

# SUICIDE PREVENTION

## SCHOOL SPECIFIC POLICY

Whilst this policy is aimed at providing support generally for “Students at Risk”, implicit in it, is the inclusion of approaches to deal with issues relating to Youth Suicide Prevention.

Guidelines for this policy are consistent with curriculum and welfare issues expressed in the ‘*Framework for Student Support Services in Government Schools – Teacher Resource*’.

### **Basic Belief:**

- To promote a healthy, supportive and secure environment for students, with targeted support for students at risk.

### **Principles:**

- Student welfare is a shared responsibility between school, home and the community.
- School should be a positive environment in which all teachers assume responsibility for student welfare and each student is provided with successful experiences.
- All students shall have access to welfare and support services.
- Clear, well known communication processes and protocols are critical to the effectiveness of student welfare support.

### **Guidelines:**

1. Parents, staff and relevant community members will be consulted in the development and regular review of this policy.
2. The Student Welfare coordinator will be responsible for the coordination and implementation of this policy.
3. The school shall implement welfare support structures and programs which prioritises and addresses the identified needs of students.

The stages at which support may be provided are: -

[a] *Primary Prevention*: programs which develop resilience, through enhanced life skills and protective factors.

[b] *Early Intervention*: strategies and processes which, assess and manage individuals and groups identified as ‘at risk’.

[c] *Intervention*: provision of crisis support for individuals exhibiting ‘at risk’ behaviours.

[d] *Post vention*: implement a critical incident response plan including counselling.

Protocols should designate stages where it is necessary to respect the confidential nature of dealing with student welfare issues. It is noted, however, that students who disclose to staff a desire to harm themselves or others, must be reported by staff to the principal.

Welfare programs and student services provision will be supported by funding and, where possible, time release for teachers to enable: -

- Employment of services to conduct support programs which focus on addressing student welfare issues
- Individual and group student counselling
- Skill development for students, teachers and parents.

References: Vic Govt Schools Reference Guide - [http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/referenceguide/enviro/4\\_6.htm](http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/referenceguide/enviro/4_6.htm)

Circular 341/2002 - Responding to Suicidal Intent or Self Harm

[www.curriculum.edu.au/mindmatters](http://www.curriculum.edu.au/mindmatters) Safe from Harm – resource manual

‘*Framework for Student Support Services in Government Schools – Teacher Resource*’

Funds provided through the DEECD 'Student Services' allocation shall be expended according to DEECD requirements.

4. Where a decision needs to be made regarding the appropriate nature of curriculum content for the teaching and learning of issues which may relate to "student at risk behaviours" it shall be referred to the Student Welfare coordinator.

The coordinator will forward their recommendation to the principal for a final decision.

(Note: There is considerable evidence to recommend that Youth Suicide is not taught in schools as a means of addressing 'at risk' behaviour, and it is there DEECD policy that we do not teach 'suicide' as a curriculum topic).

5. For school based case management of known students, a structure shall provide for continuity of care through a process of coordination with other agencies, transfer to other schools and transition.

### **Evaluation:**

The Student Welfare coordinator will consult School Council, parents, staff and relevant community members in the development and regular review of this policy

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

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