

**Counselors  
SPEAK:  
Connecting  
Carefully, Candidly  
and Courageously**  
June 19, 2020



**OKLAHOMA**  
Education



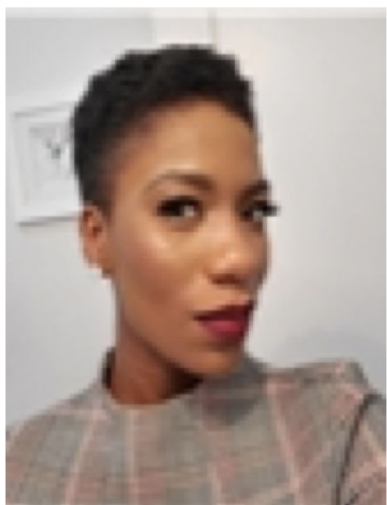
# OSDE Student Support Panel



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# OSDE Student Support Panel - 2



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# Why Are We Here?

To provide Oklahoma Counselors a forum to:

- **S**hare thoughts and concerns in a safe space
- **P**rocess possible causes and solutions
- **E**ducate, equip, and empower one another
- **A**ct, plan and implement
- **K**eeep the conversation going

# What's the Conversation?

- **How to have conversations with students and colleagues**
  - COVID-19 Fears
  - Racial Inequities and Courageous Conversations
- **Crisis Response: Return to Learn**
  - Best practices and guidelines
- **Additional Talking Points from last week:**
  - SROs
  - Facemasks and reading emotions/sensory issues

# Crisis Management Phases



## Presidential Policy Directive (PPD-8, 2011)

- **Prevention**
- **Protection**
- **Mitigation**
- **Response:** facilitate the transition to recovery.
- **Recovery**

# Crisis *Response*: Action Steps for School Leaders

- Follow all safety guidelines outlined by governing officials when planning for re-entry
- Keep lines of communication open with staff, parents, and students
  - Provide frequent updates
- Engage in triage activities to determine risk of psychological and physical trauma
  - Best practice to make contact with families in combination with using triage tools to assess risk

# Crisis *Response*: Action Steps for School Leaders - 2

- Advocate for the School Crisis Team to add diversity in roles *and* perspectives
  - Possible personnel: Administrators, School Counselors, School Psychologists, SROs, Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Parents, Support Staff, and Older Students
  - Conduct survey to allow everyone to provide input to the School Crisis Team, rather than rely on the School Crisis Team alone

[Return to Learn Oklahoma](#) - framework

[Crisis Preparedness and Response](#) - webpage



# Processing Session for Staff

- Small Group format when possible
- Administrators should model sharing thoughts and worries
- Administrators should serve to facilitate, but not direct the conversation
- Goals:
  - Recognize that every person has a story to tell. Facilitate feelings of “normalcy” while reinforcing resiliency, problem-solving, and coping
  - Gauge an understanding of common reactions
  - Triage individuals who may need more support
    - Support as staff (what additional supports might staff need to address personal risk)
    - Support in delivering response interventions to students (which staff are able and comfortable to lead student response efforts)

# Processing Session for Staff - 2

## Sample **COVID-19** Processing Questions

- “What was the quarantine like for you and your family?”
- “What are your fears about school re-entry”
- “What would help you feel safer about being back at school?”
- “What are some things that we can do to help ourselves and each other cope?”

## Sample **Equity** Processing Questions

- “What reactions are you having in response to the racial divides?”
- “What are your fears about how racial tension will affect you at school?”
- “What would help you feel safer as a member of our school community?”
- “What are some things that we can do to help ourselves and each other cope?”

# Classroom Meeting for Students

- Use the same goals and follow the same format as with staff Processing Sessions
- The Processing Sessions are a good chance to model the technique for adults asked to lead Classroom Meetings

# Classroom Meeting for Students - 2

- Keep the following in mind during Classroom Meetings:
  - Use language that is developmentally appropriate
  - Be culturally and linguistically appropriate
  - Be aware of and prepared to alter the delivery for students with disabilities
  - Do not force participation. Do not require language participation
    - Art, play, and even memes can be appropriate communication tools
  - This process is a Crisis Response intervention - *not counseling*.
    - *Triage* tool for risk assessment
    - Guides short- and long-term recovery efforts

# Developmental Reactions for Students Post-Crisis

- **Preschoolers:** toileting problems, sleeping problems, bed wetting, decreased appetite, increased temper tantrums, more clingy or whiny, and fearful of being alone. Older preschoolers may understand the effects of the outbreak and will look to adults to see how upset to be.
- **Elementary School Age:** increased need for adult attention, increased aggression and irritability, somatic complaints, sleeping problems, and concentration problems with school work.
- **Middle School and High School:** increased somatic complaints, agitation or apathy, concentration problems with school work, increased substance abuse, and withdrawal from others.

# For Both Processing Sessions and Classroom Meetings

- Often important to have one facilitator and one person ready to address acute needs that arise
- Model calmness, empathy, and optimism
- Emphasize existing procedures that schools have in place (safety procedures, student supports, employee assistance programs, etc.)
- Leaders should debrief together and use information to help guide recovery efforts

# Stay C.A.L.M !

- **C** is for **calmness** and to **control** what you can... your reaction to the crisis event and your ability to follow advice for school re-entry.
- **A** is for being **available**. Administrators should seek input from staff, students, and parents about re-entry concerns.
- **L** is for **listening** to the input from a school re-entry task force composed of staff, parents, and older students.
- **M** is for all staff and parents **modeling** coping with anxiety and fear related to re-entry.

