

# Short-term response checklist

24hrs–48hrs

Immediate

1 week–3 months

Short-term

3 months–12 months

Longer-term

This stage focuses on the strategies and actions that will foster recovery and restore mental health and wellbeing.

This phase assumes:

- that the school has been informed of a death, and the death is confirmed
- that the staff, students and the wider school community been appropriately informed of the death.

Effective postvention support is a suicide prevention strategy among those people exposed to, and bereaved by suicide. Postvention, is therefore, prevention for the future (Andriessen, 2009).

Key actions in this stage include:

- ongoing support of student and staff wellbeing
- continuing to closely monitor and follow up on student absences
- restoring the school to its regular routine
- enhancing the confidence of educators to restore safety and enhance wellbeing by:
  - understanding how young people might experience grief and loss
  - addressing behaviours in the classroom that may indicate that additional support is required
- preparing for the funeral
- managing and monitoring spontaneous memorials
- reviewing the student support room and sensitively closing (usually after the funeral).
- conducting in an operational debrief.

## Remember

As an employee of the Department you and your immediate family members (18 years and older) can access professional, counselling and mental wellbeing support through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Confidential counselling is delivered virtually, by phone or face-to-face at a time that is convenient for you. To organise support call **1300 361 008 – 24 hours a day 7 days a week**. This service is fully funded by the Department.

Action	Person responsible
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Support Room <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continue to run the student support room, reviewing it regularly</li> <li>• sensitively close when appropriate (usually after the funeral).</li> </ul>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Consideration and review of <b>spontaneous memorials</b> at school.	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Preparing for the funeral</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prepare for participation and/or attendance at the <b>funeral</b> where the bereaved family have invited family, friends and community members</li> <li>• consider how information pertaining to the funeral will be communicated to students</li> <li>• communicate to parents/carers:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– parental supervision at the funeral is essential if student attendance is welcomed by the beavered family and students chose to attend</li> <li>– that staff attending the funeral will be there in a personal capacity and will not be supervising students</li> <li>– students who attend the funeral should not return to school and should be supervised at home by parents/carers</li> <li>– normal school processes for informing the school of a student absence, attending an appointment off-site or leaving school early apply.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are familiar with the headspace information on <u>understanding grief and loss</u></li> <li>• are observing how students may be processing the loss and adjusting to the news of a suicide</li> <li>• are making the necessary referrals for additional support</li> <li>• understand that grief is a normal response to a loss; there is no right way to grieve and our experience is unique and will be influenced by a range of factors</li> <li>• look out for students and staff experiencing prolonged symptoms of grief impacting their ability to engage in regular activities (beyond 2–4 weeks after exposure to a suicide) and facilitate access to appropriate support.</li> </ul>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate appropriate support for staff and students experiencing prolonged symptoms of grief (beyond 2–4 weeks) that is impact their ability to engage in regular activities.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to <b>monitor</b> and <b>support</b> the mental health and wellbeing of students.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to <b>monitor</b> and <b>support</b> the mental health and wellbeing of staff.	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Continue documentation</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Conduct an operational debrief</b>	

Follow-up actions:

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Person responsible:

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Date:

Time:

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