



TRAGIC EVENTS RESPONSE

PROCEDURES:

The Tragic Response Manual acts as a procedural guide for any school within District School Board Ontario North East to provide direction and assist with the development of a plan during a crisis.

Appendices

- Appendix A:** Principal's Crisis Response Plan
- Appendix B:** Tragic Event Response Team Action Checklist
- Appendix C:** Documentation Template for Tragic Event
- Appendix D:** Tragic Event Response Evaluation
- Appendix E:** Sample Scripts
- Appendix F:** Informing a Student of the Death of a Significant Person
- Appendix G:** Resources for dealing with tragic situations
- Appendix H:** Community Resources & Agencies
- Appendix I:** Office Staff – Regarding Response to Community Inquiries
- Appendix J:** Sample Letters



District School Board
Ontario North East

TRAGIC EVENTS RESPONSE MANUAL

March, 2001
September, 2011
March, 2015

REVISED December, 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
TRAGIC EVENT CHECKLIST	2
A. VERIFICATION AND NOTIFICATION	2
B. INITIAL INTERVENTION	4
C. FUNERALS, MEMORIAL SERVICES AND SPONTANEOUS MEMORIALS	5
D. DEATH OF A STUDENT OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL DURING THE SUMMER OR ON VACATION	6
E. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH	7
F. LONG-TERM FOLLOW UP	7
G. FOLLOW UP	7
H. ADDITIONAL ACTION STEPS	8
SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS - Death of a Staff Member	8
TRAGIC EVENT COMMUNICATION CHAIN	9
APPENDICES	
A: Principal's Crisis Response Plan	10
B: Tragic Event Response Team Action Checklist	11
C: Documentation Template for Tragic Event	13
D: Tragic Event Response Evaluation	15
E: Sample Scripts	16
F: Informing a Student of the Death of a Significant Person	18
G: Resources for dealing with tragic situations	19
H: Community Resources & Agencies	20
I: Office Staff – Regarding Response to Community Inquiries	28
J: Sample Letters	29

INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to provide Principals with a quick reference which highlights the main considerations to take into account when faced with a tragic event. It is not intended to be a comprehensive manual dealing with all of the issues surrounding death, suicide and grieving. Please reference the Youth Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Response Protocols as needed.

What is a Tragic Event?

A tragic event is a significant event that disrupts the emotional and physical well-being of students and staff members. Within this broad umbrella are crises and traumatic events, which may require somewhat different responses.

A tragic event may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- death (expected or sudden) of a current or former student, staff member, parent or sibling of a student, spouse or child of a staff member, by any means;
- serious accident involving a student or staff member;
- serious illness of student or staff member;

“A crisis, by definition is a time of intense difficulty, trouble or danger when important decisions need to be made. In a school setting, a crisis can take the form of natural disasters, pandemic diseases, fire, violence or even death.” (Ontario Principals’ Council report on Crisis Support for Principals and Vice-Principals).

Tragic Event Response Team

Each Principal will establish a Tragic Event Response Team (TERT) (See Appendix A: Principal’s Crisis Response Plan). The prime mandate of the team is to:

- a) Offer immediate assistance in dealing with the practical aspects of the situation;
- b) Invite the Mental Health Lead to help with the planning as soon as possible;
- c) Identify staff and students who may be at risk;
- d) Refer all media inquiries to the Communications Officer.
- e) Select one or more staff members to be the ongoing contact person(s) with the family. A home visit may be very appropriate.
- f) Assign school employees who do not have immediate classroom responsibility to monitor the school entrance, hallways, and washrooms and to provide additional recess supervision.

Each crisis is unique and requires a concise assessment as each situation arises. This assessment may change as time and events unfold.

Tragic Event Checklist

RESPONDING TO A TRAGIC EVENT Recommendations for Principals/Superintendents

It is essential that only the Superintendent, Principal or designate be the spokesperson within the schools. All media inquiries are to be referred to the Communications Officer.

A. VERIFICATION AND NOTIFICATION

Note: Principal's must keep all documentation of their Tragic Event Response, including but not limited to:

- Tragic Event Checklist
 - Appendix B: Tragic Event Response Team Action Checklist
 - Appendix C: Documentation Template for Tragic Event
 - Appendix D: Tragic Event Response Evaluation
 - Memos
 - Letters
 - Communication with families
 - Scripts
 - Meeting dates/notes
-
- ☐ **Receive notification.** Any person who learns of the death/traumatic event that may affect the school community will report such knowledge to the principal/designate.
 - ☐ **Verify the facts** with a reliable source (police, public health, fire services, emergency services, coroner or family if appropriate). Separate fact from rumour. It is important to respect the wishes of the family concerning the school's involvement. In the event of a suicide, refer to the Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Response Protocol.
 - ☐ **Contact the Communications Officer** and the **Superintendent of Education** responsible for the particular school.
 - ☐ **Contact the TERT** for your school and invite the Mental Health Lead to help with the planning.
 - ☐ **Designate one person** to be the contact with the family of the student or staff member involved. Be prepared to respect cultural and religious differences.
 - ☐ **Obtain permission** from the family so that you may communicate the identity of those involved in the event. As best as possible clarify with the family:
 - The facts associated with the tragic event
 - Their perspective and understanding of the death (illness, accident, suicide)
 - Their wishes regarding information to communicate with the school community
- If the tragic event is confirmed to have been a suicide, the family may wish to keep the cause of death private.

