

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

Initiate and establish structures

Establish a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) which will take responsibility for developing a policy and putting a Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP) in place.

St. Mary's National School aims to protect the wellbeing of its students and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. **This school aims to provide a safe, happy environment in which all children can develop a positive awareness of self, and sensitivity for the feelings, rights and views of others. This will enable them to achieve their full potential in school, to live happy, fruitful lives and to fully participate in life as mature, responsible adults..** The Board of Management, through the Principal, Valerie Daly, has drawn up a critical incident management plan as one element of the school's policies and plans.

Our aim is to establish a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) to steer the development and implementation of the Critical Incident Management Plan.

Review and Research

The CIMT should consult resource documents available to schools on www.education.ie and www.nosp.ie, these include:

- Responding to Critical Incidents Guidelines and Resources for Schools (NEPS 2016)
- Suicide Prevention in Schools: Best Practice Guidelines (IAS, National Suicide Review Group (2002)
- Suicide Prevention in the Community - A Practical Guide (HSE 2011)
- Well-Being in Post-Primary Schools Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention (DES, DOH, HSE 2013)
- Well-Being in Primary Schools - Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion (DES, DOH, HSE 2015)

Other useful documents may be found on websites listed on pages 95 and 96 of Responding to Critical Incidents Guidelines and Resources for Schools, <http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/Responding%20to%20Critical%20Incidents.pdf>.

Define what you mean by the term 'critical incident'

The staff and management of St. Mary's National School recognise a critical incident to be "an incident or sequence of events that overwhelms the normal coping mechanism of the school". Critical incidents may involve one or more students or staff members, or members of our local community. The following is a list of possible examples:

- The death of a member of the school community through accident, violence, suicide or suspected suicide or other unexpected death
- An intrusion into the school
- An accident involving members of the school community
- A major accident/tragedy in the wider community
- Serious damage to the school building through fire, flood, vandalism, etc.
- A major accident/tragedy in the wider community.

Aim.

The aim of the CIMP is to help school management and staff to react quickly and effectively in the event of an incident, to enable us to maintain a sense of control and to ensure that appropriate support is offered to students and staff. Having a good plan should also help ensure that the impact on students and staff will be limited. It should enable us to effect a return to normality as soon as possible.

Creation of a coping supportive and caring ethos in the school.

We have put systems in place to help to build resilience in both staff and students, thus preparing them to cope with a range of life events. These include measures to address both the physical and psychological safety of the school community.

Physical safety.

Include some specific examples of what the school is doing at this point. You might also refer to your Health & Safety policy

- Evacuation plan formulated
- Regular fire drills occur
- Fire exits and extinguishers are regularly checked.
- Pre-school supervision in the classrooms. 9.15am
- Supervision in the school yard during break times.
- Buddy System during break times whereby infants are accompanied to the toilets by senior pupils.
- Rules of the playground.
 - No child leaves the school yard without permission.
 - Be kind.
 - Include everyone in your game.

Other School Rules are summarized in the Code of Behaviour as follows:

- I keep my hands and feet to myself
- I am polite
- I walk in the classroom
- I call you by your first name
- I follow the instruction the first time given

Psychological safety.

The management and staff of St. Mary's National School aim to use available programmes and resources to address the personal and social development of students, to enhance a sense of safety and security in the school and to provide opportunities for reflection and discussion.

Some examples are:

- Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is integrated into the work of the school. Issues such as grief and loss; communication skills; stress and anger management; resilience; conflict management; problem solving; help-seeking; bullying; decision making and prevention of alcohol and drug misuse are addressed in the SPHE curriculum. Promotion of mental health is an integral part of this provision.
- Staff have access to training for their role in SPHE
- Staff are familiar with the Child Protection Procedures and the name of the Designated Liaison Person

