

SUICIDE PREVENTION PROCEDURE FOR THE NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS

Any person licensed as administrative or instructional personnel by the Board of Education and employed by a local school board who, in the scope of his employment, has reason to believe, as a result of direct communication from a student, that such student is at imminent risk of suicide, shall, as soon as practicable, contact at least one of such student's parents to ask whether such parent is aware of the student's mental state and whether the parent wishes to obtain or has already obtained counseling for such student.

ASSURING STUDENT SAFETY AND PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTACT

The parent/guardian should be contacted and interviewed the day the student interview is conducted. Parent/guardian contact should be made regardless of the outcome of the suicide risk assessment. However, the parent/guardian should not be notified if the student has indicated that the reason for being at risk of suicide relates to parental abuse or neglect. Instead, the local department of social services should be notified (Code of Virginia § 22.1-272.1).

The parent/guardian should be interviewed to gather background information, observations, family history, and other pertinent information. Also, the interview should gauge the parent/guardian's ability and intent to follow recommendations necessary to keep the student safe.

Teams should always err on the side of caution when considering end-of-day transportation. If a student is at-risk for suicide, they should not be sent home until contact is made with a parent or guardian that can ensure they are supervised. It should also be considered if sending the student home via their normal transportation mode is a safe option or whether a parent/guardian needs to pick them up.

Parent/guardian notification should be documented. A sample parent notification form is provided on VDOE's Suicide Prevention webpage. A parent/guardian notification form should be used with every student that has been assessed to be at risk for suicide and should include:

- Student's name, date of birth, and grade;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) name and phone number(s);
- Date of the student interview;
- Name(s) of the person(s) who conducted the student interview;
- Mental health referral information, if made;
- The steps that the parent/guardian is taking to keep the student safe;
- Emergency contacts outside of school, in case of a crisis;
- School and community resources; and
- Parent's/guardian's signature.

When families are notified of suicide risk, this is an opportunity to educate them about suicide risk factors, community resources, lethal means safety, and other relevant safety information that should be considered. A copy of the parent/guardian notification form should be given to the parent and the original should be maintained in a confidential location outside of the student's cumulative record.

Adopted: April 15, 2021

Reference: VDOE Suicide Prevention Guidebook

<https://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/prevention/suicide/suicide-prevention-guidebook.pdf>

Cross Refs:

Pol 4008
Pol 2023

Suicide Prevention
Threat Assessment Teams