# Recovery After Crisis

- Long-term
- Matched to identified need
- Multi-faceted, and often addressed with an MTSS approach
- Examples:
  - Additional assessments and data gathering (e.g., Implicit Bias Assessments for Staff)
  - Lesson Plans
  - Activities
    - Circles
    - Restorative Practices
    - Prevention Practices: Bullying Cycle





# Processing Session / Classroom Meeting for COVID-19



## Remain Calm and Reassuring

Children, especially young ones, take cues from adults. Acknowledge loss or destruction, but emphasize efforts to clean up and rebuild. Assure them family and friends will take care of them and over time things will get better.



## Acknowledge and Normalize Most Feelings

Allow children to discuss feelings and concerns, but don't force them to talk about the disaster. Listen, empathize, and let them know most initial reactions are normal. Be attentive to, and obtain assistance for, feelings and concerns that may suggest that the child (or anyone else) is in harm's way.



## Emphasize Resiliency

### Competencies

Help children identify coping skills used in the past when scared or upset.

### Strategies

Encourage prosocial behaviors and good physical health.

### Awareness

Highlight communities that have recovered from natural disasters.



## Strengthen Peer Support

Children with strong emotional supports are better able to cope with adversity. Especially among adolescents, peer relationships can decrease isolation and supplement support from caregivers who are experiencing their own distress.



## Take Care of Your Own Needs

You will be better able to help children if you are coping well. Take time to address your own reactions as fully as possible. Talk to other adults, take care of your physical and mental health, and avoid using drugs or alcohol to feel better.



## Seek Help for Prolonged Signs of Distress

With the help of naturally occurring social support systems, most children will be fine. However, some may have reactions requiring professional help. Consider getting professional support for children whose reactions continue or worsen after a week or more. Your child's school can be a great source of support.

# Processing Session / Classroom Meeting for Equity & Social Justice Issues



## Reaffirm Safety

Emphasize that schools are very safe. Let children speak about their feelings and validate all reactions to the event. Support the appropriate expression of their feelings and help to put them in perspective.



## Make Time to Talk

Let children's questions guide the information provided. Be patient and look for clues that a child wants to talk. Young children may need concrete activities (e.g., imaginative play) and some older children may prefer writing or playing music.



## Keep Explanations Developmentally Appropriate

### Early Elementary

Provide simple information balanced by assurance of safety.

### Upper Elementary & Early Middle

Answer questions and assist in separating reality from fantasy.

### Upper Middle & High

Emphasize student role in safety & how to access support.



## Review Safety Procedures

Help children identify one adult at school and in the community that they can go to if they feel threatened or at risk. Review procedures and safeguards in school and home settings.



## Observe Children's Emotional State

Some will not express themselves verbally but changes in behavior, appetite, or sleep patterns can indicate anxiety or stress. Seek help from a mental health professional for those with more intense reactions.



## Maintain a Normal Routine

Keep a regular schedule to assure and promote physical and mental health. Encourage maintenance of school work and extracurricular activities but do not push children if they seem overwhelmed. Limit TV exposure.

# OSDE Crisis Preparedness and Response Webpage



The OSDE Crisis Team was developed through a STOP School Violence Grant from the Department of Justice. This grant is in partnership with the Oklahoma School Safety and Security Institute and Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management.

The purpose of the STOP School Violence Grant is to improve school security by providing Oklahoma local educational agencies (LEAs) with tools to increase school safety and identify students who may require mental health supports. The Crisis Team supports Oklahoma school districts in crisis prevention, preparedness, intervention, and response. This team can respond to both hazard-based and threat-based school crises.

The OSDE Crisis Team is tasked with the following overall goals: 1) Select and train from existing OSDE staff a team, the Crisis Response and Recovery Team, to be deployed to local education agencies in the event of a school emergency or crisis. 2) Provide evidence-based prevention and intervention crisis curriculum training to schools throughout the state. This training will help schools develop crisis preparedness plans and specifically address how to identify students who may need additional behavioral or mental health supports. 3) Assist schools in the implementation of a multi-tiered system of support for crisis management, which will include mental health interventions.

[In the News: Administrators Newsletter - April 21, 2020](#)



## Professional Associations

- [American Psychological Association](#) – The American Psychological Association represents the professional field of psychology in the United States and is the largest association of psychologists worldwide.

## Crisis Preparedness & Response

[Main Page](#)

[Resources \(By Crisis Topic\)](#)

[Training Opportunities](#)

[Professional Development](#)

[COVID-19 Resources](#)

## Contact Us

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# EngageOK in the Cloud

## **An Introduction to School-Based Crisis Response**

Presenters: Dr. Erika Olinger and Trisha Goga

Date: July 15th

Time: 10:30 - 12:00



# References

- Brock, S.E., Nickerson, A.B., Reeves, M.A., Conolly, C.N., Jimerson, S. R., Pesce, R.C., & Lazzaro, B.R. (2016). *School crisis prevention & intervention (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed): The PREPaRE model*. Bethesda, MD. National Association of School Psychologists.
- National Association of School Psychologists. (2017). Helping Children After a Natural Disaster: Tips for Parents and Educators. [https://www.nasponline.org/.../Helping\\_Children\\_After\\_a\\_Natural\\_Disaster\\_Infographic\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.nasponline.org/.../Helping_Children_After_a_Natural_Disaster_Infographic_FINAL.pdf)
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- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students, *Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans*, Washington, DC, 2013.