

CRITICAL INCIDENT PLAN

RATIONALE:

Yarraville Special Developmental School may become directly or indirectly involved in a tragic or traumatic event. This event may occur in the school environment or outside. It may involve staff, students or those close to them.

AIMS:

To mobilise all support services in a timely manner to support all members of the community affected by trauma and to provide clear, accurate information at all times.

The school is responsible for:

- Planning for and managing emergencies
- Responding swiftly to emergency incidents including medical emergencies
- Reporting emergencies and incidents
- Liaising with a range of support agencies including the Security Services Unit
- Testing emergency procedures

IMPLEMENTATION:

Incidents vary in complexity. These guidelines provide a framework for action and would not necessarily be followed in all cases. However, the following 4 principles must be followed:

- Provide clear, accurate information
- Describe the actions to be followed
- Provide help for all affected
- Maintain a normal school program as close as possible

Once the safety and security of students, staff, parents and visitors to the school have been ensured, the school will report the incident to Security Services Unit. The information to be conveyed includes:

- **Who:** the name of the person reporting the emergency/critical incident
- **What:** the nature of the emergency/critical incident
- **When:** the time when the school became aware of the emergency/critical incident
- **Where:** the location of the emergency/critical incident and contact phone numbers if it has occurred away from school

It is essential that the emergency services are notified immediately. The appropriate services are:

- Ambulance for injury and medical assistance
- Fire brigade for fires (even when fires have been put out)
- Police for crime, injury which may not be accidental or assault
- SES for floods and wind storms.

Appoint a skilled Critical Incident Recovery Team to assist in the management of the incident. The team may include staff members, psychologists, counsellors, external DET personnel, support agencies. The size and composition of the team will be related to the nature of the incident. Distribute names of the Critical Incident Recovery Team members and inform others of the role of the team. The composition of the Critical Incident Recovery Team will be:

- Principal
- Assistant Principal
- Member of Teaching staff
- Member of the Education Support staff (First Aid)
- Other support staff as appropriate
- As necessary - Psychologists, counsellors and DET personnel.

As soon as possible, inform staff, especially those most directly involved. Inform close friends and family individually. Allow questions and discussion as they arise. Dispel rumours.

As soon as possible, provide information to the community as to what has happened, what is being done.

Appoint a skilled Critical Incident Recovery Team member to respond to media enquiries. A written press release may be useful. If necessary protect others from contact with the media. Advice can be obtained from DET Media Unit.

Establish an open line of contact with the family or families directly involved.

Provide out of school hours contact if necessary e.g. circulating the Principal's telephone number. In more complex situations it may mean maintaining telephone contact at the school.

Try to identify those most likely to need help, e.g. classmates, teacher, friends. Some students not directly affected may become distressed.

Ensure that counselling help is available. Contact the Regional Office and/or DET if necessary.

Continue to keep staff, students and parents informed, especially about what has happened and what the school is doing about it.

As soon as possible call students together and provide information about what has happened and what the school is doing about it. A follow up letter home may be important.

Provide counselling services to all. Ensure that there are suitable places in which this can take place.

Modify the timetable and other arrangements so that people are free to make use of available help. Staff are able to access the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) by contacting 1300 361 008 for free counselling 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The class teacher may be the person to whom students first turn for help.

Continue normal routines at school but acknowledge the effect of tragedy on the school community. Be flexible with those in need of help. Be aware that many people may be deeply affected, e.g. an event may cause a person to recall some traumatic event involving them in the past.

Be sensitive to staff and student's needs over a period of time.

School to reflect upon management of critical incident after it has occurred.

Medical Emergencies:

Staff to commence First Aid and request assistance if required via phone, messenger sent to office or another room to ask for First Aid to be paged.

ACTIONS:

- Clear area if required
- Is student/staff has documented condition follow appropriate plan:
 1. Anaphylactic: follow plan, administer Epipen, contact office to call ambulance, parents and page First Aid
 2. Asthma: follow plan, contact office to page First Aid
 3. Head Injury: notify First Aid, then either staff or First Aid to contact parents and request student to be collected.
 4. Other Emergencies: if assistance is required organise First Aid to be contacted.
- CASES 21 accident/incident form to be completed when a student is injured. Available in the staff room on the OHS board.