

After a Suicide: Postvention Steps Quick Guide

If you or your community is impacted by suicide death or other tragedy, use this guide for steps on how to respond.

PRIORITY ACTION

These priority action steps are critically important parts of postvention

01

IDENTIFY POINT PERSON/LEAD CONTACT

All information and communications should be channeled through the point person/lead contact.

02

GATHER INFORMATION

Before moving forward with any steps gather and confirm as much information as possible about the situation.

PRIORITY ACTION

03

RESPECT THE PRIVACY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Recognize the individual's needs for privacy in the workplace, unless authorized to do so, do not share information with other people. If asked for details, respond as you would with any other medical emergency—acknowledge concern without sharing details.

04

MAKE FOLLOW-UP CONTACT

Reach out as soon as possible, even if briefly, to family members and impacted staff.

05

IMMEDIATE PROFESSIONAL FOLLOW-UP

Have one person make all official statements and actively discourage rumors, gossip, and speculation.

06

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Recognize that you need support too, and ask for help if you are struggling.

PRIORITY ACTION

07

ASSESS NEED FOR IMMEDIATE SUPPORTS

Give out printed resources, talk with those affected and reach out to those who may need extra attention. Call your designated mental health agency or 2-1-1 to identify resources and support.

PRIORITY ACTION

08

PROVIDE ONGOING SUPPORT & CARE

Keep hard copies of resources in central locations and promote the availability of resources. Routinely check in with impacted staff.

09

WORK TO REDUCE STIGMA

Regularly find ways to promote open communication about mental health and lead by example by speaking up about the importance of mental health.

10

PREPARE FULLY CONFIRMED WRITTEN STATEMENT

You may want to issue a clear and specific written statement or have information on your website or social media; consult with the family about appropriate details to share, if applicable.

11

MAKE NOTIFICATIONS

Public announcements and notifications should only be made by the point person/lead contact or designated public contact for your organization.

12

OFFER EDUCATION

Offer suicide prevention training workshops after the community has had some time to recover.

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