

Suicide Prevention Plan

California School of the Arts – San Gabriel Valley

California School of the Arts – San Gabriel Valley (CSArts-SGV) recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among youth and that an even greater amount of youth consider (17 percent of high school students) and attempt suicide (more than 8 percent of high school students). (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015)

The possibility of suicide and suicidal ideation requires vigilant attention from our school staff. As a result, we are ethically and legally responsible for providing an appropriate and timely response in preventing suicidal ideation, attempts, and deaths. We also must work to create a safe and nurturing campus that minimizes suicidal ideation in students.

Recognizing that it is the duty of CSArts-SGV to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its students, this policy aims to safeguard students and staff against suicide attempts, deaths and other trauma associated with suicide, including ensuring adequate supports for students, staff, and families affected by suicide attempts and loss. As it is known that the emotional wellness of students greatly impacts school attendance and educational success, this policy shall be paired with other policies that support the emotional and behavioral wellness of students.

The Suicide Prevention policy is based on research and best practices in suicide prevention, and has been adopted with the understanding that suicide prevention activities decrease suicide risk, increase help-seeking behavior, identify those at risk of suicide, and decrease suicidal behaviors. Empirical evidence refutes a common belief that talking about suicide can increase risk or "place the idea in someone's mind".

In an attempt to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, CSArts-SGV Administration shall develop strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, and the identification of the mental health challenges frequently associated with suicidal thinking and behavior. These strategies shall include professional development for all school personnel in all job categories who regularly interact with students or are in a position to recognize the risk factors and warning signs of suicide, including substitute teachers, volunteers, expanded learning staff (afterschool) and other individuals in regular contact with students such as crossing guards, tutors, and coaches.

Overall Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention

The Assistant Principal of Student Services or Designee shall involve all school-employed mental health professionals (e.g. school counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses), administrators, other school staff members, parents/guardians/caregivers, students, local health agencies and professionals, law enforcement and community organizations in planning, implementing, and evaluating CSArts-SGV's strategies for suicide prevention and intervention. CSArts-SGV must work in conjunction with local government agencies, community-based organizations, and other community supports to identify additional resources.

Los Angeles Alternative Crisis Response 800.854.7771

To ensure the policies regarding suicide prevention are properly adopted, implemented, and updated, the organization shall appoint an individual (or team) to serve as the suicide prevention point of contact for the organization. In addition, each school shall identify at least one staff member to serve as the liaison to the district's suicide prevention point of contact, and coordinate and implement suicide prevention activities on their specific campus. This policy shall be reviewed and revised as indicated, at least annually in conjunction with the previously mentioned community stakeholders.

Resources:

- The K-12 Toolkit for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention has been created to help schools comply with and implement AB 2246, the Pupil Suicide Prevention Policies. The Toolkit includes resources for schools as they promote youth mental wellness, intervene in a mental health crisis, and support members of a school community after the loss of someone to suicide.
- Additional information about this Toolkit for schools can be accessed on the Heard Alliance Web site at <http://www.heardalliance.org/>.

Prevention

A. Messaging about Suicide Prevention

Messaging about suicide has an effect on suicidal thinking and behaviors. Consequently, CSArts-SGV, along with its partners has critically reviewed and will continue to review all materials and resources used in awareness efforts to ensure they align with best practices for safe messaging about suicide.

Resources:

- For information on public messaging on suicide prevention, see the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention Web site at suicidepreventionmessaging.org

B. Suicide Prevention Training and Education

CSArts-SGV, along with its partners, has carefully reviewed available staff training to ensure it promotes the mental health model of suicide prevention and does not encourage the use of the stress model to explain suicide.

Suicide prevention and intervention training shall be provided to administration, counselors, conservatory directors, teachers, and other school employees who interact with students on a daily basis.

Training:

- All suicide prevention trainings shall be offered under the direction of school counselors and administrators who have received advanced training specific to suicide and may benefit from collaboration with one or more county and/or community mental health

agencies. Staff training can be adjusted year-to-year based on previous professional development activities and emerging best practices.

