

# Longer-term response checklist

24hrs–48hrs

Immediate

This stage will aid the school's recovery and focuses the school community along the continuum of mental health and wellbeing from response, through recovery and back to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. Research indicates that, with time and appropriate supports provided in the initial days, weeks and months following exposure to the suicide, for the most part, your community will be able to return to normal functioning.

It is recommended that you reflect on the incident and identify the strategies and areas of growth that will strengthen your school's capacity to respond to an incident in the future.

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).

1 week–3 months

Short-term

Key actions in this stage include:

- ongoing monitoring of student and staff wellbeing
- responding to and assessing requests for permanent memorials
- strategies to maintain the mental health and wellbeing of your school community
- consideration of relevant information sessions
- planned response to anniversaries (3, 6, 12 months following suicide) and other important events
- on-going documentation of relevant mental health and wellbeing activities and support provided.

3 months–12 months

Longer-term

## 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.

Actions	Person responsible
<input type="checkbox"/> Consideration and review of <b>permanent memorials</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider your school’s precedent regarding permanent memorials in the event a student dies. Responding to a suicide death should be recognised in the same way to avoid stigmatising of the death; however, safety takes priority and may influence the response.</li> <li>• Where possible avoid permanent memorials on school grounds to minimise the potential for students to be continually re-triggered by the death.</li> <li>• Any decision should be made in consultation with school leadership, SSS and the bereaved family.</li> </ul>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Maintaining the mental health and wellbeing</b> of your school community (students, staff and parents/carers)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Consider hosting <b>information sessions</b> for staff, parents/carers and students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any session offered should be responding to an identified need and be facilitated by an appropriately trained and evidenced-based speaker/service.</li> <li>• Consider the appropriate timing and additional resources that would be required to ensure safety and follow-up support is available if level of distress increases.</li> </ul>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Engage in <b>regular communication</b> with your staff to provide any updates or modifications that will occur in response to the incident.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan for <b>anniversaries</b> and other <b>important dates</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Build the capacity of your school by implementing a <b>whole-school</b> approach to mental health and wellbeing	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Continue documentation</b>	

Follow-up actions:

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Person responsible: .....

Date: ..... Time: .....