

SCHOOL-WIDE CRISIS MANAGEMENT:

IT TAKES A VILLAGE



Developed By:

Guidance and Counseling Section,

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

In Partnership With:

Missouri Center for Career Education

Missouri School Counselor Association

It CAN Happen Here!

- “A crisis is an event that is extraordinary. It cannot be predicted.... [A] crisis is a situation where schools could be faced with inadequate information, not enough time, and insufficient resources, but in which leaders must make one or many crucial decisions.” (USDOE, 2003, p. 1-5).

A school crisis...

- Is any event that affects the emotional stability of students and/or staff and disrupts the educational process
- Ranges in scope and intensity from incidents that directly or indirectly affect a single student to ones that impact the entire community
- Can happen before, during or after school; on or off school campuses

Types of Crises

□ Local:

- Death
- Suicide
- Health Issues
- Accidents
- Intruders
- Acts of Violence/Crime
(within the local
community)



□ Global:

- Natural Disasters
- Terrorism
- Acts of Violence
(outside of the local
community)
- Death of a Public
Figure

Crisis Management Cycle: Four Phases

- Mitigation/Prevention: Services & Programs
- Preparation/Readiness: Develop Plan for Students, Staff, Parents, Emergency Personnel
- Response: Plan into Action
- Recovery: Physical/Emotional Support AND Reflection—What worked? What needs to be changed?

Mitigation/Prevention

Pre- Planning

- Mitigation/Prevention can diffuse or limit the likelihood of potential acts of violence by students
- The district's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program emphasizes prevention
- PSCs = on-site prevention experts
- Assess existing programs & services
- Know what works and what does not work and make needed modifications

Preparation/Readiness Before A Crisis

- Planning for the worst-case scenario
- Training the Plan
- Exercising the Plan

Preparation/Readiness Before a Crisis (cont'd)

- Best practices recommend emergency management plans for all schools
- A plan=more effective response
- A plan=comprehensive & consistent procedures
- Practice: drills can help identify areas in the plan that need more attention...

Preparation/Readiness Before A Crisis

(Cont'd)

- The crisis plan is developed by representative members of the school/district/community. This plan includes:
 - ✓ Key “Response Phase” - roles/responsibilities are identified and assigned to individuals.
 - ✓ Communication Needs—Internal/External
 - ✓ Responsive Services Planning
- Drill, Drill, Drill
- Debrief/Evaluate/Alter Plan after drills

Response During A Crisis

- ❑ Gather/Disseminate the Facts
- ❑ Crisis Team Implements Pre-defined Roles and Responsibilities
- ❑ Notification of Stakeholders
- ❑ Materials/Resources Needed
- ❑ Space for Responsive Services
- ❑ Debriefing: “Day-of” Crisis

Recovery After A Crisis

- Support for adults as well as students
- Evaluation is key to having a strong team and plan
- Post-crisis meeting
- Review effectiveness of each phase
- Make changes as needed

Summary

Because of the spontaneous nature of a crisis, it can upset the balance of an entire school, district and/or community. An effective and comprehensive crisis management plan provides guidelines so that everyone will know what to do before, during, and after any crisis. It is the responsibility of the school district to ensure the preparedness of everyone within the school system in the event of an emergency.

QUESTIONS?

Missouri Comprehensive Guidance & Counseling Programs:
Linking School Success with Life Success