- Books and resources on difficulties affecting the primary school student are available.
- Information is provided on mental health in general and such specific areas as signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- The school has developed links with a range of external agencies such as NEPS, Camhs, School Age Team, SENO, Tusla, Triple – P, National Parents Council Primary.
- Inputs to students by external providers are carefully considered in the light of criteria about student safety, the appropriateness of the content, and the expertise of the providers. See DES Circulars 0022/2010 (Primary) .
- The school has a clear anti-bullying policy and deals with incidents of bullying in accordance with this policy
- There is a care system in place in the school using the “Continuum of Support” approach which is outlined in the NEPS documents published on 2007 for primary schools and 2010 for post primary schools. See also Student Support Teams in Post Primary Schools (2014). These documents are available on www.education.ie
- Students who are identified as being at risk are referred to the Designated Liaison Person or Deputy Designated Liaison Person, concerns are explored and the appropriate level of assistance and support is provided. Parents/guardians are informed, and where appropriate, a referral is made to an appropriate agency.
- Staff are informed about how to access support for themselves.

Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT)

A CIMT has been established in line with best practice. The members of the team were selected on a voluntary basis and will retain their roles for at least one school year. The members of the team will meet annually to review and update the policy and plan. Each member of the team has a dedicated critical incident folder. This contains a copy of the policy and plan and materials particular to their role, to be used in the event of an incident.

Preparation of CIMP

Roles: Schools need to make arrangements for assigning roles, taking account of such practical issues as school size and the number of staff available. Many schools will double up of roles.

The key roles which need to be covered are as follows:

TEAM LEADER – Principal Mrs. Valerie Daly
GARDA LIAISON – Principal Mrs. Valerie Daly and Chairperson Pat Walsh
STAFF LIAISON – Ms. Laura McManus
STUDENT LIAISON – Ms. Nicola Kilmartin
PARENT / GUARDIAN LIAISON - Ms. Laura McManus
COMMUNITY LIAISON – Chairperson Mr. Pat Walsh
MEDIA LIAISON - Chairperson Mr. Pat Walsh
ADMINISTRATOR – School secretary Ms. Lorna Kenny

Outlined below are some points on the key responsibilities of each role. A note on helpful qualities for each role can be found in the text box.

TEAM LEADER

A person who carries authority and can make decisions during a crisis
(e.g. school closure, attendance at memorial services, etc.)

- Alerts the team members to the crisis and convenes a meeting
- Coordinates the tasks of the team
- Liaises with the Board of Management; DES; NEPS; etc.
- Liaises with the bereaved family.

It is important to consider who will take the lead in the absence of the team leader.

GARDA LIAISON

(This may be seen as part of the team leader's role)

- Liaises with the Gardaí
- Ensures that information about deaths or other developments is checked out for accuracy before being shared.

STAFF LIAISON

A staff member known and trusted by the staff

- Leads briefing meetings for staff on the facts as known, gives staff members an opportunity to express their feelings and ask questions, outlines the routine for the day
- Advises staff on the procedures for identification of vulnerable students
- Provides materials for staff (from their critical incident folder)
- Keeps staff updated as the day progresses
- Is alert to vulnerable staff members and makes contact with them individually
- Advises them of the availability of the EAS and gives them the contact number.

STUDENT LIAISON

A trusted and familiar figure to the students.

- Alerts other staff to vulnerable students (appropriately)
- Provides materials for students (from their critical incident folder) Maintains student contact records(R1)
- Looks after setting up and supervision of 'quiet' room where agreed.

COMMUNITY/AGENCY LIAISON

Someone with good contacts with agencies and relevant individuals in the community

- Maintains up to date lists of contact numbers of
 - Key parents, such as members of the Parents Council
 - Emergency support services and other external contacts and resources
- Liaises with agencies in the community for support and onward referral.
- Is alert to the need to check credentials of individuals offering support.
- Coordinates the involvement of these agencies.
- Reminds agency staff to wear name badges.
- Updates team members on the involvement of external agencies.

PARENT/GUARDIAN LIAISON

Someone known to parents. This person should be comfortable speaking before a large group and have skills to manage emotional reactions of individual or groups of parents

- Visits the bereaved family with the team leader.
- Arranges meetings, if held.

