



Traumatic Incident Procedure 517

PROCEDURES - Staff who hear of a death or crisis involving pupils or staff members should contact the principal or one of the crisis team members. This team includes: The principal, board chairperson, school chaplain, child caregiver, class teacher, Public Health Nurse

Tasks of the Crisis Team

1. Other team members are contacted and a meeting arranged.
2. The principal arranges release for staff involved.
3. Relevant information is collected. The principal verifies that the information is accurate.
4. Outside support agencies are contacted for advice and assistance. e.g SES, Victim Support, Pediatric outreach nurses. The Public Health Nurse can advise.
5. In consultation with the family the crisis team determines what information is to be shared with the school and community
6. Inform the family of the support available, e.g. School Chaplain, Public Health Nurses.
7. The staff and Board of Trustees are consulted as soon as possible.
8. A plan for informing the pupils is developed:
 - Pupils and or staff likely to be most affected are identified.
 - Siblings and best friends are supported individually as soon as possible.
 - A decision about which pupils are to be told is made.
 - A written statement is prepared outlining what information is to be released.
 - The Principal with the support of the Board Chairperson delivers the statement at an assembly.
9. The Principal or Board Chairperson makes all media statements. No other staff member responds and pupils are reminded that they do not speak with the media at school to prevent inaccuracies or sensationalism out of respect for the family.
10. An accurate written statement is given to the secretary for incoming calls.
11. Parents of affected pupils are contacted and pupils are permitted to be taken home.
12. School activities continue as normally as possible and routines are maintained to give children security.
13. In liaison with outside support agencies an ongoing support plan is formulated.

Other Considerations

- A staff member may be appointed to collect and return belongings.
- Suitability or otherwise of messages of condolence from staff and pupils
- Attendance at the funeral - in consultation with the family
- Suitability of a school memorial service/ memorial - in consultation with the family
- A debrief is available for staff - Waitaki Mental Health Services
- Staff are given professional development to prepare them for traumatic events and their consequences.