

# COPING with DEATH during COVID-19

In addition to the ordinary grief mourners experience at a time of loss, the newly imposed requirements to modify or cancel public funerals, burials, and memorials introduces a new trauma and component to the grieving process. It is important that family, friends and school staff provide support and comfort to remain connected for grieving individuals.

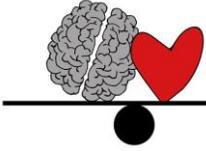
The complications of this grief may differ for students and staff:

- The restrictions on gatherings limits traditional rituals that typically offer physical and emotional support which is one component people rely upon after a death.
- The inability to honor the wishes of a departed loved one.
- An inability to adhere to religious observances.
- The inability for students and staff to gather and process their grief.

Our Crisis Team recognizes that coping with grief during a traumatic event, like social distancing required for the COVID-19 outbreak, can intensify and complicate the grieving process. Complicated or traumatic grief is grief that does not end and does not help you make progress toward getting back to your usual activities and routine. In addition to the protocol below, our team will look for [signs of traumatic grief](#) in our children and families' responses.

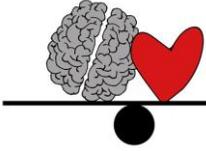
## PROTOCOL:

1. Notify the superintendent or building principal of a death. Administrators will collect initial information and inform the central office ( Asst. Sup, Director of Communication, etc.)
  - **ONLY CONFIRMED INFORMATION THAT THE PARENT HAS APPROVED CAN BE SHARED**
  - **ALL COMMUNICATION TO MEDIA AND OUTSIDE SOURCES WILL COME FROM COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR**
    - **Consider community response to honor the person**
  - If we receive information from the community, we will verify it through the police or authority.
  - Begin communication process. Gather information:
    - Inform staff of the process
    - What needs to be communicated to building staff? To the district office?
    - What needs to be communicated to the community (include Director of Communications for district if appropriate)? Ask parents to monitor social media concerns



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2. Admin & school counselor identifies crisis team and assign a team leader (typically school counselor but not necessarily, probably not the person on the child's caseload)
  - a. Crisis team meets via Google Meet
    - i. Crisis team notifies all school counselors, school psychologists and mental health partner (see attached [contact](#) list)
  - b. Triage-- crisis team determines staff and students with immediate need and assigns team member to contact each student via phone or googlemeet
    - Consider siblings possibly in other buildings, friends, teachers from previous years, parents, people in other buildings
    - Keep of a list of students in the shared drive, who require a check in and assign a person & time
  - c. Communication & Connection via Social Media
    - i. Select a consistent time for the crisis time to meet as we monitor the situation (i.e. crisis team meets at 8 AM & 8PM via googlemeet to debrief daily)
    - ii. Assign members of the crisis team to monitor social media at different intervals
    - iii. Consider a school sponsored virtual site that is monitored by counseling personnel (rotating basis). Consider inviting a friend group to a private google meet. Allow space to see what kids respond to.
3. Crisis Team convenes via google meet after triage to discuss:
  - a. Debrief and reflect on initial response
  - b. Impact on children and the community
  - c. Identify people at the secondary level of support or newly in need of support and how we will access them via social media, phone, etc.
4. Post-crisis-- send [survey](#) to all impacted
  - a. Make a plan for Crisis Team to Debrief virtually with an outside source (AFSP, Companions on a Journey).
5. Plan Postvention Response- include mental health partners
  - a. Plan for when social distancing crisis is over
  - b. Consider appropriate memorial (see Samsha guide)



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c. Plan for anniversary

## Grief Support

[Companions on a Journey- Grief Support- 513-870-9108-](#) Offers support to anyone who has suffered the death of a loved one

[Fernside- Supporting Children and Families Through Grief- 513-246-9140-](#) Offers groups for children and teens ages 3-18, who are grieving the death of a family member or friend.

## RESOURCES:

[Jewish Grief and Mourning](#)

[Samhsa Grief After Trauma](#)

[Resource for Condolences and Mourning](#)