



OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
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Working with Students Returning from a Mental Health Crisis

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Crisis

If you had a student returning from school after a hospitalization for any other reason, you would help them transition back to school.

This situation is no different.



Mental Health Crisis

- In-patient treatment
 - Suicidal ideation
 - Self injury
- Extreme anxiety
- Phobia
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Other crisis



During the Crisis

- Contact Parents/guardians immediately
- Provide as much information to the family as possible
- Send resources with the family
 - Third Party Affidavit
 - Emergency Notification Form
 - Treatment facilities
 - Other supports
- Ask for a re-entry meeting at least one day before the student returns



During the Crisis

- If you cannot reach parents/guardians, police should be contacted
 - Police will take student into protective custody
 - Police will take the student to get a mental health evaluation
- If parents/guardians won't take their son/daughter to receive a mental health evaluation two things should be done
 - Contact police
 - Contact DHS



During the Crisis

- Assure the student and his/her family that school should be the last thing that they should worry about
- Assure the student and his/her family that absences will be excused
- Assure the student and his/her family that you will work with them and with the other staff to help transition back
- Ask the student and his/her family what is ok to tell the need-to-know staff members



Our Duty

- Show empathy
- Providing a safe space
- Advocacy with other staff members
- Communication with the parents/guardians
- Explaining options for student
 - Thinking outside of the box in order to help the student





Provide a Safe Space

- Permission for student to see you anytime
 - Check for a pattern
 - Set a timer
- Check in, check out
- Regular times to touch base
- Back-up plan
 - Favorite teacher
 - Office Staff
 - Another counselor or other administrator



Advocacy with Other Staff

- Train teachers in advance
- Tell teachers, secretaries, principals, etc. only what they NEED to know
- Get permission from the family
- Essential assignments only
- Excused absences
- Consider a 504



Why a 504?

- A diagnosed mental health condition is no different than any other chronic health condition
- Accommodations are frequently needed
- Medications may need to be taken at school



Communication with Parents/Guardians

- Contact the family the same day and/or day after the crisis
- Contact family to set up a transition meeting
- Greet family and student before meeting
- Be the touchstone with the family once the student returns



Explaining the Options

- Consider the 504 as a team
- Thinking outside the box to accommodate the student whether they are on a 504 or not
 - Regular touchbase
 - Adjusted schedule
 - Modified assignments/work
 - Are animals allowed?
 - The difference between service animal, therapy animal and emotional support animal



Animals

- Service & Emotional support animals
 - Require a 504 or an IEP
 - Impairment must be documented by a doctor
 - Animal must be trained (different levels of trainings)
- Therapy animals
 - Not for those with a disability, they are for service providers
 - Animal/handler must be certified
 - District decision



Therapy Dogs

- Certification required
- Insurance needed
- District decision
- Pros and cons



Student Re-entry Planning

- Set appointment with parent as soon as possible
- Find out date when student wants to return to school
 - Take into consideration tests, finals, etc.
- Let teachers know ahead of time what you will be asking of them



Student Re-entry Planning

- You could ask teachers to:
 - Forgive non-essential assignments
 - Work with student on deadlines and make-up work
 - Modifying assignments in the future
 - Shortening the school day
 - Etc.



Student Re-entry Planning

- You will need:
 - Signed release of information on mental health provider
 - Student Safety Plan
 - Invite all interested parties (teachers, principal, mental health provider, coaches, IEP teacher of record, family, etc.)
 - Information about a 504 plan or an IEP





My Safety Plan

Date:
What are my warning signs that a crisis may be developing?
What are some ways I can help myself at school?

Who are people I can call if I need help?	
Name:	Phone #:
Name:	Phone #:
Name:	Phone #:
Who will I contact in case of an emergency:	
Call 911	
National Suicide Prevention Lifelines Hotline 1-800-273-8255 (TALK)	
Local Hospital _____	

Student Re-entry Planning

- At the meeting you will need to know:
 - Family concerns about re-entry
 - Academic concerns
 - Mental health provider concerns
 - Mental health provider recommendations
 - Doctor's Note
 - Have they been enrolled someplace else during their treatment?
- Ask teachers to bring list of work student needs to make up (remember to ask for non-essential items to be excused)





STUDENT RE-ENTRY PLAN

STUDENT INFORMATION						
Student:			ID:	Grade:		
Person Completing Form:						
Meeting Date:			Date Returning to School:			
Length of time out of school:						
Signed release of information from mental health provider	Yes	No				
Mental health provider present (if yes, provide name)	Yes	No				
Parent/Guardian present	Yes	No				
Student Safety Plan (must complete before re-entry)	Yes	No				
Student on 504 plan or IEP	Yes	No				
Daily check-in upon Reentry	Yes	No	With whom:	AM	PM	Both

Family Concerns					
Academic Concerns					
Re-entry Conference (Names & titles of all present)					
Modification on course assignments (list course and if assignments can be modified) List modifications on back					
Course	Can assignments be modified?			Can assignments be modified?	
	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No		Yes	No
	Yes	No		Yes	No

Course	Teacher
Modification	

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