reactions
- Advises that there will be a staff meeting to debrief at the end of the day
- Identifies any staff member significantly affected by the situation and makes arrangements for relief
- Organises any parent/guardian meetings required, in collaboration with the relevant Director of Students
- Sets a date to review the Crisis Management Plan one month after the incident

Business Manager

- Briefs administration staff on how to manage incoming calls/enquiries and provides written statement to use

College Counsellors

- Liaise regularly with Principal
- Provide instructions on how to present information and appropriate ways to respond to likely reactions at initial staff briefing
- Provide handouts to staff with suggestions on how to handle reactions, signs of distress and grief and answers for likely questions
- Ask students to respect feelings/privacy of those closely involved
- Contact all students and staff identified as requiring support
- Triage students most in need of assistance and support
- Plan follow up assistance, as needed
- Record names of all students and staff accessing support
- Keep in regular contact with the Deputy Principal - Students and Directors of Students to assist with the identification of students and staff who may be at risk
- Provide information regarding possible reactions from staff and students
- Manage support room if required, in consultation with the College Chaplain
- Provide individual counselling
- Consider group counselling
- Contact CEWA psychology service, if extra psychologists are required
- Liaise with external support agencies, as required
- Assist with future briefings
- Keep accurate and adequate records

College Chaplain

- Attends Crisis Management Team meetings
- Subject to the Crisis Management Plan, the Chaplain may also
 - Visit family/families involved
 - Assist with funeral organisation
 - Work with the Deputy Principal – Faith & Life and other relevant staff to arrange whole school or Year group masses/liturgies
 - In consultation with the College Counsellors, provide support to students and staff most immediately affected by the incident

Director of Catholic Identity & Mission

- Assists with funeral organisation
- Works with the Deputy Principal – Faith & Life and other relevant staff to arrange whole school or Year group masses/liturgies

Directors of Students

- Be present and available to students in the yard during break times
- Meet with immediate friends of the affected students, as soon as possible (Students should be given the opportunity to talk about the incident either individually or as a group)
- Identify students who need referring to the College Counsellors and forward the list of students to the College Counsellors
- Make direct contact with the parents/guardians of the most affected students
- Monitor absentees for students with prolonged absences
- Monitor students who chose to go home following the incident, and encourage them to return to school within one or two days to assist them in a return to routine to help the recovery process, if necessary
- Clear out the student/s locker and gather any personal belongings, if necessary
- Note the date of the incident and be aware of future anniversaries

Responsibilities of staff

- Monitor students and refer distressed students to established support systems
- Read statements to students, as directed
- Continue routine to maintain normality, where possible
- Explain support services available to students

Appendix A

Pastoral Care Services Contact List

Incident: _____

Date: _____

Compiled by: _____

Name of Student	Year Group	Date	Outcome

Appendix B

Crisis Management Team Record Sheet

Incident: _____

Date: _____

Present: _____

Compiled by: _____

DATE & TIME	NOTES	ACTION REQUIRED	PERSON RESPONSIBLE

Appendix C

Informing all staff at a briefing

- Check attendance – staff absent should be briefed as soon as possible
- Verify and restate factual information about the incident, so that staff can understand what has happened (this is subsequent to consent from family and adhering to police instructions and confidentiality)
- Information may include:
 - Names of students directly involved and their Year group
 - Names of staff directly involved
 - Date, time and place of incident
 - Name and Year group of any siblings attending the College directly affected
- Discuss reactions they may have
- Describe the actions the College has taken
- Outline management strategy to be implemented, which may include:
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Discuss any changes to normal College operations
 - Written statements to inform students
 - Process for identifying students at risk
 - Strategy for accessing pastoral care and counselling
 - Advice from CEWA regarding contact with media
 - Information handouts
- Discuss procedures to be followed by staff during the day
- Discuss guidelines for informing students and answering questions from students
- Discuss action to communicate with parents/guardians and the community
- Provide teachers with a written summary for use as a reference when discussing the incident with students
- Ensure staff have time to have their questions answered and to talk about the incident amongst themselves

