

Sample Forms for Schools 7a continued

Notification Letter for Parents Following a Suicide

When cause of death has been confirmed as suicide (3, 4)

Date: _____

Dear parents of _____ students,

The death of a child is a sad and tragic event, and the sudden death of our student, _____ (name), has touched both students and faculty here at _____ High School.

Based on the information provided to us by the medical examiner and the family, _____ (name of student) died by suicide on _____ (day), _____ (month) _____ (date).

The funeral arrangements are as follows: _____ . Mr. and Mrs. _____ (name) request that students _____ attend/do not attend. In addition, donations may be sent in care of _____ .

Since the news of the death, the school has implemented a crisis response plan to help the students and staff respond to this unfortunate death. In conjunction with colleagues from _____ (community agencies), the school continues to provide/ has provided professionally staffed support stations available to all students. In addition, students continue to meet with staff from our counseling and social work departments.

In the days and weeks ahead, students may have questions and concerns relating to the death and are going to require your support at home and our continued support here at school as they work through their feelings and grief. Although we cannot predict how any child may react, we can be sensitive and aware, both at home and at school, of the common reactions experienced by grieving adolescents.

If you feel your child is having difficulty and may benefit from additional support, please feel free to contact _____, the Crisis Team Leader, your child's guidance counselor, or myself so the school can be aware of the needs of your child. We are also supported by local mental health professionals and can provide you with referrals as needed. In addition, if you are interested in attending a parent/caretaker meeting, please contact _____ at _____ (phone) for further information and registration.

As the school community continues to cope with the loss of _____ (name), we invite your participation in the healing process. Please feel free to contact the school at any time with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

School Principal

Sample Forms for Schools 7a continued

Notification Letter for Parents Following a Suicide

When cause of death has NOT been confirmed as suicide (3)

Date: _____

Dear parents of _____ students,

I am writing with great sadness to inform you that one of our students, _____, has died. Our thoughts and sympathies are with [his/her] family and friends.

All of the students were given the news of the death by their teacher in [advisory/homeroom] this morning. I have included a copy of the announcement that was read to them.

The cause of death has not yet been determined by the authorities. We are aware that there has been some talk about the possibility that this was a suicide death. Rumors may begin to circulate, and we have asked the students not to spread rumors since they may turn out to be inaccurate and can be deeply hurtful and unfair to _____ as well as [his/her] family and friends. We'll do our best to give you accurate information as it becomes known to us.

Members of our Crisis Response Team are available to meet with students individually and in groups today as well as over the coming days and weeks. Please contact the school office if you feel your child is in need of additional assistance; we have a list of school and community mental health resources.

Information about the funeral service will be made available as soon as we have it. If your child wishes to attend, we strongly encourage you to accompany him or her to the service. If the funeral is scheduled during school hours, students who wish to attend will need parental permission to be released from school.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or one of the school counselors with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

School Principal