- May facilitate such meetings, and manage 'questions and answers' sessions.
- Manages the 'consent' issues in accordance with agreed school policy.
- Ensures that sample letters are prepared and available on the school's IT system ready for adaptation.
- Sets up room for meetings with parents.
- Maintains a record of parents seen.
- Meets with individual parents.
- Provides appropriate materials for parents (from their critical incident folder).

MEDIA LIAISON

Someone with good interpersonal skills who would be comfortable talking to the media by phone or in person. A person who is able to set limits without being offensive

- In advance of an incident, will consider issues that may arise and how they might be responded to (e.g. students being interviewed, photographers on the premises, etc.)
- In the event of an incident, will liaise where necessary with the SEC, relevant teacher unions etc.
- Will draw up a press statement, give media briefings and interviews (as agreed by school management).

ADMINISTRATOR

- Maintenance of up to date telephone numbers of
 - Parents/guardians
 - Teachers
 - Emergency services
- Takes telephone calls and notes those that need a response
- Ensures that templates are available on the schools IT system and ready for adaptation
- Prepares and sends out letters, emails and texts
- Photocopies materials as needed
- Maintains records.

Record keeping.

In the event of an incident each member of the team will keep records of phone calls made and received, letters emails and texts sent and received, meetings held, persons met, interventions used, material used etc. The school secretary Ms. Lorna Kenny will have a key role in receiving and logging telephone calls, sending letters, photocopying materials etc.

Confidentiality and good name considerations.

The management and staff of name of school have a responsibility to protect the privacy and good name of the people involved in any incident and will be sensitive to the consequences of any public statements. The members of the school staff will bear this in mind, and will seek to ensure that students do so also. For instance, the term 'suicide' will not be used unless there is confirmed information that death was due to suicide, and that the family involved consents to its use. The phrases 'tragic death' or 'sudden death' may be used instead. Similarly, the word 'murder' should not be used until it is legally established that a murder was committed. The term 'violent death' may be used instead.

Critical incident rooms

In the event of a critical incident,

Staff room - will be the main room used to meet the staff

Special Education room(s) - for meetings with students

Special Education room (s)- for parents

Special Education room (s)- for media

Special Education room (s)- for individual sessions with students

Principal's Office - for other visitors

Consultation and communication regarding the plan.

The Board of Management and all staff were consulted and their views canvassed in the preparation of this policy and plan. Parent/guardian representatives were also consulted and asked for their comments.

Our school's final policy and plan in relation to responding to critical incidents has been presented to all staff.

Each member of the critical incident team has a personal copy of the plan.

All new and temporary staff will be informed of the details of the plan by Valerie Daly

Appendix List.

R20

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEMPLATE FOR SCHOOL PLAN

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM

Role	Name and Email address	Telephone number
Team Leader	Valerie Daly	
Garda Liaison	Valerie Daly and Pat Walsh	
Staff Liaison	Laura McManus	
Student Liaison	Nicola Kilmartin	
Parent Liaison	Laura McManus	
Community Liaison	Pat Walsh	
Media Liaison	Pat Walsh	
Administrator	Lorna Kenny	

SHORT TERM ACTIONS – DAY 1

Task	Name
Gather accurate information	All CIMT
Who, what, when, where?	
Convene a CIMT meeting - specify time and place clearly	
Contact external agencies	
Arrange supervision for students	
Hold staff meeting	
Agree schedule for the day	
Inform students - (close friends and students with learning difficulties may need to be told separately)	
Compile a list of vulnerable students	
Contact/visit the bereaved family	

(continued opposite)

Prepare and agree media statement and deal with the media

Inform parents/guardians

Hold end of day staff briefing

MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS - (DAY 2 AND FOLLOWING DAYS)

Task	Name
Convene a CIMT meeting to review the events of day 1	Team leader
Meet external agencies	
Meet whole staff	
Arrange support for students, staff, parents/guardians	
Visit the injured	
Liaise with bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements	
Agree on attendance and participation at funeral service	
Make decisions about school closure	BOM

FOLLOW-UP BEYOND 72 HOURS

Task	Name
Monitor students for signs of continuing distress	Class teachers
Liaise with agencies regarding referrals	
Plan for return of bereaved student(s)	
Plan for giving of 'memory box' to bereaved family	
Decide on memorials and anniversaries	BOM/Staff, parents and students
Review response to incident and amend plan	Staff/BOM

EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

(To be displayed in staff-room, school office and Principal's office etc.)