At the end of the day

- Meet with staff to review the day, share the trauma of the day and identify students at risk
- Reassure staff that the Crisis Management Team is available to offer support and guidance

Appendix D

Informing students

- Obtain from family/police what information can be released
- Prepare a written statement to be used
- Brief teachers regarding informing students
- Identify teachers who are uncomfortable informing students and arrange for support from another teacher or member of the Crisis Management Team
- Identify teachers too distressed to take classes and arrange replacement
- Inform students as soon as possible after informing staff
- Determine the forum that students will be informed about the incident either at a whole school assembly, by Year groups or individual classes, depending upon the nature of the incident
- Students who are close friends of any student involved in an incident should be identified and informed individually before other students and the parents/guardians of these students should also be contacted directly
- In the case of a serious incident students will be informed in their Home Room to monitor students reactions
- Teachers are to take a roll to record students who have been informed and identify those who are absent
- Avoid speculation and rumours
- Inform students of support available and location of pastoral support
- Inform students of any arrangements regarding funeral/memorial services
- Discuss appropriate ways to express condolences
- Ensure students have time to have their questions answered and to talk about the incident amongst themselves
- Inform students of the arrangements for the day
- Monitor students' reactions and refer to the relevant Director of Students or the College Counsellor, if needed

Example of statement for class teachers to read to students in the case of a student death

I have some sad news to tell you

The College has been informed that _____ passed away _____

Other information

Further information you may wish to provide may include...

- It is normal to feel upset even if you did not know _____. What you are feeling is grief
- Grief is normal. You may need time to work through it. It will last for different times for different people but it won't last forever
- You might feel a whole range of feelings from sadness to anger
- Be aware that while you are going through these feelings so will other. You might need to help each other
- You may want to discuss how you are feeling with your parents or others whom you trust
- There are people in the school who are available to help you such as the College Counsellors, College Chaplain, Directors of Students or the Deputy Principals
- Way of accessing them are _____
- There is a support room in _____

Appendix E

Correspondence to parents/guardians

Letterhead

Date

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Introduction

- State that you have some tragic or sad news to inform them

The facts

- The event
- Who was involved
- What happened
- Any injuries or deaths

What has been done

- Contact with the family
- Informed students
- The parents/guardians of significantly affected students contacted by telephone
- Support system in place
- Information sheets available on website

What the College plans to do

- As per the Crisis Management Team's decision
- Confirm will provide further information when available and if needed

How students may react

- Common reactions
- Importance for routine

Support available

- Directors of Students
- College Chaplain
- College Counsellors

Closing sentence

- This letter was written after consultation with the family
- Ask the College community to keep the family in their prayers

Regards,

Principal

Appendix F

Statement for Administration staff dealing with enquiries regarding a critical incident

Please keep to the information provided below and give no other information unless advised otherwise:

- There has been an unfortunate incident at the College
- Nagle Catholic College has implemented its Crisis Management Plan
- The Crisis Management Team are responding to the incident and addressing any issues or needs
- You will be notified of any statements released by the Principal informing parents/guardians and other relevant parties of the incident and what action the College has taken
- That is all the information that has been provided at this time

Other relevant information:

Appendix G

Guidelines for media contact

It is important to be aware of the possibility of media involvement in a critical incident. The media can be helpful in providing information to families quickly and reducing the number of enquiries the College receives, however, insensitive media coverage may further traumatise victims through being repeatedly exposed to the event and information may be misrepresented.

