

BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT PROCEDURE

PROCEDURE: SUICIDE RESPONSE PROCEDURE

Summary

This procedure was developed by BSD school counselors in collaboration with the Howard Center. The procedure provides a systematic approach for responding to suicide warning signs, conducting suicide screenings, postvention response plans for death by suicide, and what to do if there is a BSD suicide attempt on school grounds.

Student Screening for Suicide Risk

When a student discloses suicidal ideation to a BSD staff member or is observed to have warning signs, the staff member is responsible for connecting the student with a School Counselor for an initial screening, or the building administrator will connect the student with another designated staff member trained in mental health for an initial screening. ([See attached document for Howard Center Suicide Prevention Warning Signs Infographic.](#)) The steps taken during the student screening process are outlined below:

- 1) Nurses, School-Based Clinicians, School Counselors, or designated staff who have a stronger relationship with the student complete the Columbia C-SSRS Suicide Screening.
 - a) [BSD Student Screening for Suicide Risk Response Plan Final](#)
 - b) [BSD Brief Checklist for Suicide Screening - Ages 6-11](#)
 - c) [BSD Brief Checklist for Suicide Screening - Age 12+](#)
- 2) Consult with a colleague to help inform next steps.
- 3) Reference the risk level to determine if a crisis assessment is recommended.
- 4) Inform the legal guardian/caregiver of the details of the concerns about suicide, and stay with the student until connection to the guardian is complete. If the risk is low and we deem them safe to be at school, we do not need to send them home.
 - a) Inquire about the student's current qualified mental health supports/services and how accessible/available they are to see the student. Acquire consent to coordinate with these providers if possible.
 - b) Acquire legal guardian consent to initiate referral to First Call for Chittenden County.
 - i) If the guardian refuses FCCC contact, strongly recommend same-day follow-up with their PCP or mental health provider.
 - ii) Based on caregiver response, determine if a DCF report is warranted.
- 5) For moderate and high-risk students, create a collaborative safety plan using the Stanley and Brown Safety Plan.
 - a) Share the safety plan with the student, family, and school team members connected to the student. Ask the student/family what they are comfortable with being shared.
- 6) Schedule follow-up meetings or phone calls with the student/family.
- 7) Document and file this document along with the student's safety plan.

Postvention Response Plan

If a suicide death occurs within BSD, we will follow our [Postvention Response Plan Death by Suicide/Unexpected Death](#). *This protocol can also be used in circumstances in which a family refers to a death as unexpected or traumatic, and consent to use the term suicide has not been granted.* Confidentiality and privacy do not end at death. Remember to utilize consultation and be intentional when making decisions about what information to share and with whom. The protocol includes guidance around notification of the administration, gathering information from the family, and the initiation of the School Crisis Response Team, which will identify immediate priorities and at-risk individuals, create a communications response plan, and outline next steps.

Suicide Attempt on School Grounds

The [BSD Suicide Attempt on School Grounds Crisis Response Plan](#) is recommended for use by school district staff if a **suicide attempt** occurs on BSD grounds. It is recommended that this protocol be followed when a student has engaged in a significant attempt to end their own life and/or when acute medical attention is required. Examples include a suicide attempt by hanging, a reported overdose/consumption of pills, or a reported suicide attempt via cutting, requiring

significant medical care. Please note that not all reported attempts require use of this protocol; instead, refer to the District's protocol "[Screening a Student at Risk for Suicide](#)."

Clerical Information

<i>BSD Version:</i>	<i>BSD Suicide Procedure</i>
<i>Date Adopted:</i>	<i>October 14, 2025</i>
<i>Legal Reference(s):</i>	<i>33 VSA Chapter 49, Subchapter 2, Reporting Abuse of Children.</i>
<i>Policy Reference:</i>	<i>N/A</i>