- **Assess the potential impact of the tragic event** on students and staff. The following questions may be helpful:
 - What was the cause of death? Deaths by homicide, accident, and suicide are unexpected and often create a higher level of emotion.
 - Where did the tragedy occur? Events that occur at school are especially traumatic for students and staff members.
 - Have there been prior tragedies that have affected the school community? Issues and emotions from previous losses will likely surface, further complicating the processing efforts.
 - Was there a perpetrator who caused an accident or committed a homicide? If students and staff members were acquainted with the perpetrator, many additional issues may surface.
- **Limit information regarding a suicide.** If the deceased's family approves, tell staff members and students the truth about the cause of death without giving explicit details. Make no attempt to explain how the deceased died. Focus instead on helping students grieve and learning the warning signs of suicide. Small-group or classroom discussions are better than a large school assembly.
Follow our Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Post-vention procedures.
- **If possible, provide all teaching and non-teaching staff with advance notice.** If a tragic event is verified during non-school hours, the summer holiday or other vacation, notify staff. When school resumes after the holiday or vacation, additional plans should be in place for notification and support of students and staff.

Only the information regarding cause of death that the family has permitted should be released in any statements. It is important that following consultation with family members, any information that the family wishes to be withheld is a wish that is respected. Ensure the Director of Education and the Communications Officer are made aware of who provided permission to release information.

- **Schedule a staff meeting as soon as possible, preferably prior to the start of the school day.** A meeting is important in order to ensure information and plans are communicated to all staff members:
 - Clarify the facts, have a picture of the deceased available.
 - Introduce additional personnel who are at the school to provide support.
 - Allow time for staff to discuss and process the information.
 - Explain how students should be informed (Appendix E: Sample Scripts, and Appendix F: Informing a Student of the Death of a Significant Person).
 - Some teachers may not feel emotionally able to share information with their class. Administration may need to identify support staff (i.e. TERT, CYWs, Social Workers) to go into the classroom for support and/or to read the script for the teacher.
 - Assess the needs of staff. Supply help may be necessary to relieve some of the teachers of regular duties.
 - Identify students who may need additional support.

- Inform staff of additional supports/resources available to them (i.e. CYWs, Social Workers, community partners) and provide handouts (Appendix H).
 - Decide if any scheduled events need to be cancelled.
 - Inform staff of location of supports/resources within the school.
 - Request that staff check e-mail regularly throughout the day for any new information.
 - Set up a system to contact absent staff.
 - Schedule a debriefing meeting for the end of the school day attended by all staff and support personnel.
- **Inform the students face to face with familiar staff.** If school is in session when a tragic event is verified, we recommend the following notification methods:
- Provide a written script for staff (Appendices E & F). It is recommended that classroom teachers or designated staff read the prepared script directly to the students. This will help dispel rumours and discourage speculation.
 - Ensure that staff who feel they need additional support communicate that to the TERT

P. A. announcements are **NOT** recommended. **Do Not Announce Via Assembly.**

- Determine if other schools may be involved and should be notified (i.e., siblings of the student or children of the teacher)
- **Delegate as many tasks as possible so the Principal:**
- a) can make decisions and be available for consultation;
 - b) be present and available to staff, students, and parents.
- Secretarial staff should be responsible only for referring calls to the Principal. They are not to respond to inquiries about the crisis. (Appendix I: Office Staff – Regarding Response to Community Inquiries)

B. INITIAL INTERVENTION

- **Coordinate with the family of the deceased.** Inform the family of the school's plans to provide information and interventions. Make sure that they know what information is being shared. Determine the wishes of the deceased's family regarding school involvement in the funeral. Find out about funeral arrangements and whether it would be appropriate for students and staff to attend. Assure the family that they will be consulted about plans for honouring or remembering the deceased.
- **Express the school's condolences** to the family of the deceased (flowers, letters, cards, etc.).
- **Provide resources for staff members and parents.** Teachers and staff members should receive scripts to read to students and guidelines on how to help grieving students. Prepare these letters for parents in consultation with the Communications Officer. You will want to include facts about the death and tips on how to help grieving youth. (Appendix J: Sample Letters).

- **Keep school open during normal hours.** School is a major source of comfort for most students and staff members in times of crisis. Keeping school open enables students to be together, receive helpful information, benefit from the nurturing and guidance of familiar adults, and maintain a sense of normalcy in their lives. It is important for the principal to be visible and available to staff members, students, and parents, especially during the first few days following the tragedy. Consideration may be given to extending the school day hours to provide support for students and staff.
- **Maintain regular school activities while adjusting schedules as necessary.** Students will need the support of an established routine. Also, maintaining some form of regular routine enables the school to readjust more quickly after the crisis has passed. However, a death may pre-empt the regular curriculum in classes that the deceased would have attended. It is not unusual for teachers to want to stick to the standard lesson plan or give a scheduled test. However, staff members need to remember that students may be emotional and assessments at this time may not be appropriate.
- **Establish a “safe” room.** These rooms make it easy for students or staff members to receive support if they have difficulty coping. School-based or community professionals who are trained to work with grieving children and adults should staff these rooms.
- **Support students in the classroom.** Teachers can be instrumental in helping students cope with the loss, defuse the effect of the trauma, regain some measure of control, and understand the event. In some cases, it may be helpful to have Child and Youth Workers or Social Workers co-facilitate class discussions. Be truthful and direct with students. Students need accurate information and the opportunity to ask questions.
- **Identify those most at risk.** Students or staff members who were emotionally close to the deceased or were directly exposed to the trauma may need more extensive assistance. Students or staff who have suffered a previous loss, have a history of mental health problems, or have been exposed to a previous trauma may be particularly at risk. It is important to monitor these students, give them extra support, communicate with their families, and refer them to the mental health team.
- **Tailor support services for students with special needs.** Students who have developmental disabilities, emotional disorders, or low self-esteem may require unique forms of support.
- **Reflect cultural and religious differences.** The cultural background of students may affect their reaction to trauma.
- **Conduct staff “debriefing” sessions.** Principals will hold a staff debriefing at the end of the first day and at least one follow up meeting within the first two weeks to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the tragic event response plan, get a feel for the health of the school, help identify students and staff members who need help, and modify the tragic event response plan if needed. (Appendix D: Tragic Event Response Evaluation)

C. FUNERALS, MEMORIAL SERVICES AND SPONTANEOUS MEMORIALS

Participation of Students: Students may wish to attend the memorial services and/or funeral of the deceased student or teacher. Talk to the family of the deceased and determine their wishes. If many students or staff are likely to attend, inquire if there may be visitation hours/memorial services outside of school hours. If the services are during school hours, establish a policy for student absence that allows students who have a close relationship to the deceased to attend. Have substitute teachers available for teachers who wish to attend the services.