AGENCY	CONTACT NUMBERS
GARDA	Birr 0579169710
HOSPITAL	Tullamore 0579321501
FIRE BRIGADE	999/112
LOCAL GPs	Dr. Harkins, Banagher 0579151247
HSE/Primary Care Team / Primary Care Centre / CAMHS / Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention	HSE Tullamore 0579357876
SCHOOL INSPECTOR	Helena Ní Dhuinn Dept of Ed and Skills Athlone (090) 648 3600
NEPS PSYCHOLOGIST	Jo Moore 01 8892700
DES	(090) 648 3600
INTO	01 8047700
PARISH PRIEST / CLERGY	Fr. Pat Kiernan 057 9151338
CHAIRPERSON OF BoM	Mr. Pat Walsh 087 2583373
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICE	1800 411 057

R22

GUIDANCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA USE AND CRITICAL INCIDENTS

Social media is now part of everyday communication and information sharing. Most students are avid and competent users. Social media messages speed up the rate at which information is shared. This can have a significant influence on the behaviour of young people during a critical incident. Some social media communication may occur without the knowledge of school staff that leads to distress among students or their parents/guardians.

The following information may help schools to consider issues related to social media use when dealing with a critical incident.

- It is essential that schools take account of the need to have competency in the use of social media among management and staff. If the members of the CIMT have particular concerns or fears about social media, they should consult those familiar with its use. Senior-students e.g. sixth-year members of the student council could also be asked for help. Normalising social media use by the students during a critical incident is very important.
- Schools should include social media literacy in the school curriculum. It is essential that school management, staff and students understand the role of social media, and its positive and negative aspects. A positive disposition to social media by the school may encourage thoughtful use by students during a critical incident.
- Agreement on appropriate use of social media during a critical incident should be included in the school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). All school staff should follow agreed online professional protocols as prescribed by the New Code of Professional Conduct by Teachers i.e. "Teachers should ensure that any communication with pupils/students, colleagues, parents/guardians, school management and others is appropriate, including communication via electronic media, such as email, texting and social media etc." (The Teacher Council, 2012). The CIMT may also remind staff, students and other relevant community members about their AUP during times of crises.
- When dealing with a critical incident it is advised that schools act quickly and with caution. A message could be placed on the school website and on any other school social media account along the following lines:

'You may be aware of a recent event within the school community. We ask you to respect the family's privacy and sensitivities by considering if you should post any comments, especially on social media. We will inform you through the normal channels of any relevant developments.'
- School can use social media to provide up to date information for all concerned throughout the various stages of the incident. Positive messages and appropriate advice for young people and their parents/guardians can be provided. One important message would be to remind parents/guardians to discuss social media use with their children and monitor use more actively following a crisis.

- It is important that CIMT members are familiar with safe messaging guidelines and the document Media Guidelines for Reporting Suicide and Self-harm. Safe messaging guidelines should be followed when sending messages to staff, students, community or the media following a death by suicide. Media personnel if making contact with the school during a critical incident should be provided with the guidelines. Should the need arise during a crisis, schools can contact the Department of Education and Skills Press Office for advice and support or in the case of Education and Training Board schools the Board head office.
- Young people often post Rest-In-Peace (RIP) messages on social media sites when tragedies occur. These posts can be heartfelt and emotional particularly in cases of death by suicide. Messages such as “I miss you and will see you soon” or “I will follow in your path” should cause concern and be followed up with the individual concerned. The death by suicide of an individual may influence others. Young people are especially prone to contagion. Those who are emotionally vulnerable may act on suicidal impulses.
- Activity on social networking sites during a critical incident can be a source of potentially important information, such as suicide pacts, identification of vulnerable groups or individual young people who may be at increased risk of suicide. Given privacy restrictions to people’s personal web pages, distressing information may be posted without the knowledge of parents or school management. It is likely that users will block access so activity of this nature will not be accessible to everyone.
- Monitoring sites raises issues of privacy and surveillance. Schools are not advised to engage in monitoring. However, should schools become aware of inappropriate posts by students, they could inform the parents/guardians and encourage them to request that it is deleted. The easiest way to have a post removed is for the person who originally posted it to delete it from their account or request its removal. Service providers will not usually remove posts unless content is contrary to their AUP.

