

## **How Sudbury Catholic District School Board Schools Respond When a Student Talks About Suicide**

### **Our Commitment**

The safety and well-being of students is our top priority. When a student expresses thoughts of suicide, school staff respond immediately, with compassion and care.

### **What Staff Do First**

- Listen and stay with the student. No student is ever left alone if they say they might be unsafe.
- Take it seriously. All disclosures of suicide risk are responded to with care.
- Act quickly. Staff follow the school board's suicide response protocol, aligned with Ontario's Ministry of Education direction.

### **Who Gets Involved**

- School staff (teachers, child & youth workers, educational assistants) provide immediate support.
- Principals/designates are notified right away.
- Mental health professionals (school social workers) become involved when available.
- Parents/guardians are contacted as soon as possible.

If a mental health professional is not at the school that day, staff consult with other board clinicians, community crisis teams, or emergency services.

### **Levels of Response**

- If risk is low → The student is connected with a safe adult at school and mental health staff follow up.
- If risk is moderate → A safety plan is developed with the student, family, and school staff.
- If risk is high or urgent → Crisis services or 911 are contacted to ensure the student's immediate safety.

### **Parent and Caregiver Role**

Parents and caregivers are vital partners. If your child expresses suicidal thoughts at school, you can expect:

- A call from the school as soon as possible.
- Clear information about what your child has shared.
- An invitation to collaborate on a plan for safety and ongoing support.
- Guidance about community resources that can help.

## **If Parents Cannot Be Reached**

If we cannot reach parents/guardians and believe the child is at risk:

- We will connect with alternate emergency contacts on file.
- If necessary, crisis services or emergency services will be involved.
- Students are never released from school care until a safe transfer is arranged.

## **Aftercare and Follow-Up**

- Schools work with families to plan a safe, supportive return for the student.
- A “safe adult” at school is identified for regular check-ins.
- Ongoing supports are offered through school and community resources.

## **Key Message for Families**

- Talking about suicide is always taken seriously.
- Your child will be supported, never left alone, and connected to the right help.
- You will be contacted and included in the plan as soon as possible.
- Our goal is safety, compassion, and collaboration.

**If you or your child are ever in immediate danger, call 911.**

**If you need help right away but there is no immediate danger,  
call the HSN Crisis Program at 705-675-4760**