Spontaneous Memorials: Informal memorials are likely to “spring up” after the death of a student or teacher. Plans to handle the flowers, cards, etc., should be made in advance. Determine the time period that the memorial will remain (e.g., a few days or one week), and communicate to students that the memorial will be removed after that time and indicate what will be done with the non-perishable items (e.g., stuffed animals will be sent to a local daycare center, etc.). Providing alternate commemorative opportunities for the students and engaging students early on in the response efforts or an announcement about the family’s wishes may help to minimize these spontaneous memorials.

Timing of Memorial Activities at School: Plan for these carefully. In many cases, memorials can reduce feelings of isolation and promote individual and collective grief resolution. Be cautious of committing to things in the immediate aftermath of the tragedy. It is important that activities (e.g., raising money, a school memorial) be thoughtfully planned and delayed to allow students and staff time to grieve. Participation should always be voluntary. Be cautious of outside pressures to memorialize a student or staff member. If the death was by suicide, public memorial gestures are not recommended.

Equitable Policies: In general, schools should avoid formal commemorative or memorialization activities or acts (e.g., naming a building or hanging a plaque) to mark the death of a popular student or staff member since failure to respond in the future in a similar manner to the death of a less popular student/staff may raise equity concerns; schools may be reluctant to provide similar responses after certain deaths (e.g., suicide, drug overdose) in order to minimize glamorization of the cause of death. Instead, less formal but thoughtful commemorative activities developed over time with active student involvement is often much more meaningful (and therapeutic) to students and staff. Such commemoration is more likely to recognize and preserve essential memories of the deceased than are more routine and reactive efforts instituted shortly after notification.

Constructive Expression of Grief: Students may wish to write letters/draw pictures to send to the deceased student’s or staff member’s family. Be sure these are reviewed before sending them out. Also, be careful not to interpret the drawings and writings without adequate input from mental health professionals. Avoid activities that solicit public anonymous statements, such as creating places for students to express their thoughts anonymously about the deceased, as school teachers and staff will not be able to identify students who may express worrisome thoughts (e.g., suicidal ideation or threatening statements).

Handling Traumatic Reminders for Students: School desks and lockers may serve as unwelcome reminders of the deceased student(s). Consider procedures for handling these, drawing on the input of the classmates.

Personal Effects of the Deceased: Arrange with parents/family members for the return of belongings that is at a time convenient for them, preferably after school hours. Have the personal effects available at the office so that parents/families are not presented with the emotional challenge of having to clean out a locker or desk. Have a member of TERT present when parents come to retrieve a child’s belongings.

D. DEATH OF A STUDENT OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL DURING THE SUMMER OR OTHER VACATION

Involve the Superintendent of Education responsible for the particular school, your TERT, the Communications Officer and the Mental Health Lead to develop a plan. You may wish to offer the school building as a place for community support services to be offered in the immediate aftermath of the event and communicate this through public or social media. When school resumes after the holiday or vacation, additional plans should be in place for notification and support of students and staff.

E. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

The Role of the Communications Officer: Media attention is possible after a death of a student or school staff. This is best handled by our Communications Officer or the Principal at the school site. Teachers, staff and parents should be made aware that all media requests should be referred to this individual.

Protect Students from Being Re-Traumatized: The focus of all communications, including media coverage, should be on the protection of students and the school environment from unwanted intrusive attention. Television coverage of the event should not be watched in the classroom during school hours. Information about how to handle media requests can be distributed to parents.

Ongoing communication between parents and school teachers and staff about how students are doing will be important to ensure appropriate support and intervention services in the immediate aftermath of a death and in the long-term. Parents of children identified as at-risk for mental health difficulties should be given information about whom to contact with concerns and about positive progress. School personnel should also keep parents informed about their children's functioning at school (e.g., school work, peer relationships and behaviours). Again, parents should be provided with information related to common reactions after a death as well as behaviours that may signal the need for more intensive mental health services.

F. LONG-TERM FOLLOW UP

- ❑ **Provide ongoing support as necessary.** Because the effects of a tragedy can persist for an extended time, it is important to provide ongoing support to the close friends of the deceased. Staff should also be made aware that Human Resources can provide information and/or coordinate additional support services.
- ❑ **Monitor your own processing and support requirements.** Identify your own coping skills as well as sources of comfort and strength in your life. Check frequently with school personnel who are most affected by the tragedy and do not hesitate to discuss the tragedy at staff meetings as the need and situation dictate.
- ❑ **Arrange for a follow-up** TERT meeting to debrief and evaluate the procedures and plans. (Appendix D)

G. FOLLOW UP

- ❑ Make changes to computer data, mailing lists, etc., if necessary. Retire Ontario Student Record (OSR) for filing by the end of the school year.
- ❑ In the event of a death, it is not essential that the deceased's property be immediately removed from the school. Allow the family members to do this when they are ready. They may prefer that it be done by some other person.
- ❑ **In the case of a suspected suicide**, the police may want to examine the deceased's desk and locker for a possible suicide note or other pertinent information.
- ❑ Contact your School Photography Company to inquire about current year school pictures that can be made available to the family (e.g. Lifetouch Canada will provide a package free of charge).