The following advice for journalists is provided in the Media Guidelines for Reporting Suicide and Self-harm.

The internet has created additional opportunities and challenges for journalists due to the speed and ease of accessing and publishing information. Points of view can now be presented more quickly and easily but sometimes without review or factual basis. It can be difficult for some readers to understand the distinction between what is fact and what is opinion. If you are posting your story on a news website or blog please consider the following points:

General tips

- Avoid linking to or mentioning the names of websites that encourage or glamorise suicide. Helpful websites offering support are listed at www.ias.ie and www.samaritans.org/ireland/links.
- Try to exercise care and judgment in the creation of news stories that will appear online, as they can often be surrounded by adverts and commentary which are outside the control of the author. Additional features on the page can create a negative context, allowing, for example, adverts promoting depression aids to appear alongside articles on mental health.
- Add hyperlinks to sources of support to ensure that people in distress can access useful resources quickly. Consider promoting www.samaritans.org within the UK and Ireland, or our worldwide equivalent, www.befrienders.org, beyond these regions.
- webwise.ie is an internet safety initiative funded by the DES, focused on raising awareness of online safety issues and good practice among students, their parents/guardians and teachers. www.webwise.ie

Reader feedback

- The ability to comment on articles or blog posts gives readers the opportunity to glamorise suicide or present controversial opinions about suicidal tendencies and mental health. The relative anonymity of these comments can encourage debates that are inappropriate for a news website, and potentially damaging to other readers.
- Responsible websites ensure that the terms and conditions each commentator agrees to when contributing online are explicit in what constitutes inappropriate material, and how it will be dealt with. In addition, site owners and moderators should understand the implications of allowing these comments to be published on their website.
- Wherever possible, attempt to educate your audience to understand how to use the feedback section with full consideration for everyone's health, safety and wellbeing, and the right of the publisher to remove inappropriate content.
- Consider making it clear to users that feedback services are moderated, whether manually or electronically.

R23

TEACHERS HELPING STUDENTS IN TIME OF CRISIS OR EMERGENCY

1.LISTEN 2.PROTECT 3.CONNECT 4.MODEL & 5.TEACH

THINK ABOUT your students' "DIRECT EXPERIENCE" with the event i.e. FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE of the event (physically experiencing or directly seeing it as it happens).

After the event, changes can happen in students' thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. Your students may worry about family members, classmates, friends, or pets they care about, and may worry that it will happen again. Common reactions to crises and emergencies include trouble sleeping, problems at school and with friends, trouble concentrating and listening, and not finishing work. Your students may become more irritable, sad, angry, or worried as they think about what has happened, and as they experience recovery efforts after the event.

When students share their experiences, thoughts and feelings about the event, LISTEN for RISK FACTORS for adverse reactions.

Risk factors that may indicate a need for counselling referral for students include:

- loss of a family member, schoolmate, or friend
- observing serious injury or the death of another person
- family members or friends missing after the event, past traumatic experiences or losses
- getting hurt or becoming sick due to the event
- home loss, family moves, changes in neighbourhoods/schools, and/or loss of belongings.

