

PERSONNEL

Traumatic Response

1.0 Introduction

The Traumatic Response resource is intended to assist staff when responding to a traumatic event that has occurred at a school and/or in the school community.

Planning for a traumatic event is essential. Principals are expected to work with their Safe and Accepting Schools Team to review safety data, including data collected by the Violence Risk Assessment Tool and School Climate/Well-Being Surveys, to revise their Safety Plan. The Traumatic Response Resource should be used to support the Safety Plan (refer to Appendix A, B and C). The Safety Plan should then be embedded into the School Improvement Plan, and thoroughly reviewed with school staff, students and members of the School Community Council.

In addition, establishing and sustaining a positive school climate is essential to building resilience in staff and students. Principals are expected to work with their students, staff and parents to use evidence-informed initiatives to support positive Well-Being and Mental Health.

2.0 General Information and Expectations

- 2.1 Traumatic events are part of a continuum that includes any incident that impacts a school, such as a suicide, death of a student or staff and/or a natural disaster. There is a difference between a crisis and a traumatic event.

The components of a crisis include:

- Impacts on the immediate school community
- Can be contained by the school
- The school has sufficient resources to respond effectively
- There is a high degree of predictability concerning who is most likely to be impacted

The components of a traumatic event include:

- It cannot be contained within the school and affects both the school and “community”
- It cannot be contained by the school
- The school and community does not have the necessary resources to adequately respond, and as a result, must rely on outside resources to help respond to the event

- 2.2 A traumatic event may consist of one event or a series of events that significantly upset an individual, family, classroom or school and/or community. Effective traumatic event responses need to be timely and planned. Consider the following factors:

- Nature of the event
- Age(s) of individuals affected
- Dynamics of the school community
- Wishes of the immediate family(ies)
- The family(ies) cultural, ethnic and religious background

- 2.3 A Traumatic Response Team responds to traumatic events which have occurred on school grounds and in the school community. Traumatic events may include the loss of life and/or serious injury, motor vehicle accidents, violent act against a student, parent, staff member or other persons known to the school community, or threats to the safety of the school environment. It may also include natural disasters, e.g., tornadoes or fire, or large scale acts of violence or threats of violence.

The primary goal of traumatic response is the de-escalation of an unexpected trauma, and of the “overwhelming” experience for staff, students and parents involved. Managing a traumatic situation in a sensitive and timely fashion is an essential aspect of intervention. The School Traumatic Response Team serves a critical function. Each member of the school team has a key role in addressing the needs of students and staff during a traumatic event.

- 2.4 The members of the Board Traumatic Response Team include:

- Director and Associate Director
- The Superintendents of Safe Schools, Operations and Special Education
- The Family of Schools Superintendent and Administrative Officer
- The Safe Schools and Operations Administrative Officers
- The Manager of Communications, Facilities and Transportation
- The Chiefs of Psychological Services and Social Work
- The Mental Health Lead

3.0 References

The following documents support the Traumatic Response resource:

DDSB DEPARTMENT	RESOURCE
Special Education	· Procedure – Emergency Evacuation Procedures for Students Requiring Specialized Assistance
Psychological Services / Social Work	· Dealing with a Traumatic Event · School Response to Tragic Events: A Quick Reference Guide (flipchart) · Procedure, Guidelines and Forms - Reporting Children and Youth in Need of Protection
Mental Health	· DDSB Protocol for Suicide Prevention and Intervention for Students
Safe Schools	· Police/School Board Protocol · Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) and Intervention Protocol · Responding to Sexual Harassment and/or Sexual Violence Flipchart · Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (BPIP) · Safe Schools Student Safety Plan · An Equitable Framework for Progressive Discipline · Foundations of Restorative Practice · Safe at School (SAS) Binder · Additional Safe Schools Resources · Administrators 911 / Reference Guide

Operations	· Procedure – Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions In Schools: Asthma · Procedure – Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions In Schools: Epilepsy · Procedure – Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions In Schools: Anaphylaxis · Procedure – Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions In Schools: Diabetes · Procedure – Concussion Management · Procedure – Checklist of Emergency, Operational and Personnel Procedures · Procedure - Flags
Facilities	· 911: Emergency Flipchart
Health and Safety	· 911: Emergency Flipchart (printable version) · Regulation – School System Procedures for Emergency Closing · Procedure - Emergency Notification – Central Monitoring Station (nuclear) · Nuclear Emergency Procedures · Critical Incidents Kits · Procedure – Workplace Violence Management Program
Communications	· Procedure - Handling of Media at the School Level · Administrators 911 / Reference Guide
Transportation	· DSTS Operations Manual Section 2-9 Lockdown_Hold & Secure
Employee Services (HR)	· Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP): https://www.workhealthlife.com/ or 1-844-880-9142 (search “Durham District School Board”) · Mental Health Services in Durham Region: https://www.durham.ca/en/health-and-wellness/mental-health.aspx or 1-800-841-2729 (Durham Health Connection Line) · Regulation – Domestic Violence · Workplace Violence Awareness E-Learning Module · First Aid/CPR/AED Training

Appendix:

Appendix A – Traumatic Response Flowchart

Appendix B – Supports for Students

Appendix C – Supports for Staff

Effective Date

2018-01-22

Amended/Reviewed