- Annually, identified staff shall participate in training on the core components of suicide prevention through staff development and a required online training through Safe Schools. Core components of the general suicide prevention training may include:
 - Identification of suicide risk factors and warning signs, prevention, intervention, referral, and crisis intervention and response
 - Protective factors that may help to decrease a person's suicide risk ○ How to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide
 - How to respond appropriately to the youth who has suicidal thoughts
 - Such responses shall include constant supervision of any student judged to be at risk for suicide and an immediate referral for a suicide risk assessment.
 - Steps to follow for a teacher if a student contacts a teacher after hours who appears to be at risk for self-harm
 - Emphasis on immediately referring (same day) any student who is identified to be at risk of suicide for assessment while staying under constant monitoring by a staff member
 - Emphasis on reducing stigma associated with mental illness and that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide
 - Reviewing the data annually to look for any patterns or trends of the prevalence or occurrence of suicide ideation, attempts, requests for leave of absence, or hospitalizations
 - Data from the climate surveys (California Healthy Kids Survey, Aeries Data Analysis, Columbia Rating Scales, CSArts-SGV Student/Family Surveys) should also be analyzed to identify school climate deficits and drive program development.
- In addition, ongoing staff professional development for all school counselors may include the following components:
 - The impact of traumatic stress on emotional and mental health
 - Common misconceptions about suicide
 - School and community suicide prevention resources
 - Appropriate messaging about suicide (correct terminology, safe messaging guidelines)
 - The factors associated with suicide (risk factors, warning signs, protective factors)
 - How to identify youth who may be at risk of suicide
 - Appropriate ways to interact with a youth who is demonstrating emotional distress or is suicidal
 - Specifically, how to talk with a student about their thoughts of suicide and how to appropriately respond and provide support based on school guidelines

- School approved procedures for responding to suicide risk (including multi-tiered systems of support and referrals)
 - Such procedures should emphasize that the suicidal student should be constantly supervised until a suicide risk assessment is completed
 - School-approved procedures for responding to the aftermath of suicidal behavior or after a suicide occurs (crisis intervention and response)
 - Resources regarding youth suicide prevention
 - Emphasis on stigma reduction and the fact that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide
 - Emphasis that any student who is identified to be at risk of suicide is to be immediately referred (same day) for assessment while being constantly monitored by a staff member
- The professional development also shall include additional information regarding groups of students judged by the school, and available research, to be at elevated risk for suicide. These groups include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Youth affected by suicide
 - Youth with a history of suicide ideation or attempts
 - Youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance abuse disorders;
 - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth;
 - Youth experiencing homelessness or in out-of-home settings, such as foster care;
 - Youth who have suffered traumatic experiences;

Resources:

- Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) teaches a 5-step action plan to offer initial help to young people showing signs of a mental illness or in a crisis, and connect them with the appropriate professional, peer, social, or self-help care. YMHFA is an 8-hour interactive training for youth-serving adults without a mental health background. See the Mental Health First Aid Web page at <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/cs/take-a-course/course-types/youth/>
- Free YMHFA Training is available on the CDE Mental Health Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/mh/projectcalwell.asp>
- Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) is a gatekeeper training that can be taught online. Just as people trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the Heimlich Maneuver help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help. See the QPR Web site at <http://www.qprinstitute.com/>
- SafeTALK is a half-day alertness training that prepares anyone over the age of fifteen, regardless of prior experience or training, to become a suicide-alert helper. See the LivingWorks Web page at <https://www.livingworks.net>
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) is a two-day interactive workshop in suicide first aid. ASIST teaches participants to recognize when someone may have

thoughts of suicide and work with them to create a plan that will support their immediate safety. See the LivingWorks Web page at <https://www.livingworks.net/programs/assist/>

- Kognito At-Risk is an evidence-based series of three online interactive professional development modules designed for use by individuals, schools, districts, and statewide agencies. It includes tools and templates to ensure that the program is easy to disseminate and measures success at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. See the Kognito Web page at <https://www.kognito.com/products/pk12/>

C. Employee Qualifications and Scope of Services

Employees at CSArts-SGV must act only within the authorization and scope of their credential or license. While school professionals are trained to identify suicide risk factors/warning signs, and the immediate risks of suicidal behavior, treatment of suicidal ideation is typically beyond the scope of services offered in the school setting. In addition, treatment of the mental health challenges often associated with suicidal thinking typically requires mental health resources beyond what schools are able to provide.

