

Marist School Protocol for Students At-Risk for Self-Injury

In the school setting, there are times when concerns arise about an individual student's at-risk behaviors related to self-injury (cutting, burning, and other forms). These concerns may come from peers, teachers, coaches, or other adults. When such concerns are raised, the student's Personal & Academic Counselor should be notified. The guidelines listed below outline how such information should be handled.

□ Step 1- Counseling Intervention: Identification and Assessment of Self-Injury

- Assess whether the student is harming or has harmed his/her body. Ask to examine any easily seen injuries he/she may have (arms, wrists, ankles). If wounds are significant and warrant immediate medical attention, the School Nurse will be contacted.
- Identify the item(s) used to inflict injury. Confiscate any such item(s) in the student's possession.
- Unless the student is in obvious emotional crisis, kind and calm attention to assuring that all physical wounds are treated should precede additional conversation with the student about the non-physical aspects of self-injury. The wound severity, implements used, location of the injury and observed number of scars from old wounds can all be noted and discussed when triaging next steps.
- Asking straightforward medically-focused questions at this stage may also be appropriate if the student is calm and willing to share.
- Identify if it was a coping mechanism or a suicide attempt. **If the student was attempting suicide, please follow the suicide protocol.** *While it is uncommon for actively self-injurious students to be suicidal, the suicide assessment may be warranted- particularly if there is any reason to believe that the student might actively be suicidal. If this is the case then a suicide assessment should occur immediately and suicide protocols should follow.*
- If the student discloses that his/her distress is the result of parental abuse, neglect, or exploitation, notify the Director of Counseling, then the President (or Principal), and then contact the Division of Family and Children Services immediately (1-855-GACHILD). The student may not be left alone while the call is made.
- Self-Injury Information:
 - Administer the **SOARS** self-injury screening tool. In consultation with the Director of P/A Counseling, assign student to the following risk category:
 - Category: "**High At-Risk**" students:
 - Those who report frequent or long-standing self-injury practices, who use high lethality methods, and/or who are experiencing chronic internal and external stress with few positive supports or coping skills.
 - Category: "**Low At-Risk**" students:
 - Those with little history of self-injury
 - Manageable amount of external stress, some positive coping skills, and some external support.
 - In these cases it is important to work with the student to come up with strategies for handling stress and for checking in with their counselor during times where they begin to feel like they may be at risk for self-injury or other unhealthy behaviors.
 - Monitor and document student behavior through observation, teacher reports, and periodic check-ins for a certain amount of time.

□ Step 2- Parental Notification of Non-Suicidal Self-Injury

- Category: “**High At-Risk**”
 - The counselor will need to contact the parents immediately and obtain a **signed Addendum B-1**.
 - The Counselor will continue supervision of student while waiting for parents to arrive, and when possible, have student be part of the conversation.
 - Upon the parents’ arrival, provide complete disclosure of series of events to the parents. Parents are entitled to all details and materials. Materials or writings must be in original form, regardless of content. Counselor will provide parents with **three documents**:
 1. Blank ROI
 2. Self-injury questionnaire that has been filled out
 3. Addendum B-1 (signed and returned immediately to counselor)
 - The student will not be permitted to attend school until an assessment confirmation document and release of information form has been received.
 - Parent refusal to sign agreement and/or comply with agreement will warrant Counselor consultation with Director of P/A Counseling and Principal to decide next steps, which may include contacting DFCS.
- Category: “**Low At-Risk**”
 - The student will be permitted to attend school, but the counselor needs to receive an assessment confirmation document and release of information form by a **specified date** (specified date determined in concert with assigned counselor and Director of P/A counseling).
 - The student should be engaged as an **active participant** in regards to parental notification. Give the student the choice to either:
 - 1.) Student informs the parent themselves of self-injurious behavior. Counselor follows up with parents to verify the student’s disclosure, and obtains a **signed Addendum B-2**.
OR
 - 2.) Counselor informs parent of self-injurious behavior first, and obtains a **signed Addendum B-2**.
 - Counselor will provide parents with **three documents**:
 4. Blank ROI
 5. Self-injury screening tool that has been filled out
 6. Addendum B-2 (signed and returned within 48 hours to counselor)

□ Step 3: Follow-Up

- Assigned counselor will **document** the series of events and outcome of meeting in Log Entries.
- Save the assessment confirmation document and the ROI in the counseling P: drive.
- Follow-up with the appropriate members of the Marist faculty (Administration, Dean of students, Director of P/A Counseling). See **email templates**.
- Re-establish rapport with the student to 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.***