If a student has had any of these experiences, you may wish to consider referring her or him to the HSE services. Your NEPS psychologist will be available to provide support and advice. Now that you know what can affect your students after a disaster, school crisis, or emergency, you're ready to Listen, Protect, Connect, and Model & Teach

1.LISTEN, PROTECT, CONNECT, MODEL & TEACH

The first step after an event is to listen and pay attention to what they say and how they act. Your students may also show their feelings in non-verbal ways, like increased behavioural problems or increased withdrawal. Let your students know you are willing to listen and talk about the event, or to make referrals to talk to an appropriate professional, if they prefer it. Use the following questions to talk with your students. You can listen for clues that indicate when students are having a hard time. Write down a few examples that may be helpful to note:

- What might be preventing a student from coming to or staying in school?
- What might be preventing a student from paying attention or doing homework?
- What might be preventing a student from returning to other school based activities?

Listen, observe, and note any changes in:

- Behaviour and/or mood
- School performance
- Interactions with schoolmates and teachers
- Participation in school-based activities
- Behaviours at home that parents/guardians discuss with you.

LISTEN 2. PROTECT, CONNECT, MODEL & TEACH

You can help make your students feel better by doing some or all of the following:

- Answer questions simply and honestly, clearing up any confusion students may have about what happened
- Let your students know that they are not alone in their reactions
- Provide opportunities for your students to talk, draw, and play, but don't force it
- Talk to your students about what is being done by the school and community to keep everyone safe from harm
- Watch for anything in the environment that could re-traumatize your students
- Keep your eyes and ears open for bullying behaviours
- Maintain daily routines, activities and structure with clear expectations and consistent rules
- Make adjustments to assignments to be sensitive to students' current level of functioning
- Limit access to live television and the Internet that show disturbing scenes of the event
- Remember, what is not upsetting to adults may upset and confuse students, and vice versa
- Encourage students to "take a break" from the crisis focus with activities unrelated to the event
- Find ways for your students to feel helpful to your classroom, the school, and the community
- List other things you do that help your students feel better. Sharing this list with other teachers may increase ideas to help your students.

LISTEN, PROTECT 3.CONNECT, MODEL & TEACH

Reaching out to people in your school and community will help your students after a school crisis or emergency. These connections will build strength for everyone. Consider ways to make some or all of the following connections:

- "Check in" with students on a regular basis
- Find resources that can be supportive to your students and staff
- Restore interactive school activities, including sports, club meetings, student projects, and student councils, coaches, etc.)
- Encourage student activities with friends, including class projects and extracurricular activities

- Empathise with your students by allowing a little more time for them to learn new materials
- Build on your students' strengths by encouraging them to find ways to help them use what they have learned in the past to help them deal with the event
- Remind your students that major disasters, crises, and emergencies are rare
- Discuss feeling safe and times they have felt safe
- List programs and activities that connect you and your students with the community
- Share your list with other teachers to create a larger list of activities and resources.

LISTEN, PROTECT, CONNECT 4.MODEL & TEACH

As you help your students after a disaster, crisis, or emergency, your efforts may be more successful – and you may be less stressed – if you keep in mind:

- It is good to be aware of your own thoughts, feelings, and reactions, these can be seen and may affect your students
- How you cope and behave after an event will influence how your students cope and behave. Your students will be watching you for both verbal and non-verbal cues
- Monitor conversations that students may hear
- Acknowledge the difficulty of the situation, but demonstrate how people can come together to cope after such an event.

LISTEN, PROTECT, CONNECT, MODEL & 5.TEACH

Talk to your students about expected reactions after a crisis (emotional, behavioural, cognitive, and physiological). There are “normal” reactions to abnormal events.

- Different people may have very different reactions, even within the same family
- After the event, people may also have different amounts of time they need to cope and adjust
- Encourage your students to identify and use positive coping strategies to help them after the event
- Help your students problem-solve to get through each day successfully
- Help your students set small “doable” goals and share in these achievements as “wins” for the students and your classroom
- Remind students that with time and assistance, things generally get better. If they don't, they should let a parent or teacher know
- Over time, you, your students, their families, your classroom, can EXPECT RECOVERY.

Adapted by the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) for Irish schools from Psychological First Aid materials developed by the American Red Cross (2014 and FEMA, see www.ready.gov). We acknowledge with thanks.