D. Specialized Staff Training (Assessment)

Additional professional development in suicide risk assessment and crisis intervention shall be provided to mental health professionals (administration, school counselors, psychologists, and nurses) employed by CSArts-SGV.

Resource:

- Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk (AMSR) is a one-day training workshop for behavioral health professionals based on the latest research and designed to help participants provide safer suicide care. See the Suicide Prevention Resource Center Web page at <https://sprc.org/>

E. Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers Participation and Education

- To the extent possible, parents/guardians/caregivers should be included in all suicide prevention efforts. At a minimum, schools shall share with parents/guardians/caregivers CSArts-SGV's suicide prevention policy and procedures.
- The Suicide Prevention Board Policy shall be displayed on the CSArts-SGV website.
- All parents/guardians/caregivers will have access to suicide prevention resources located on the CSArts-SGV website that address the following:
 - Suicide risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors
 - How to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide
 - How to respond appropriately to the student who has suicidal thoughts
 - Such responses shall include constant supervision of any student judged to be at risk for suicide and referral for an immediate suicide risk assessment

CSArts-SGV has carefully reviewed available student curricula to ensure it promotes the mental health model of suicide prevention and does not encourage the use of the stress model to explain suicide.

Under supervision of school-employed mental health professionals, and following consultation with county and community mental health agencies, students shall:

- Receive developmentally appropriate, student-centered education about the warning signs of mental health challenges and emotional distress;
- Receive developmentally appropriate guidance regarding CSArts-SGV's suicide prevention, intervention, and referral procedures through grade-level counseling presentations.
- The content of the education includes:
 - Coping strategies for dealing with stress and trauma
 - How to recognize behaviors (warning signs) and life issues (risk factors) associated with suicide and mental health issues in oneself and others
 - Help-seeking strategies for oneself and others, including how to engage school-based and community resources and refer peers for help
 - Emphasis on reducing the stigma associated with mental illness and the fact that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide.

Student-focused suicide prevention education can be incorporated into classroom curricula (e.g., health classes, freshman assembly, and mindfulness exercises across all curricular areas).

CSArts-SGV will support the creation and implementation of programs and/or activities on campus that raise awareness about mental wellness and suicide prevention (e.g., Mental Health Awareness Weeks, Guidance Curriculum, and CSArts-SGV Campus clubs).

Resources:

- More Than Sad is school-ready and evidence-based training material, listed on the national Suicide Prevention Resource Center's best practices list, specifically designed for teen-level suicide prevention. See the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Web page at <https://afsp.org/>
- Coping and Support Training (CAST) is an evidence-based life-skills training and social support program to help at-risk youth. See the Reconnecting Youth Inc. Web page at <http://www.reconnectingyouth.com/programs/cast/>
- Linking Education and Awareness for Depression and Suicide (LEADS) for Youth is a school-based suicide prevention curriculum designed for high schools and educators that links depression awareness and secondary suicide prevention. LEADS for Youth is an informative and interactive opportunity for students and teachers to increase knowledge and awareness of depression and suicide. See the SAVE Web page at <https://www.save.org/what-we-do/education/leads-for-youth-program/>

Intervention, Assessment, Referral

A. Staff

Two CSArts-SGV staff members who have received advanced training in suicide intervention shall be designated as the primary and secondary suicide prevention liaisons. Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions, they shall promptly notify

the primary designated suicide prevention liaison. If this primary suicide prevention liaison is unavailable, the staff shall promptly notify the secondary suicide prevention liaison.

- Under normal circumstances, the primary and/or secondary contact persons shall notify the Dean of Student Services, another school administrator, school psychologist or school counselor, if different from the primary and secondary contact persons. The names, titles, and contact information of multi-disciplinary crisis team members shall be distributed to all students, staff, parents/guardians/caregivers and be prominently available on school and district Websites.
- The Assistant Principal of Student Services, another school administrator, school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, or nurse shall then notify, if appropriate and in the best interest of the student, the student's parents/guardians/caregivers as soon as possible and shall refer the student to mental health resources in the school or community. Determination of notification to parents/guardians/caregivers should follow a formal initial assessment to ensure that the student is not endangered by parental notification.

If the student is in imminent danger (has access to a gun, is on a rooftop, or in other unsafe conditions), a call shall be made to 911 and then parent/guardian/caregiver will be contacted.

- Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions, they shall promptly notify the primary or secondary suicide prevention liaisons.
- Students experiencing suicidal ideation shall not be left unsupervised.
- A referral process should be prominently disseminated to all staff members, they know how to respond to a crisis and are knowledgeable about the school and community-based resources.
- The Assistant Principal of Student Services or Designee shall establish crisis intervention procedures to ensure student safety and appropriate communications if a suicide occurs or an attempt is made by a student or adult on campus or at a school-sponsored activity.

B. Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers

Emergency telephone numbers and resources are available on the CSArts-SGV website for all parents/guardians/caregivers, so they know how to respond to a crisis and are knowledgeable about the school and community-based resources.

C. Students

Students shall be encouraged to notify a staff member when they are experiencing emotional distress or suicidal ideation, or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's emotional distress, suicidal ideation, or attempt.

D. Parental Notification and Involvement

CSArts-SGV shall identify a process to help parents ensure continuing care for the student identified to be at risk of suicide. The following steps should be followed to ensure continuity of care:

1. After a referral is made for a student, school staff shall verify with the parent/guardian/caregiver that follow-up treatment has been accessed.
2. Parents/guardians/caregivers will be required to provide documentation of care for the student.
3. If parents/guardians/caregivers refuse or neglect to access treatment for a student who has been identified to be at-risk for suicide or in emotional distress, the suicide point of contact (or other appropriate school staff member) will meet with the
4. parents/guardians/caregivers to identify barriers to treatment (e.g., cultural stigma, financial issues) and work to rectify the situation and build understanding of the importance of care. If follow-up care for the student is still not provided, school staff shall comply with mandated reporting governing laws by contacting Child Protective Services (CPS) to report neglect of the youth. (Los Angeles County CPS 24-hour hotline, 7 days a week 1.800-540.4000)

E. Action Plan for In-School Suicide Attempts

If a suicide attempt is made during the school day on campus, it is important to remember that the health and safety of the student and those around him/her is critical. The following steps should be implemented:

- Remain calm, remember the student is overwhelmed, confused, and emotionally distressed;
- Move all other students out of the immediate area;
- Immediately contact an administrator, suicide prevention liaison or a school counselor;
- Call 911 to share information about any suicide note, medications taken, and access to weapons, if applicable;
- If needed, provide medical first aid until a medical professional is available;
- Parents/guardians/caregivers should be contacted as soon as possible;
- Do not send the student away or leave them alone, even if they need to go to the restroom;
- Listen to and prompt the student to talk;
- Review options and resources of people who can help;
- Be comfortable with moments of silence as you and the student will need time to process the situation;
- Provide comfort to the student;
- Promise privacy and help, and be respectful, but do not promise confidentiality;
- Student should only be released to parents/guardians/caregivers or to a person who is qualified and trained to provide help.

F. Action Plan for Out-of-School Suicide Attempts

If a suicide attempt by a student is outside of school, it is crucial that CSArts-SGV protects the privacy of the student and maintains a confidential record of the actions taken to intervene, support, and protect the student. The following steps should be implemented:

- Contact the parents/guardians/caregivers and offer support to the family;
- Discuss with the family how they would like the school to respond to the attempt while minimizing the spread of rumors among teachers, staff, and students;

- Obtain permission from the parents/guardians/caregivers to share information to ensure the facts regarding the crisis are correct;
- Refer media requests to CSArts-SGV's Director of Public Relations and Communications;
- Provide care and determine appropriate support to affected students;
- Offer the student and parents/guardians/caregivers steps for reintegration to school.

G. Supporting Students after a Mental Health Crisis

It is crucial that careful steps are taken to help provide the mental health support for the student and to monitor their actions for any signs of suicide. The following steps should be implemented after the crisis has happened:

- Treat every threat with seriousness and approach with a calm manner; make the student a priority;
- Listen actively and non-judgmental to the student. Let the student express his or her feelings;
- Acknowledge the feelings and do not argue with the student;
- Offer hope and let the student know they are safe and that help is provided. Do not promise confidentiality or cause stress;
- Explain calmly and get the student to a trained professional, guidance counselor, or designated staff to further support the student;
- Keep close contact with the parents/guardians/caregivers and mental health professionals working with the student.

