

## **School Reentry for a Student Who Has Attempted Suicide or Made Serious Suicidal Threats**

Efforts to respond to suicide attempts and other traumas should be focused on making the student's return to school a comfortable one. Because families exposed to a suicide attempt or serious suicidal threat experience considerable guilt and fear. They are more likely to disclose information if they know the school has a helpful, nonthreatening manner of dealing with suicide.

Because a student who attempted/threatened suicide often is at greater risk for a suicide in the months following the crisis, it is extremely important to closely monitor his or her reentry into school and to maintain close contact with parents and mental health professionals working with that student.

Assuming the student will be absent after a suicide attempt/serious threat and possibly hospitalized in a treatment facility, schools should follow these steps:

- Obtain a written release of information for signed by the parents. This makes it possible for confidential information to be shared between school personnel and treatment providers.
- Ask returning student if he/she has special requests about what is said/done by school.
- Inform the student's teachers regarding the number of probable days of absence.
- Instruct teachers to provide the students with assignments , if appropriate.
- Once the student returns to school, a Building Crisis Team member should maintain regular contact with the student. If the student has a previous, positive relationship with a trusted staff member, provide support to that staff member in maintaining ongoing contact with the student.
- Seek recommendations for aftercare from the student's therapist. If the student has been hospitalized, a Building Crisis Team member should attend the discharge meeting at the hospital.
- The Building Crisis Team member should convey relevant non-confidential information to appropriate school staff regarding the aftercare plan.
- The school should maintain contact with the parents to provide progress reports and other appropriate information, and be kept informed of any changes in the aftercare plan.