

SUICIDE PREVENTION REFERRAL PROCESS



(After School Hours)

BALDWIN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

In the event that a school's staff member becomes aware of a student who expresses suicidal ideation or behavior **after school has dismissed**, the following steps should be taken:

1. Inform the school's counselor, social worker, or administrator via telephone. **(It is not permissible for the school counselor, school social worker, or administrator to be notified of a student's suicidal ideation or behavior via e-mail or text.)**
2. The school's counselor, social worker, or administrator will make contact with the student's parent/guardian immediately.
3. In the event that school personnel are unable to make contact with the student's parent/guardian, contact the school's resource officer and ask for him/her to do a welfare check at the student's home.

If the school's resource officer is not available, contact the local police department or the Sheriff's Office and ask for them to do a welfare check at the student's home.

4. Once contact has been made with the student's parent/guardian, the school counselor, social worker, or administrator will need to share with the parent various resources that are available—in the event that the student needs to either be evaluated or hospitalized on that night.
5. If there is not an immediate need for the student to either be evaluated or hospitalized on the night contact is made with the parent/guardian, inform the parent/guardian that she will need to schedule a time to meet with the school's counselor or social worker on the next day in order to further discuss the student's suicidal ideation or behavior.

During this meeting with the parent, she will be given a copy of the Suicide Prevention Resources handout and the safety plan (if one has been completed for the student). She will also be asked to sign the *Suicide Intervention Parent Acknowledgement of Notification Letter*, which documents the need to seek medical/mental health assistance.

The student's parent/guardian will be encouraged to complete a referral (as well as an Authorization for Release of Information) to Alta Pointe. Upon completion of the referral form, it

should be faxed to 928.0216. **(DO NOT FAX OR SEND THE ALTA POINTE REFERRAL FORM TO THE PREVENTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES COORDINATOR.)** The student's parent/guardian should be directed to contact the Access to Care Department, Care Pointe, at 450.2211 or 1-888-335-3044.

In addition to encouraging a referral to Alta Pointe, the parent/guardian will also be advised that it is in the best interest of the student to be evaluated/assessed by a medical doctor or mental health professional to ensure that he/she is no longer at risk of harming him/herself.

6. Upon return to school the next day, the school's counselor or social worker will need to do the following:
 - a. Talk/conference with the student who expressed suicidal ideation or behavior in an effort to ensure that the student doesn't have any intentions of harming him/herself.
 - b. Assess if there is a need for the completion of a safety plan.
 - c. Ensure that a conference is held with the student's parent/guardian.
7. After talking with the student and his parent/guardian, the school counselor or school social worker will complete the ***Suicide Intervention Referral Form***, which should be forwarded to the Prevention and Support Services Coordinator via the courier. **(TO ENSURE CONFIDENTIALITY, DO NOT FAX THE SUICIDE INTERVENTION REFERRAL FORM.)** The school counselor or school social worker should make a copy for him/herself, which should be retained for his/her personal files. The principal's signature should also be included on this Suicide Intervention Referral Form before being forwarded to the Prevention and Support Services Coordinator.
8. If the student is hospitalized on the night contact is made with the parent, then the meeting with the parent, as well as the student, will need to take place upon the student's return to school. However, the *Suicide Intervention Referral Form* will still need to be completed and submitted to the Prevention and Support Services Coordinator on the next school day following the after-school hours intervention.
9. The school principal should be notified of the student who is at suicide risk and should also be apprised of all steps taken to ensure the emotional well-being and safety of the student who has expressed suicidal ideation or behavior. **(Ideally, the school principal will be notified on the same night that the school counselor or social worker has been made aware of the student's suicidal ideation or behavior.)**