H. Re-Entry to School After a Suicide Attempt

A student who has threatened or attempted suicide is at a higher risk for suicide in the months following the crisis. Having a streamlined and well planned re-entry process ensures the safety and wellbeing of students who have previously attempted suicide and reduces the risk of another attempt. Involving students in planning for their return to school provides them with a sense of control, personal responsibility, and empowerment.

The following steps shall be implemented upon re-entry:

- Obtain a written release of information signed by parents/guardians/caregivers and providers;
- Confer with student and parents/guardians/caregivers about any specific requests on how to handle the situation;
- Inform the student's teachers about possible days of absences;
- Allow accommodations for the student to make up work (be understanding that missed assignments may add stress to student);
- Mental health professionals or trusted staff members should maintain ongoing contact to monitor student's actions and mood;
- Work with parents/guardians/caregivers to involve the student in an aftercare plan.

Resource:

- The School Reentry for a Student Who Has Attempted Suicide or Made Serious Suicidal Threats is a guide that will assist in school re-entry for students after an attempted suicide. See the Mental Health Recovery Services Resource Web page at: <https://www.mhrbwcc.org/prevention-and-resources/>

I. Responding After a Suicide Death (Crisis Intervention and Response)

A death by suicide in the school community (whether by a student or staff member) can have devastating consequences on students and staff. Therefore, it is vital that we are prepared ahead of time in the event of such a tragedy. California School of the Arts – San Gabriel Valley will ensure that the school works closely with Los Angeles County Department of Education's Crisis Response team in response to a suicide death as part of the general Crisis Response Plan. The Suicide Death Response Action Plan (Suicide Postvention Response Plan) needs to incorporate both immediate and longterm steps and objectives.

- Suicide Postvention Response Plan shall:
 - Identify a staff member to confirm death and cause (school site administrator);
 - Identify a staff member to contact the deceased's family (within 24 hours);
 - Enact the Suicide Postvention Response Plan, include an initial meeting of the district/school Suicide Postvention Response Team;
 - Notify all staff members (ideally in-person or via phone, not via e-mail or mass notification).
 - Coordinate an all-staff meeting, to include:
 - Notification (if not already conducted) to staff about suicide death;
 - Emotional support and resources available to staff;
 - Notification to students about suicide death and the availability of support services (if this is the protocol that is decided by administration);
 - Share information that is relevant and that which you have permission to disclose.
 - Prepare staff to respond to the needs of students regarding the following:
 - Review of protocols for referring students for support/assessment;
 - Talking points for staff to notify students;
 - Resources available to students (on and off campus).
 - Identify students significantly affected by suicide death and other students at risk of imitative behavior;
 - Identify students affected by suicide death but not at risk of imitative behavior;
 - Communicate with the larger school community about the suicide death;
 - Consider funeral arrangements for family and school community;
 - Respond to memorial requests in respectful and non-harmful manner; responses should be handed in a thoughtful way and their impact on other students should be considered;
 - Identify media spokesperson skilled to cover story without the use of explicit, graphic, or dramatic content (go to the Reporting on Suicide. Org Web site at www.reportingonsuicide.org). Research has proven that sensationalized media coverage can lead to contagious suicidal behaviors.

- Utilize and respond to social media outlets:
 - Identify what platforms students are using to respond to suicide death
 - Identify/train staff and students to monitor social media outlets
- Include long-term suicide postvention responses:
- Consider important dates (i.e., anniversary of death, deceased birthday, graduation, or other significant event) and how these will be addressed
- Support siblings, close friends, teachers, and/or students of deceased
- Consider long-term memorials and how they may impact students who are emotionally vulnerable and at risk of suicide

Resources:

- After a Suicide: A Toolkit for School is a comprehensive guide that will assist schools on what to do if a suicide death takes place in the school community. See the Suicide Prevention Resource Center Web page at <http://www.sprc.org/comprehensive-approach/postvention>
- Help & Hope for Survivors of Suicide Loss is a guide to help those during the bereavement process and who were greatly affected by the death of a suicide. See the Suicide Prevention Resource Center Web page at <https://sprc.org/resources/>
- For additional information on suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, see the Mental Health Recovery Services Model Protocol Web page at <https://www.mhrbwcc.org/>
- Information on school climate and school safety is available on the CDE Safe Schools Planning Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/vp/safeschlplanning.asp>