- Monitor the behaviour, performance, attendance and support of students and staff on an on-going basis, especially those thought to be greatly affected by the incident. Advise your CYW about these individuals.

H. ADDITIONAL ACTION STEPS

- Refer to the board policy regarding flags (Policy 1.2.7 Flag Raising) when dealing with the death of a current student or staff.
- Arrange for a quiet place for the Tragic Event Response Team to work.
- Be aware that impromptu memorials may be set up at various locations (desk, locker). These are difficult to remove once established. **Prevention is preferred.**
- Designate staff to handle telephone enquiries from the community members, and indicate what the appropriate response should be.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS - Death of a Staff Member

Whenever a staff member dies (teaching and/or non-teaching staff) some additional considerations are necessary.

Appoint a liaison to maintain contact with the family

One person may be selected to maintain contact with the family. The person could be the principal or someone else whom the family knows. While the role of the liaison person can vary, some functions include:

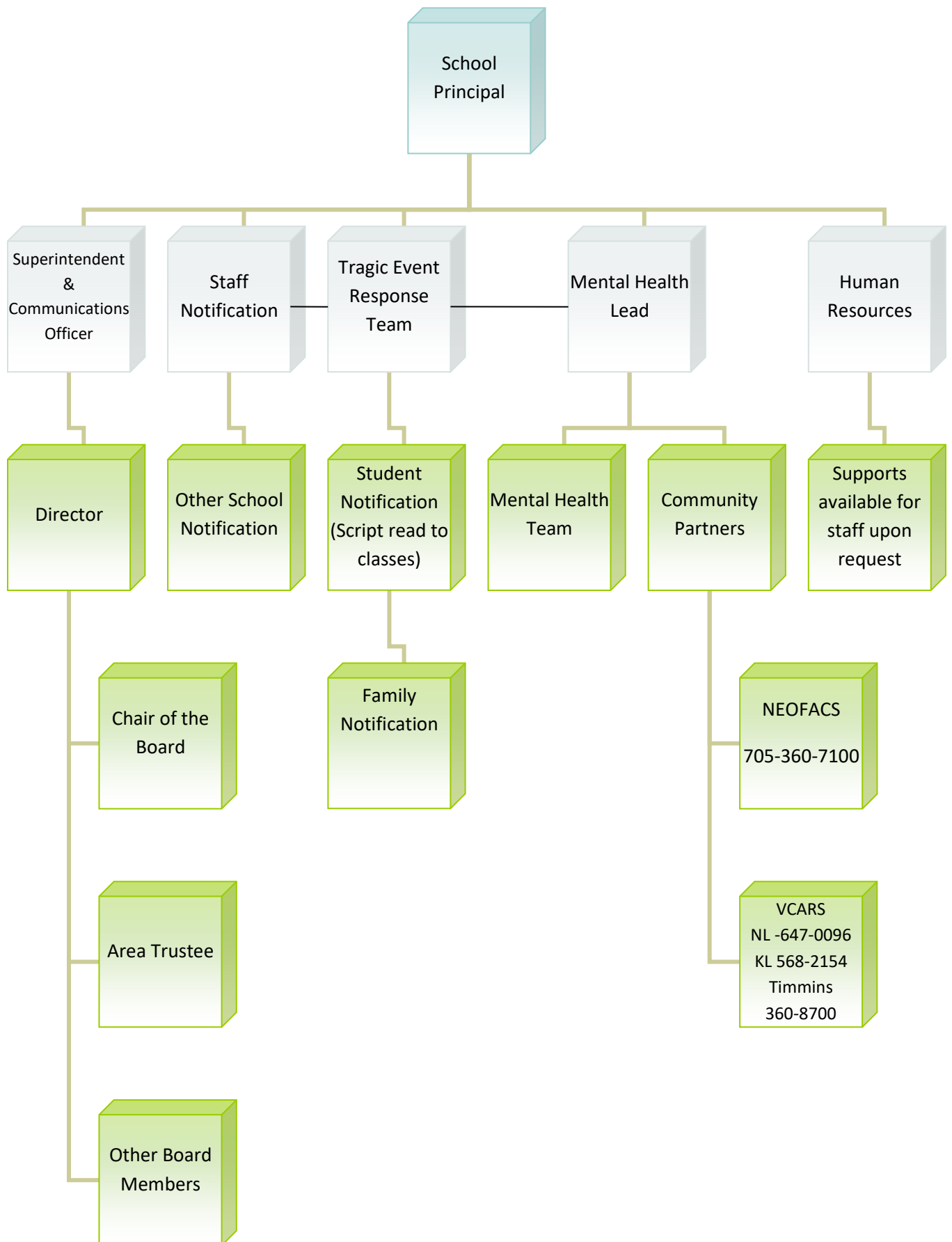
- keeping staff informed with respect to funeral arrangements
- identifying needs
- advising the family to contact Human Resources and Payroll/Benefits

Notify the Human Resources Department

Human Resources and Payroll/Benefits carry out a number of activities which are helpful:

- determine pension benefits and insurance coverage prior to the family's inquiries
- determine other benefits to which the family may be entitled
- notify others who can be of assistance: Administrators, Federation President(s)

Tragic Event Communication Chain



PRINCIPAL'S CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN

TRAGIC EVENT RESPONSE TEAM AND CONTACT INFORMATION

In September of each year, the principal shall review all emergency procedures. As part of this review, the identification of the Tragic Event Response Team members should be recorded in the table below. A copy is sent to the Superintendent of Education responsible for the particular school.

