

# Universal Supports Following a Crisis: Guidance for Student Support

## PURPOSE

This tool provides student support staff with considerations and action steps to take after a crisis. It provides some ideas of how to collaborate with leadership and teaching staff to support being responsive to the needs of individuals, groups of students, or the school community after a crisis.

## DIRECTIONS:

Use this tool to develop a plan for student support members to provide schoolwide services to students, families and staff. This tool should be used to leverage guidance on the activities (virtual or in-person) necessary to ensure the development of a crisis plan and the design of a collaborative process that addresses the emotional and physical safety needs of the school community.

## Shared Leadership and Ownership

*Collective commitment and responsibility for a whole child vision, grounded in equity*



- Actively co-lead or participate in the school's crisis team and development of crisis plan
- Actively contribute and participate in the development of the school's crisis plan and training:
  - Communication channels and roles/responsibilities of team members
  - Master scheduling accommodations, create plan for teaching routines and expectations
  - Planning for creation and maintenance of supportive environments, addressing students' emotional needs, doubling down on relationships, intentional [skill and mindset development](#)
  - Encourage crisis team to meet regularly for updates and/or necessary shifts about students, staff, and families, etc.
  - Planning around students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and those who have not been heard from
- Leverage mental health providers where necessary to provide input into the crisis plan
- Remain knowledgeable about local and district mandates and resources
- Directly communicate school crisis plan to at-risk families
- Continue check-ins with teachers, keep detailed information about the needs of families, and offer necessary resources
- Share any updates with families about services provided
- Ensure all communications are available in the languages and styles necessary to reach all families (e.g., hard copy, electronic, phone recordings)
- Establish regular communication with leadership during and outside of meetings
- Communicate plan to outside agencies partnered with the school
- Create a process for children to get additional support during and outside of school
- Determine a process or structure for keeping data on students in need of additional support in school and collaborate with their teachers/caregivers
- Collaborate with teachers in supporting or communicating with students in class about the resources readily available to them, along with signs and symptoms of trauma and other mental health topics
- Support staff in addressing their own needs and provide resources
- Leverage comprehensive resources to meet the needs of the school (particularly those that have expertise/experience in responding to trauma)

## Developmental Relationships

*Relationships defined by trust, reciprocity, challenging growth, and balance of power*



- Ensure ongoing communication with families
- Increase check-ins with students in need of more support
- Provide staff with strategies for relationship development
- Connect with staff in informal ways (e.g., chat, email, telephone, scheduled brief check-ins)
- Increase presence and availability by participating in team builders, extended office hours, etc.
- Provide ideas for team builders
- Provide strategies for repairing relationships between teachers and students
- Increase collaboration with teachers and other school staff members
- Increase collaboration with families and community agencies
- Proactively reach out to families who have not been heard from
- Support students who may be new to the school

## Supportive Environments

*Physically, emotionally and identity safe, inclusive, and co-regulating spaces*



- Participate in schoolwide venues that address the current climate and its impact on school operations, learning, and mental health
- Model use of calm tone and approach toward staff, students, and families
- Provide extended office hours where possible
- Support staff and provide feedback around classroom and schoolwide environments
- Reinforce therapeutic culture
- Advocate for families with language barriers
- Leverage mental health support to be available within the building
- Ensure collaboration and cohesiveness with other student support staff members
- Encourage students and families to provide input into school decisions based upon unaddressed needs; provide guidance on the pathway to provide their input

## Skill and Mindset Building

### *Integrated development of the Building Blocks for Learning*



- Support teachers in teaching students about the signs and symptoms of mental health and trauma, along with how to get support when necessary
- Conduct groups and individual sessions with students to address mental health needs
- Conduct teacher and caregiver workshops proactively or based upon observable gaps
- Be knowledgeable about resources and how to access them
- Encourage staff to prioritize their own self-care plans
- Teach students coping strategies and have them practice trying them out
- Model coping strategies
- Share strategies taught to students with their families