

Suicide Prevention Plan and Policy

The self-disclosure of suicidal thoughts is a significant and traumatic event in the student's life. Our institution has the opportunity, as a Catholic and a Marist school, to reach out in compassion and solidarity to those who are suffering from depression and suicidal ideation. Marist's process will enable students to recognize destructive thoughts and assist them to pursue professional help that they will need. The process of handling a student who discloses suicidal thoughts includes stabilization, assessment of risk, use of appropriate risk procedure, and follow-up (may also include spiritual guidance).

If a student verbalizes the intention or thought that he/she is considering suicide, the following steps must be taken:

Step 1- Recognition of Student in Crisis:

1. Under no circumstance, from the moment the threat is recognized, is a student in crisis to be left alone.
 - a. If during an **on-campus class or activity**, a supervising employee (e.g. teacher, coach, advisor) will contact the counseling office to accompany the student to the office.
 - b. If during an **off-campus activity**, the employee needs to contact parents immediately, or in the case of imminent threat, the employee must contact parents first, then the police. Depending on the severity of the situation, either parent(s) or police must assume responsibility as soon as possible.
 - c. If recognition of the threat is after hours through a paper or other communication, the employee needs to contact parents immediately, or in the case of imminent threat, the employee must contact parents first, then the police.
2. Upon notification of essential parties as listed above:
 - a. **On-campus employee** will have immediate verbal communication with one of the following administrators – President, Principal, Dean of Faculty, Academic Dean, Director of P/A Counseling, or Dean of Students.
 - b. **Off campus during school hours**, call the front office to notify administrators.
 - c. **Off campus after hours**, call Fr. Rowland and/or Kevin Mullally (#s listed on laminated emergency contact card).
3. If a student is in crisis, determine if the student has any dangerous items (weapon, substance, or other injurious material) in close proximity. If so, ascertain the location. If in a locker or other location on the premises, it is important to note that for future removal by the appropriate authorities. If a class is present, dismiss the other students to the Dean of Students. If in a large space or outside, send other students into the nearest building to notify school personnel.

□ **Step 2- Counseling Intervention** (administered by student's counselor, with one other counselor available for consultation):

1. Maintain composure while talking calmly to the student to assess the risk of the student self-inflicting harm. **Fill out the suicide risk screening tool.** Listen attentively to what the student is saying without providing advice and keep questions nonjudgmental.
2. If the student discloses that his/her distress is the result of parental abuse, neglect, or exploitation, notify the Director of P/A Counseling, then the President (or Principal), then the Division of Family and Children Services immediately (#1-855-GACHILD--line staffed 24hours/day). The student may not be left alone while the call is made.
3. Assigned counselor will consult with the Director of P/A Counseling while the student waits in a safe place (ie: assigned counselor's office). **Assignment to the appropriate risk category, below, is determined by the assigned school counselor,** after reviewing the suicide risk assessment and through discussion with the Director of P/A Counseling.

□ **Step 3- Parental Notification:**

- 1.) Parent(s) will be called and notified of the situation. The following categorization must be determined after administering the suicide risk screening tool and consulting with the Director of P/A Counseling:

a.) **Crisis:**

- i.) In the case of crisis, parents must come to Marist immediately, sign an agreement (**Addendum A-1**) confirming plans to take the student immediately to an **inpatient unit or emergency room**. If parents refuse or are unavailable, emergency services (ie: ambulance/police) must be contacted. **Student will not be allowed to return to Marist without documentation from a medical professional indicating release to return to school.** Please provide the parents with our "Safe Return Form."
- ii.) The student will be prohibited from returning to school until an assessment confirmation document is presented to school.
- iii.) Continue supervision of the student and when possible, have the student be part of the conversation.
- iv.) Provide parents with our therapist referral list and an ROI to complete.
- v.) For students in this risk category, the assigned counselor will initiate a **mandatory Counseling Accommodation Plan (CAP)** for the student.

b.) Significant At-Risk:

- i.) If a student is significantly at-risk, but not in crisis, parents will be contacted immediately, and must come to Marist and sign an agreement (**Addendum A-1**) to have the student evaluated before returning to school.
- ii.) Provide parents with our therapist referral list and an ROI to complete.
- iii.) The student will be prohibited from returning to school until an assessment confirmation document is presented to school.
- iv.) For students in this risk category, the assigned counselor will initiate a **mandatory Counseling Accommodation Plan (CAP)** for the student.

c.) At-Risk:

- i.) If a student is at-risk, but there are no immediate safety concerns (ie: a student who has had passive suicidal ideation 4 months ago), please contact parents immediately (**Addendum A-2**). The parents do NOT need to come to campus, and the student will be permitted to attend classes. However, the school counselor needs the assessment confirmation document by a specified date in order to continue at school.
- ii.) Provide parents with our therapist referral list and an ROI to complete.

Note: Upon the parents' arrival or phone conversation, provide complete disclosure of events to the parents. Parents are entitled to all details and materials. Materials or writings must be in original form, regardless of content. This would include the suicide risk screening tool.

Step 4- Communications:

1. The counselor will send a confidential email (**Email Template A**) to admin, on the day of the student's disclosure. Email will be sent to admin regardless of risk category.
2. **For Addendum A-1** cases, the counselor will send a follow-up email to the student's parents (**Email Template B**), on the day of the student's disclosure.
3. Document series of events and outcome of meeting in log entries. Keep all three documents (ROI, Addendum A-1/A-2 and the Assessment Confirmation) on file in the counseling Private shared space.
4. After receiving the assessment confirmation document, the counselor will send another confidential email to admin (**Email Template C**).

□ Step 5- Follow up:

1. Discuss with parents the arrangements for long-term clinical and/or support services.
2. A Counseling Accommodation Plan (CAP) is mandatory for any students:
 - a. In the “Crisis” or “Significant At-Risk” categories
 - b. Returning to Marist from inpatient mental health treatment
 - c. For a student who has gone through this protocol more than one time.
3. When the student has returned to campus, make an appointment with him/her to re-establish rapport and communicate interest in their welfare and support of the services being provided.

In order to preserve the student’s well-being, we will only disclose this information to the necessary school personnel. Maintenance of the student’s and family’s confidentiality will remain a priority throughout the process.

For more Information contact American Foundation for Suicide Prevention <https://www.afsp.org/>

Additional information:

- *If a Marist employee is informed that a student who is not enrolled at Marist may be suicidal:*
 - *During the school day the employee should send the reporting student to the counseling office.*
 - *After school hours the employee should:*
 - *Call child’s parents if known*
 - *If parents contact information is not known, contact the police*