SCHOOL:

DATE:

	Name	Office #	Cell #	Home #
Superintendent of Education				
Executive Assistant to Superintendent of Education				
Principal				
Vice-Principal				
Mental Health Lead				
Regional School Social Worker				
Child and Youth Worker				
Guidance Counsellor				
Team Members:				

Note: Copy to Superintendent of Education responsible for the particular school.

Tragic Event Response Team Action Checklist

ACTION	NOTES/DATES (Attach additional details separately)
1. Confirm information	
Verify the facts & ensure documentation	
Advise the Superintendent of Education responsible for your school and the Communications Officer	
Meet with Tragic Events Response Team (TERT)	
Invite the Mental Health Lead for planning response	
Designate one person to be the family contact and obtain permission to communicate facts associated with the tragic event	
2. Provide information	
TO STAFF	
Arrange for a staff meeting (notice, scripts, photo, facts)	
Written statement (attach)	
School routine (reassign classroom duties if necessary, altered day)	
Classroom strategies (grief books, support literature, links, circles)	
Identify “at risk” students and staff (names to TERT)	
TO STUDENTS	
Advise how information will be shared – attach scripts	
Support information, e.g. counsellors	
TO PARENTS	
Letter if required (attach copy)	
3. Counselling Resources	
Interview rooms as required	
Telephone	
Classroom visits	
Safe room	
Support for students and staff as determined by TERT and Mental Health Lead	

4. Inquiries	
School spokesperson (principal, superintendent or designate)	
News release and media contact handled by the Communications Officer	
Telephone assistance (notice to secretaries)	
Grounds patrol, if required – to monitor media; other guests	
5. Family of Deceased	
Contact person	
Determine wishes	
Offer condolences: card/flowers/donation	
Deceased's property (gathered and returned to family)	
In some cases police may request access to locker/desk for investigation purposes	
6. Commemoration	
Funeral attendance	
Lowering flag, etc.	
School memorial if appropriate (planned after crisis period has passed)	
7. Staff Debriefing	
FIRST DAY	
After school meeting to assess situation	
Request Mental Health Team to return for second day, if required	
SECOND DAY – Mental Health Team	
Continue support groups and individual interviews for the time required in consultation with the Mental Health team	
Follow-up on “at risk” individuals, contact parents if necessary	
WITHIN 2 WEEKS of the tragedy:	
Identify students/staff who require extra/continued support	
Debrief with TERT and entire staff on how the plan was implemented and gather recommendations. Use the Tragic Event Response Evaluation form – Appendix J and forward a copy to the Mental Health Lead	

Documentation Template for Tragic Event

Event Date: _____

Time: _____

Name: _____

Grade/Position: _____

D.O.B.: _____

Police Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Hospital Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Other Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Verification from: _____

Phone: _____

Details:

Request for Confidentiality? ☐ No ☐ Yes **If Yes, Requested By :** _____

Relationship to Deceased/Injured Party: _____

Name of Family Liaison: _____ **Phone:** _____

Relationship to Deceased/Injured Party: _____

Family Wishes:

Informing classes/school: **Format:** _____ **By whom:** _____

Script to be used: (list script from Appendices, note original script below, or attach separately)

- ☐ Informed Ontario School Board Insurance Exchange - OSBIE
(and completed necessary forms as appropriate)
 - ☐ Informed Occupational Health and Safety Officer (and complete necessary forms as appropriate)
 - ☐ Informed Human Resources (as appropriate)
 - ☐ Informed Payroll (as appropriate)
 - ☐ Informed School Council Chair
 - ☐ Informed other persons associated with school: _____
 - ☐ Past Principals: _____
 - ☐ Past Staff: _____
 - ☐ Others: _____
-
-

Funeral Home Name
and Address:

Visitation Date: _____ Time: _____

Funeral Service
Location:

Date: _____ Time: _____

Tragic Event Response Evaluation

After a crisis, evaluate your plan with the participants, including external agencies.

1. Was the plan effective? If not, why not?

2. Were the affected persons' needs met ☐ effectively? ☐ partially? ☐ not at all?

a) What were the problems?

b) How can they be rectified?

3. Were there any areas where further planning or support would have been helpful?

☐ Yes ☐ No

a) If so, what were they?

b) How could these areas be improved and changes implemented?

4. Was responsibility evenly distributed or were some participants too weighed down to be fully effective?
How can responsibilities be redistributed?

5. Based on your experience, what other factors should be considered in **modifying** your plan?

Sample Scripts

JK/SK

Please read this script to all students in your home room as directed by administration. Should you require assistance in delivering this message, please ask your principal or a member of the Tragic Event Response Team. Please shred this script at your earliest convenience.

I have some sad to share with you. You may see some students and adults in the halls or outside at recess today, who are sad or upset.

A student/staff member at our school, name of individual and grade, died when.

If you see someone who is feeling sad or upset, what can you do to help them to feel better?

Some students may talk about a death they have experienced (even a pet). Reassure them that it is normal to feel sad when these things happen, then bring it back to how we can help.

Grades 1-6

Please read this script to all students in your home room as directed by administration. Should you require assistance in delivering this message, please ask your principal or a member of the Tragic Event Response Team. Please shred this script at your earliest convenience.

We want to take some time this morning to talk about something very sad. Name of student / staff member and grade, died unexpectedly last night. At this point, we do not officially know the cause of name's death.

Our sympathies go to his/her family and in particular to his/her sister/brother, sibling's name who is in class/grade/school.

Death is a difficult issue for anyone to deal with. Even if you didn't know name, you might still have some emotional reactions to hearing about this.

Child and Youth Workers will be available all day for anyone needing support. We will share more information with you as it becomes available.

Grades 7-12

Please read this script to all students in your home room as directed by administration. Should you require assistance in delivering this message, please ask your principal or a member of the Tragic Event Response Team. Please shred this script at your earliest convenience.