- All communication with the media should go through the Principal
- The Principal will confirm with police whether the College is authorised to provide media comment
- The Principal should refuse permission for the media to enter the College grounds so the focus can be on managing the incident and protecting the safety and privacy of the students
- The Principal should protect students from unwanted interviews with the media
- The Principal should advise students of their responsibilities in regards to contact with the media and parents/guardians should be given the same information
- A record of media enquiries should be kept
- It may be appropriate to issue a media release after the event in order to avoid unnecessary media attention
- Be aware of increased media coverage due to anniversaries, court proceedings or similar incidents in the future

If an interview occurs, the following guidelines should be used

- Comments should only be made after all parents/guardians whose children have been affected have been fully informed
- Responses should be restricted to facts that are clearly known to be true
- Describe how the College is dealing with the incident
- Provide information such as that all students are safe, where parents/guardians can pick up their child and if the school will be closed
- Do not speculate or give credence to unfounded theory
- Do not speculate on issues of negligence or blame
- Protect confidential information
- Do not supply photographs

Appendix H

Support and intervention

Common initial responses to trauma and loss include:

- Shock
- Numbness
- Disbelief
- Anger
- Sadness
- Guilt
- Despair
- Helplessness
- Loneliness
- Exhaustion
- Restlessness, sleeplessness and fatigue
- Bad dreams
- Flashbacks
- Anxiety
- Confusion
- Forgetfulness and inability to concentrate
- Dizziness, palpitations, shakes, difficulty breathing
- Headaches, neck and backaches
- Loss of appetite, nausea and diarrhea
- Social withdrawal
- Crying

These are all normal responses to a sudden or unexpected loss or trauma. Reactions may vary due to a number of variables such as:

- Personality
- Gender
- Culture
- Beliefs about death
- Experience
- Age and maturity
- Preparation
- Severity
- Control level
- Outcome

Strategies to minimise impact on students and staff

- Reunite students/staff with families, as soon as possible
- Re-establish College routine, as soon as possible
- Allow students to process their reactions and provide opportunities for students to discuss the incident
- Monitor rumours
- Keep parents/guardians informed
- Educate and provide staff with skills to manage students' reactions
- Support staff and encourage them to monitor their own wellbeing
- Monitor staff for vicarious trauma

Strategies for staff to provide psychological first aid to reduce student distress:

- Listen
- Reflect content and feelings
- Show empathy and concern
- Answer questions simply and directly, ask student to suggest an answer
- Acknowledge the impact and significance of the event
- Avoid “What if...?” or “I should have...” statements... If the student takes this line, bring the talk back to real events
- Explore the problem
- Identify strengths
- Explore options for short term solutions
- Assist in implementing solutions
- Follow up
- Refer on

Subsequent strategies to assist students:

- Journal writing
- Use photos
- Sympathy cards
- Create a memory box
- Create a memorial
- Organise a tribute or commemorative activity
- Allocate an award in the name of the deceased
- Collect and donate money to specific charities when a student has died from an illness
- Implement grief and loss programs such as Rainbows Silver Linings and Spectrum Programs

Appendix I

Managing suicide

In addition to the strategies suggested in Appendix D and H, the following considerations should be given in an incident where a suicide death occurs.

- Seek consent from parents/guardians/police before releasing information
- It is the responsibility of the coroner to ascertain cause of death and it should not be speculated on...Even with parent/guardian permission, the word suicide itself should not be used
- The means/method of death should NOT be given even when it is already known to some of the school community
- Provide unambiguous information to students and staff which will dispel rumours
- Do not glorify or romance the death or encourage others to do so
- Emphasise that the person chose to commit suicide
- Discourage students from apportioning or accepting blame
- Reassure students that there is no right way to feel or react in these circumstances
- Encourage students to talk to their parents/guardians
- Provide information to students and parents/guardians about support services which are available through the school and the community
- Be mindful of contagion/clustering influence in which one death by suicide can increase the likelihood of other suicides
- Provide staff with information about warning signs and risk factors for student suicide
- Monitor students to identify those who may need support—particularly those who show extreme reactions, are close to the dead person or are known to have had traumatic experiences of their own
- Monitor anyone who seems particularly withdrawn
- Monitor curriculum that may have reference to suicide
- Provide opportunities to enhance the health and wellbeing of students and staff
- Student expressing suicidal thoughts or threats or self harming behavior should be taken seriously
- Students identified at risk of suicide or self harming behavior should be appropriately assessed and supported