

BRIDGEVALLEY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

CAMPUS REGULATION

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February 15, 2015	Dealing with Suicide: Prevention, Intervention, and Post-vention	CR-D-15-2	1 of 4

STATEMENT

Suicide is the second leading cause of death of college students. The stress of the college experience and the normal developmental issues of young adulthood place some students under emotional pressures that occasionally manifests itself in a threat or attempt by the student to take his or her own life. The college will treat all threats or attempted suicides as serious regardless of the degree of lethality involved. When a student threatens or attempts suicide, the college will take the steps necessary to ensure the safety of that student and any other individuals in the college setting. Suicide, attempted suicide, and suicidal gestures have detrimental effects on both the involved student and other students in the community campus environment.

DEFINITION

Suicide is defined as, the purposeful act of causing one's own death. Attempted suicide is considered to be a person engaging in life threatening behavior(s) intended to jeopardize his/her life through an act, threat, or gesture.

GUIDELINES

The following processes/procedures are to be followed for suicide prevention, intervention and post-vention:

Prevention

Students will receive information via Suicide Prevention/ information sharing activities and events. New students will be provided information via new student orientation. Other possible avenues to include Freshman Experience Classes, Student Email listserv, DMS, The campus student newsletter. The goal of the educational programming offered by Student Services is to promote understanding concerning the dynamics of suicide and to recognize behaviors that may signal suicidal intent. Brochures and flyers will be distributed and provided regarding depression, general principles about mental health, stress, and related topics to student's concerns.

Information will also be made available to faculty and staff regarding how to recognize behaviors that may signal suicidal intent. Guidelines on intervention via this manual will also be shared with staff to provide them with the necessary information in relation to intervention.

Intervention

The following are guidelines for immediate and non-immediate intervention in the case of a suicide threat or attempt. It is recognized that special circumstances may arise which require deviation from these guidelines, and that administrative discretion must be exercised in these circumstances.

1. The Dean of Students (or designee) will be notified immediately. If the Dean of Students is not available the BridgeValley Chief of Police (or designee) should be contacted immediately.
2. The Dean (or designee) or Chief of Police (or designee) will notify:
 - a. Medical emergency personnel (as needed)
 - b. BridgeValley Counseling Services (during office hours)
 - c. Director of Counseling Services (after hours)
3. Medical emergency personnel will transport the student to the hospital for medical evaluation and mental health assessment upon arrival on campus.
4. The Dean (or designee) will contact the family of the student (once the situation is stable i.e. the student is no longer in danger) who threatened or attempted suicide, when appropriate, and will render support to family members and significant others as needed.

When the threat is not immediate, but suggested, the student will be referred to counseling services that same day. The counselor will attempt to make a written “no suicide” safety contract with the student. The contract could state, “I will not make any attempt to harm myself”. The contract should also include a mutually agreed upon date by which the person will seek professional help (See Safety Contract) If the student refuses then it becomes an immediate threat and should be treated as such.

Post-Vention/Clearance to return to school

1. The student must provide documentation supporting the need for an excused absence the day prior to or day of their return to campus.
2. The student may be asked to fill out a release of information to the profession who is currently treating the student if they desire additional counseling services via the school.
3. The same waiver of absence policy that is addressed in the Disability Services Handbook will be applied.

Intervening with a Suicide Threat: General Employee Procedure Check List

If a student has threatened suicide directly or indirectly, the following procedures are to be followed. Take all suicide threats seriously! A suicide threat is to be handled as a crisis intervention and potential medical emergency.

1. Stay with the student or designate another BridgeValley employee to supervise the student constantly and without exception until help arrives.
2. Under no circumstances should you allow the student to leave the school alone or with non-family members.
3. Do not agree to keep a student's suicidal intentions a secret.
4. If the student has the means to carry out the threatened suicide on his or her person, determine if he or she will voluntarily relinquish it. Do not force the student to do so. Do not place yourself in danger.
5. Take the suicidal student to an area away from others.
6. Notify the Dean of Students immediately. If the Dean of Students is not available the BridgeValley Chief of Police (or designee) should be contacted immediately.
7. Inform the suicidal student that outside help has been called and describe what the next steps will be.