We have some sad news to share. We regret to inform you of the death of student's name. (you could add, a former student/staff member or a student at another school)

Our sympathies go to his/her family and in particular to his/her sister/brother, sibling's name who is in class/grade/school.

We know that staff and students may be upset on hearing this news.

Child and Youth Workers are available for support all day in/at location. Please let me or another teacher know if you would like to go to location.

We will share more information with you as it becomes available.

Informing a Student of the Death of a Significant Person

These steps should be followed while informing a student in attendance at school of the death of a significant person:

- ▶ Contact parent or family member to determine how the news is to be delivered. Preferably a family member/representative will attend the school to deliver the news.
- ▶ The person(s) delivering the information will be escorted to one of the administrative offices.
- ▶ The child/children will be escorted from class by the Principal or designate to the administrative office.
- ▶ The principal or designate will provide pertinent information to the teachers of the child by memo immediately.
- ▶ Release of the student to the care of a responsible adult will be the responsibility of the Principal or designate.

Resources for dealing with tragic situations

- Centre for Suicide Prevention <http://suicideinfo.ca/>
- The Dougy Center for Grieving Children and Teens www.dougy.org
- National Association of School Psychologists www.nasponline.org
- National Alliance for Grieving Children <http://www.childrengrieve.org/>
- The National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children – School Memorials
<https://www.maine.gov/suicide/docs/SchoolMemorials.pdf>



Community Resources & Agencies

APPENDIX H

TABLE OF CONTENTS

For imminent suicide risk – call 911, Mobile Crisis Unit, or
the emergency department at your local hospital.

ENGLEHART	25
HEARST.....	26
IROQUOIS FALLS - MATHESON	27
KAPUSKASING & SMOOTH ROCK FALLS	28
KIRKLAND LAKE	29
TEMISKAMING SHORES	30
TIMMINS AREA	31

ENGLEHART & AREA

Canadian Mental Health Association (age16+)

705-544-1971

Centre de Santé Communautaire du Témiskaming

705-567-1414

Crisis Hotline (CMHA) (16+)

1-888-665-8888

Egale

Organization for LGBTQI2S education, awareness and advocacy.

1-888-204-7777

Englehart and District Hospital

705-544-2301

Kids Help Phone

Professional counselling, information, referrals and volunteer-led text-based support. Call, text, or chat live.

1-800-668-6868

Kirkland & District Family Health Team

705-567-2224

Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services (up to 18)

Indigenous youth experiencing distress who are involved with child welfare agencies.

705-268-9033 or 1-800-461-1293

LGBT Youth Line

Confidential and non-judgemental peer support by telephone, text and chat.

1-888-687-9688

(Text at 647-694-4275)

Mobile Crisis Unit

Youth in crisis, imminent suicide risk.

705-544-5437

NeedHelpNow.ca

Help for teens negatively impacted by a self/peer exploitation incident, e.g. stopping the spread of sexual pictures/videos.

North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services (up to 18)

705-544-5437

Sexual Health Infoline Ontario

1-800-668-2437

Women's Issues, Ontario

Resources promoting women's economic independence and fighting against gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, abuse.
ontario.ca/page/womens-issues

HEARST & AREA

Centre Passerelle pour femmes (16+)

For female victims of violence.

705-360-5657 or 1-877-336-2433 (after hours)

Mobile Crisis Unit

Youth in crisis, imminent suicide risk.

705-372-2445

Cochrane District Detox Centre (16+)

Withdrawal management services.

1-800-787-7951

NeedHelpNow.ca

Help for teens negatively impacted by a self/peer exploitation incident, e.g. stopping the spread of sexual pictures/videos.

Egale

Organization for LGBTQI2S education, awareness and advocacy.

1-888-204-7777

Nord-Aski Family Health Team

705-362-5544 (or on Facebook)

North Cochrane Addictions Services

705-362-7844

Kids Help Phone

Professional counselling, information, referrals and volunteer-led text-based support. Call, text, or chat live.

1-800-668-6868

North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services (up to 18)

705-372-2445

Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services (up to 18)

Indigenous youth experiencing distress who are involved with child welfare agencies.

705-268-9033 or 1-800-461-1293

Notre Dame Hospital

705-362-4291

LGBT Youth Line

Confidential and non-judgemental peer support by telephone, text and chat.

1-888-687-9688

(Text at 647-694-4275)

Services de Counselling Hearst / Kapuskasing / Smooth Rock Falls (16+)

705-372-1993

Sexual Health Infoline Ontario

1-800-668-2437

Maison Arc-En-Ciel (12-24)

For substance disorders (pour les hommes).

705-369-4582

Timmins and District Hospital

1-888-340-3003 (24 hour Crisis hotline)

Maison Renaissance (16+)

For substance disorders.

705-362-4289

Women's Issues, Ontario

Resources promoting women's economic independence and fighting against gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, abuse.
ontario.ca/page/womens-issues

IROQUOIS FALLS - MATHESON & AREA

Anson General Hospital

705-258-3911 (Iroquois Falls)

Bingham Memorial Hospital

705-273-2424 (Matheson)

Centre Passerelle pour femmes (16+)

For female victims of violence.

705-360-5657 or 1-877-336-2433 (after hours)

Cochrane District Detox Centre (16+)

Withdrawal management services.

1-800-787-7951

Egale

Organization for LGBTQI2S education, awareness and advocacy.

1-888-204-7777

Iroquois Falls Family Health Team

705-258-2818

Kids Help Phone

Professional counselling, information, referrals and volunteer-led text-based support. Call, text, or chat live.

1-800-668-6868

Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services (up to 18)

Indigenous youth experiencing distress who are involved with child welfare agencies.

