

GREENWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Greenwich, Connecticut

Policy E-002 - WHOLE STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Procedure E-002.2 - PREVENTION OF YOUTH SUICIDE

The Superintendent recognizes that suicide is a complex issue and that, while school personnel may identify potentially suicidal youth, they do not offer clinical assessment of risk and/or provide in-depth counseling, but must refer the youth for appropriate assessment and follow-up.

Any school employee who may suspect or have knowledge that a student or a group of students is at risk for suicide shall report this information to the appropriate school administrator who will in turn follow the procedures below. In the same way, school employees who are aware of situations occurring outside of the school but potentially affecting the students and/or staff shall report this information to the appropriate school administrator.

The Greenwich Public Schools shall provide suicide prevention programs to students, parents and staff for the purpose of increasing awareness, fostering mental health and promoting appropriate responses.

Suicide Prevention Guidelines

When a staff member is confronted with a situation in which a student makes a statement of suicidal thinking, or it appears that an attempt at suicide is possible, the following actions will take place:

1. The staff member immediately will refer the student to the appropriate guidance counselor.
2. In the event the staff member perceives that a student has taken action which creates a medical emergency, the school nurse will be notified immediately and emergency medical procedures will be followed.
3. The guidance counselor will notify the principal and the school nurse and seek the intervention of the Pupil Personnel Services staff - either the school psychologist or the school social worker.

4. The guidance counselor and/or psychologist or social worker will meet with the student immediately for the purpose of establishing sequential facts or events leading to the crisis. At no time during the process is the student to be left alone.

5. If the student is not found to be suicidal, the parents will be notified of the referral and of all conclusions reached.

6. If the student is found to be suicidal, immediate contact will be made with a parent or guardian and a conference will be held the same day.

During the conference, the parent or guardian will be advised that an immediate psychiatric evaluation is needed.

Under no circumstances is a student allowed to go home alone. The student must be released only to a parent, guardian or other responsible adult.

If reasonable attempts to reach the parent, guardian or other responsible adult in whose custody the student may be released are not successful, the case will be treated as a medical emergency and arrangements will be made to transport the student to an area hospital emergency room or mental health facility.

If the student requires medical attention, he/she will be transported immediately to an area hospital. The school nurse will arrange to have the parents meet the student at the hospital.

A detailed report will be written within twenty-four hours by the staff member who assumes responsibility for the case. The report shall include:

- name of the student
- name of the staff member(s) involved
- time and date of all conferences
- summary of all conferences
- recommendations made to parents, student, and building staff

Follow-up contact will be in accordance with the recommendations. A report will be written indicating those activities performed to follow through and ensure the safety and well-being of the student.

A copy of all reports will be submitted to the parents, the principal and the Director of Pupil Personnel Services.

Failure on the part of the family to take seriously and provide for the safety of the student in case of potential suicide will be considered emotional neglect and reported to the Department of Children and Youth Services.

If, as a result of suicidal activity a need exists for changes in the student's program, the school's planning and placement team will convene and consult with the student's mental health professional, the parent(s) or guardian, appropriate outside facility staff members and, if feasible, the student to plan the student's educational program.

The school social worker or Pupil Personnel Services staff member who assumes responsibility for the case will maintain contact with the student's mental health professionals to support programming needs and follow-up procedures.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General statutes
P.A. 89-168 An act concerning child abuse and the prevention of youth
Suicide

Procedure Revised – September 2005