R24

USEFUL WEBSITES AND HELPLINES FOR ACCESSING RESOURCES

NEPS has identified the following websites which schools may find helpful. However, all materials should be reviewed by school management to ensure that they conform to school ethos and policy before they are used.

TRAINING - www.nosp.ie

ASIST Training: ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) is a two-day interactive workshop in suicide first-aid. It is suitable for all kinds of caregivers - health workers, teachers, community workers, Gardaí, youth workers, volunteers, people responding to family, friends and co-workers. It is free of charge. If you'd like to make a difference in your community, you may wish to access ASIST training and learn how to help. Information can be obtained on the website of the National Office for Suicide Prevention.

SafeTALK: SafeTALK 'suicide alertness for everyone' is a half day training programme that prepares participants to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources. These specific skills are called suicide alertness and are taught with the expectation that the person learning them will use them to help reduce suicide risk in their communities. Participants learn how to provide practical help to persons with thoughts of suicide in only a few hours. Following a SafeTALK workshop you will be more willing and able to perform an important helping role for persons with thoughts of suicide.

WEBSITES

Barnardos provide resources and advice on www.barnardos.ie/resources, www.barnardos.ie/teenhelp

The Childhood Bereavement Network (CBN) is a multi-professional federation of organisations and individuals working with bereaved children and young people. www.irishchildhoodbereavementnetwork.ie

Cruse Bereavement Care exists to promote the wellbeing of bereaved people and to enable anyone bereaved by death to understand their grief and cope with their loss. www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk

The Professional Development for Teachers (PDST) Health and Wellbeing Team provide support for teachers at primary and post-primary level in physical education (PE), social personal and health education (SPHE) which includes anti-bullying, child protection, mental health and wellbeing, relationships and sexuality education (RSE) and other SPHE related areas. Supports offered to schools include in-service for principals, co-ordinators, teachers of SPHE, whole staff groups; programme planning; school policy development; schools visits. www.pdst.ie.

The former SPHE Support Service has been integrated into the Health and Wellbeing team of the PDST. Visit www.sphe.ie for further information and to book post-primary SPHE courses.

The National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) was established to oversee the implementation of 'Reach Out' the National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention, and to co-ordinate suicide prevention efforts around the country. The NOSP works closely with the HSE Suicide Prevention Officers. Up-to-date contact details for suicide prevention officers can be found on the NOSP website www.nosp.ie

The Irish Association for Suicidology (IAS) sets out to be a forum for all individuals and voluntary groups involved in any aspect of suicidology for the exchange of knowledge gained from differing perspectives and experiences www.ias.ie

Irish Hospice Foundation - www.hospicefoundation.ie

Lifelines supports all people who are affected in anyway by self-injury within the United Kingdom and beyond. It supports people who self-injure, and their family and friends. www.selfharm.org

Winstonswish Foundation, help for grieving children and their families. www.winstonswish.org.uk

Resources and support for those dealing with suicide, depression or emotional distress, particularly teenagers and young adults. www.papyrus-uk.org

A national charity committed to improving the mental health of all children and young people. www.youngminds.org.uk

An Irish website covering all aspects of health, lifestyle, culture and craic. It's an online youth information centre, a magazine, a health clinic, a contact directory, a youth media forum a take action initiative, a community building place and lots more. www.spunout.ie

A site that focuses on issues relating to youth in Ireland today. www.youth.ie

An Australian site that helps young people through tough times. www.reachout.com.au

Mental Health Ireland aims to promote positive mental health and to actively support persons with a mental illness, their families and carers by identifying their needs and advocating their rights. The pro teen matters web magazine, which is created by young people for young people, has information about physical and mental health, frequently asked questions, competitions, jokes and stories. www.mentalhelathireland.ie

Non-judgemental information and support. www.gayswitchboard.ie

HELPLINES

Remind students that if they need someone to talk to, at any time of the day or night, they can ring either:

Childline:	1800 666 666 (free calls)
The Samaritans:	1850 60 90 90 (Local call cost)

Ratified by the BoM on 28th April 2020