705-268-9033 or 1-800-461-1293

Lady Minto Hospital

705-272-7200 (Cochrane)

LGBT Youth Line

Confidential and non-judgemental peer support through telephone, text and chat

1-888-687-9688

(Text at 647-694-4275)

Minto Counselling (16+)

705-272-4245, 705-258-2212, 705-273-2255

Misiway Milopemahtesewin

Community Health Centre

705-264-2200

Mobile Crisis Unit

Youth in crisis, imminent suicide risk.

705-232-7000

NeedHelpNow.ca

Help for teens negatively impacted by a self/peer exploitation incident, e.g. stopping the spread of sexual pictures/videos.

North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services (up to 18)

705-232-7000

Sexual Health Infoline Ontario

1-800-668-2437

South Cochrane Addictions Services

705-273-2233 or 705-232-4344

Timmins and Area Women in Crisis

705-268-8380

Timmins and District Hospital

1-888-340-3003 (24 hour Crisis hotline)

Women's Issues, Ontario

Resources promoting women's economic independence and fighting against gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, abuse.

ontario.ca/page/womens-issues

KAPUSKASING, SMOOTH ROCK FALLS & AREA

Centre Passerelle pour femmes (16+)

For female victims of violence.

705-360-5657 or 1-877-336-2433 (after hours)

NeedHelpNow.ca

Help for teens negatively impacted by a self/peer exploitation incident, e.g. stopping the spread of sexual pictures/videos.

Cochrane District Detox Centre (16+)

Withdrawal management services.

1-800-787-7951

North Cochrane Addictions Services

705-335-8408

Egale

Organization for LGBTQI2S education, awareness and advocacy.

1-888-204-7777

North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services (up to 18)

705-335-2445

Kids Help Phone

Professional counselling, information, referrals and volunteer-led text-based support. Call, text, or chat live.

1-800-668-6868

Sensenbrenner Hospital

Kapuskasing

705-337-6111

Services de Counselling Hearst/Kapuskasing/Smooth Rock Falls (16+)

705-335-8468

Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services (up to 18)

Indigenous youth experiencing distress who are involved with child welfare agencies.

705-268-9033 or 1-800-461-1293

Sexual Health Infoline Ontario

1-800-668-2437

LGBT Youth Line

Confidential and non-judgemental peer support through telephone, text and chat.

1-888-687-9688

(Text at 647-694-4275)

Smooth Rock Falls Hospital

705-338-2781

Timmins and District Hospital

1-888-340-3003 (24 hour Crisis hotline)

Mobile Crisis Unit

Youth in crisis, imminent suicide risk.

705-335-2445

Women's Issues, Ontario

Resources promoting women's economic independence and fighting against gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, abuse.
ontario.ca/page/womens-issues

KIRKLAND LAKE & AREA

Canadian Mental Health Association (16+)

705-567-9596

Centre de Santé Communautaire du Témiskaming

705-567-1414

Crisis Hotline (CMHA) (16+)

1-888-665-8888

Egale

Organization for LGBTQI2S education, awareness and advocacy.

1-888-204-7777

Kids Help Phone

Professional counselling, information, referrals and volunteer-led text-based support. Call, text, or chat live.

1-800-668-6868

Kirkland & District Family Health Team

705-567-2224

Kirkland Lake and District Hospital

705-567-5251

Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services (up to 18)

Indigenous youth experiencing distress who are involved with child welfare agencies.

705-268-9033 or 1-800-461-1293

LGBT Youth Line

Confidential and non-judgemental peer support through telephone, text and chat.

1-888-687-9688

(Text at 647-694-4275)

Mobile Crisis Unit

Youth in crisis, imminent suicide risk.

705-567-9201

NeedHelpNow.ca

Help for teens negatively impacted by a self/peer exploitation incident, such as stopping the spread of sexual pictures/videos.

North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services (up to 18)

705-567-9201

One Kids Place

705-476-5437

Sexual Health Infoline Ontario

1-800-668-2437

Women's Issues, Ontario

Resources promoting women's economic independence and fighting against gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, abuse.
ontario.ca/page/womens-issues

TEMISKAMING SHORES & AREA

Canadian Mental Health Association (16+)

705-647-4444

Centre de Santé Communautaire du Témiskaming

705-647-5775 or 705-647-5939

Crisis Hotline (CMHA) (16+)

1-888-665-8888

Egale

Organization for LGBTQI2S education,
awareness and advocacy.

1-888-204-7777

HANDS The Family Help Network

1-800-668-8555 (Nipissing)

1-844-287-9072 (Mental Health Crisis Line)

Kids Help Phone

Professional counselling, information,
referrals and volunteer-led text-based
support. Call, text, or chat live.

1-800-668-6868

Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services (up to 18)

Indigenous youth experiencing distress who
are involved with child welfare agencies.

705-268-9033 or 1-800-461-1293

LGBT Youth Line

Confidential and non-judgemental peer
support through telephone, text and
chat.

1-888-687-9688

(Text at 647-694-4275)

Mobile Crisis Unit

Youth in crisis, imminent suicide risk.

705-647-1200

NeedHelpNow.ca

Help for teens negatively impacted by a
self/peer exploitation incident, e.g. stopping
the spread of sexual pictures/videos.

