

Procedures for Implementation of CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAMS

Northwest Missouri School Counselors' Association

(Please note: It is recommended that each counselor locate the current name and phone numbers of the district C.I.R. Chair and/or the Team Members for their county area at the beginning of each school year.)

Procedures for Local School Counselors:

1. Contact either the Northwest District CIR Chair or the Team Members for your county area to apprise them of your situation. If you contact the NWD Chair, s/he will in turn contact the appropriate Team Leaders.
2. Meet with your administrators and determine the level of response you feel is appropriate to your situation and your district. *(If the incident is overwhelming, you may want to ask your Team Leaders or the District Chairperson to be in attendance at this session. An objective viewpoint might be needed.)*
3. Let the Team Leaders know what needs and support the local team can provide.

Procedures for NW Team Leaders:

1. Notify the NW District CIR Chairperson of the situation.
2. Determine if the school district has a Crisis Plan in place.
3. Using the local district's Crisis Plan, work with the local school counselor to determine what support the local team will provide.
4. Contact the Team Members and organize a schedule of consulting counselors.
5. Make sure that a copy of the Missouri School Counselor Association's *Crisis Manual* is also available for reference.

Areas Where Team Leaders Can Assist:

In addition to the procedures listed above, the NWD CIR Chairperson, and the Team Leaders can provide assistance in many areas, if needed. In smaller districts with only one counselor, more outside help will be necessary, especially in cases where the local counselor is her- or himself significantly or personally impacted by the situation. Possible assistance can include, but is not limited to:

- arranging for a central team meeting area at the affected school;
- assign team members to man support centers, to patrol halls and bathrooms, and to assist in other procedural tasks;
- distribute I.D. or visitor badges to all local team members;
- arranging for group rooms and procedures for identifying students and assigning them to groups;
- arranging for tissues, water, and chairs for the meeting rooms;
- arranging for food for the visiting team;
- making copies of notices and other information that needs to be distributed to teachers and/or parents or used by the team;
- providing resources for grief and coping;
- taking over for the counselor who may need a break or time to handle her or his own grief & stress;
- taking over for teachers who need a break or time to handle their own grief and stress;
- man phone lines or other informational networks;
- lead daily debriefings for all staff;
- organize or assist in planning for any needed parent meetings;
- anticipate other building, family, or community needs;
- monitor needs of local counselor as long as necessary.