North Bay Regional Health Centre

705-474-8600

North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services (up to 18)

705-647-1200

One Kids Place

705-680-5437

Pavilion Women's Centre

705-672-2128

Sexual Health Infoline Ontario

1-800-668-2437

Timiskaming Hospital

705-647-8121

Women's Issues, Ontario

Resources promoting women's economic
independence and fighting against gender-
based violence, sexual exploitation, abuse.
ontario.ca/page/womens-issues

TIMMINS & AREA

Canadian Mental Health Assoc. (16+)
705-267-8100, or call the **Crisis Hotline** at
1-888-340-3003 (evenings, weekends)

Centre Passerelle pour femmes (16+)
For female victims of violence.
705-360-5657 or 1-877-336-2433 (after hours)

Cochrane District Detox Centre (16+)
Withdrawal management services.
1-800-787-7951

Egale
Organization for LGBTQI2S education,
awareness and advocacy.
1-888-204-7777

The Jubilee Centre (16+)
Residential or day treatment services and
emergency safe bed program.
705-268-2666

Kids Help Phone
Professional counselling, information,
referrals and volunteer-led text-based
support. Call, text, or chat live.
1-800-668-6868

**Kunuwanimano Child and Family
Services (up to 18)**
Indigenous youth experiencing distress who
are involved with child welfare agencies.
705-268-9033 or 1-800-461-1293

LGBT Youth Line
Confidential and non-judgemental peer
support through telephone, text and chat.
1-888-687-9688 (Text at 647-694-4275)

Mobile Crisis Unit
Youth in crisis, imminent suicide risk.
705-360-7100

NeedHelpNow.ca
Help for teens negatively impacted by a
self/peer exploitation incident, e.g. stopping
the spread of sexual pictures/videos.

**North Eastern Ontario Family and
Children's Services (up to 18)**
705-360-7100

Northern Treatment Centres
Detox services.
705-264-2174

Sexual Health Infoline Ontario
1-800-668-2437

South Cochrane Addictions Services
705-264-5202

Timmins and Area Women in Crisis
705-268-8380

Timmins and District Hospital
705-264-3003 (24 hour Crisis hotline)

**Timmins and District Hospital –
Community Mental Health (16+)**
705-267-6315

Timmins Family Counseling Centre
705-267-7333 (fee for services)

**Timmins Native Friendship Centre
(16+)** To provide positive growth & change
while supporting one's spiritual, emotional,
mental and physical well-being.
705-268-6262

Timmins Pride (timminspride.com)
Unites and engages, to educate, advocate
and support the LGBTQ+ community in
Timmins and its surrounding areas.

Women's Issues, Ontario
Resources promoting women's economic
independence and fighting against gender-
based violence, sexual exploitation, abuse.
ontario.ca/page/womens-issues

Office Staff: – Regarding Response to Community Inquiries

It is essential that only the Superintendent, Principal or designate be the spokesperson within the schools. All media inquiries are to be referred to the Communications Officer. The Communications Officer is the spokesperson for the Board.

School name administration has been informed of the death of deceased's name.

Students have been told about name's death. Child and Youth Workers are available to those who wish to speak with someone about their feelings.

Include information regarding the funeral depending upon family wishes.

The funeral will be at place on date at time.

Visitation will occur at place on date at time.

Or

Name's family has indicated that the funeral arrangement is private.

Sample Letters

Although the students may or may not have been close to the deceased, the feelings of grief for previous losses can be triggered by the death. Parents need to know that a tragedy has occurred so that they can support the young person at home.

A letter should be brief and may include:

1. Expression of sympathy to the parents/spouse of the deceased.
2. Explanation of the facts surrounding the death, where appropriate, funeral details and how the school will be handling attendance at the funeral.
3. Some details of the deceased person's background.
4. Concluding comments with focus on the nature of the loss and support for the family.

To Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of Schoolmates

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We wish to extend our condolences to the name of family in the recent tragic death of their (son/daughter) name of student. *(Possible additional sentence addressing the circumstances or facts of the accident or illness, with permission).* Name was a description (i.e., happy, outgoing) student in name of Teacher's grade level class.

It is difficult to accept the loss of such a young person. Dealing with death affects each of us differently based on our relationship to the individual lost and/or our own trauma history. I encourage you to discuss name of deceased's death with your child, as you feel appropriate. Please realize that *(children/adolescents)* respond to tragedy or grief in different ways. I have enclosed some information on grief that may assist you.

Child and Youth Workers were in the school today as part of our Tragic Event Response Team. We can assure you that this support will continue to be available as long as it is needed. Many students participated in the creation of cards for presentation to name of deceased's family. This process itself can be very therapeutic.

The school supports any student's need to attend the funeral. We understand that this is a time for family and friends to find comfort in the company of each other. Funeral services will be held on date and time at location.

Our collective thoughts are with the surname of student family. Name of deceased will remain in the hearts and thoughts of *(his/her)* classmates, the staff and the name of school community.

Please feel free to call me at phone number if you have any questions or concerns about your child.

Sincerely,
Principal

Follow-Up Letter (Optional) – up to one week later

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Last week we wrote to inform you of the tragic death of deceased's name. The staff and students of the school continue to struggle with this loss.

Child and Youth Workers have been in the school assisting students and staff as part of our school's Tragic Event Response Team. Some students may require an ongoing connection with counsellors, perhaps as a result of their own trauma history. If your child seems unusually upset over a long period of time, you may wish to pursue a referral for counselling outside of the school. We would be pleased to help identify appropriate community resources and to assist you with a referral.

Again, we express our deepest sympathies to the deceased's family name family. If there is anything further we can do at this difficult time, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

Principal

Death of a Staff Member

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We regret to inform you of the death of a school name (*Teacher/Educational Assistant/staff member*), name of staff member. Name of teacher has taught grade at our school since year (or *other such statement reflecting the deceased appropriately*).

Funeral services will be held at location of funeral on date and time of funeral. In order to allow staff representatives to attend the funeral, there will be necessary adjustments of program and /or time tabling for several classes on date and time.

Child and Youth Workers have been in the school assisting students and staff as part of our school's Tragic Event Response Team. Your child may wish to discuss this loss with you.

Our collective thoughts are with the surname of deceased family. Name of deceased will remain in the hearts and thoughts of the staff, students and the name of school community.

Sincerely,

Principal