

WHAT IS STUDENT ASSISTANCE?

Student Assistance is a program aimed at helping students in all grade levels to overcome issues that interfere with their education. The main goals of the Student Assistance Program are to help identify students in distress, to intervene, and to get them to help as quickly as possible. Early intervention and treatment can restore students to their fullest potential so that they can once again become successful in school, at home, and in the community.

Intervention is a caring situation. It cannot take place without friends and relatives who are willing to get help for someone they love. Interventions save lives. Participation may be painful or frightening, but it is less so than to lose someone to self-destructive behavior. Become involved! Please help the team to help those students to a complete recovery, to a more complete life free from drugs or other disabling problems.

The main component of the program is a core team of teachers, staff, administrators, nurses, and counselors. All staff members listed below are state certified by participating in over 30 hours of training. Areas of training include: drug and alcohol use, abuse and addiction, enabling behaviors, intervention, recovery, the recognition of students with eating disorders, other dysfunctional behaviors and after care.

Any student, parent, teacher, or community member who has a concern may contact the student's guidance counselor for advice or help. The confidentiality of the student and others concerned with the referral is always observed.

The PA State Department of Education and Department of Health has mandated that all schools provide these services.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

There are a number of outside agencies in Venango County that offer services to students and their family members. The following agencies operate for the benefit of the residents and can be contacted at the phone numbers listed below.

- **Childline:** 1-800-932-0313
Emergency number to report suspected child abuse cases.
- **Venango County Crisis Hotline:** 432-9111
24-hour emergency hotline
- **PPC Violence Free Network Hotline:** 677-7273
Counseling is provided for domestic violence victims and their families.
- **Suicide-Crisis Intervention Hotline:** 1-800-243-4944
24-hour hotline.
- **National Alcohol and Drug Abuse Hotline:** 1-800-252-6465
24-hour hotline.
- **Children and Youth Services of Venango County:** 432-9743
This agency helps resolve problems experienced by school children at home, school and in the community. It offers individual, group, and family counseling as an aid in solving personal and family problems.
- **Venango County Protective Intake & Crisis Unit:** 432-9100
Comprehensive intake unit for emergency mental health and drug and alcohol services.
- **Clarion Psychiatric Center:** 1-800-253-4906
This is a 48-bed psychiatric hospital for children, adolescents, and adults.
- **Family Service and Children's Aid Society:** 677-4005

This is a private confidential family counseling service. Family Service deals with marital problems, drug and alcohol problems, unwed pregnancies, and any situation that might be affecting the stability of the family.

- **Juvenile Probation: 432-9623**
This agency deals with legal situations associated with our youth.
- **Venango County Non-Emergency: 676-4545**
This line provides non-emergency 24-hour, 7-day assessment for psychiatric hospitalization, crisis intervention, and referral. This service is provided for residents of all ages for problems of a mental health or mental retardation nature.
- **UPMC – Behavioral Health Services/Drug & Alcohol Services: 676-7600**
- **Northwest Legal Services: 437-3028**
Legal services provided free in most cases.
- **Regional Counseling Center: 676-5614**
The drug and alcohol and mental health programs have counselors who see people on an outpatient basis.
- **Victims Resource Center, Inc.: 437-1996**
Free and confidential services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- **PA Department of Health: 677-0672**
Well baby clinic, HIV testing and counseling, health screenings.

C.A.R.E. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

To make available a supportive network for the prevention, early identification and intervention of potentially at-risk students at Cranberry Junior-Senior High School and to provide an educational component to the professional staff, student body, and community.

GENERAL REFERRAL PROCEDURE

1. Anyone interested in referring a student may approach a C.A.R.E. Team member and/or fill out a general referral form.
2. Parents are contacted.
3. At the C.A.R.E. Team meeting data is collected when necessary.
4. A case manager may be assigned.
5. The C.A.R.E. Team reviews data and makes the appropriate referral when necessary.
6. The appropriate agency assesses the student.
7. The team or a specific team member will continue to monitor the student.

8. The confidentiality of the student will always be observed with any referral.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

In 1986, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency provided initial funding to create the Pennsylvania Comprehensive Drug and Alcohol Prevention/Intervention Program. This program was initiated in October 1986 to prevent substance use and abuse by middle and secondary school students.

The program consists of five district alcohol and other drug prevention components: Curriculum, the Elementary Absenteeism Program, the Student Leadership Program, the Parent Education Program, and the Student Assistance Program. The five components form a comprehensive approach to substance abuse prevention in key areas of the student's life.

STUDENT SUICIDAL/HOMICIDAL IDEATION PROCEDURES

Definition: Whenever a student makes intentions known to harm themselves or another, we as district employees have an obligation to act in a way that ensures the safety and security of all individuals involved. Administrator/staff involved shall have the sole responsibility for following the steps outlined. If additional staff is available, they may be assigned one or more of the duties.

General Procedure:

1. Do not let a potentially suicidal/homicidal student out of your sight.
2. Immediately notify the guidance counselor responsible for that student's grade level. Refer all students making such comments or intentions known. Do not attempt to assess the student's level or risk or the seriousness of their intention independently. Staff should maintain confidentiality at all times.
3. The grade level counselor, school administrator, or school nurse will assess the student's level of mental duress and will collaborate with building level administration on a plan of action. This assessment may include the use of a predefined threat assessment tool, when appropriate. That plan will consider the safety and security of all students as its greatest concern and will include at least one, but possibly all, of the following:
 - a. Contacting the student's parent or guardian to inform them of the student's intention and assessed level of mental duress.
 - b. Contacting the district SAP liaison/county to further assess the student's level of mental duress.
 - c. Contacting an advocate from the county mental health department to come to the school to evaluate the student's need for inpatient mental health counseling.
4. In all instances, the affected student's parent will be notified of the actions being taken to ensure the safety and security of all persons involved.
5. In the event of homicidal ideation or the indication of the use of a weapon or explosives, administration will collaborate with the School Resource Officer to determine the most appropriate course of action and will defer to their professional judgment if appropriate. This course of action will include at least one, but may include several of the following outcomes:

- a. Contact the student's parent/guardian and inform them of the student's intention and assessed level of threat.
 - b. Conference with the student's parent/guardian, student, School Resource Officer, and school personnel to discuss the ramifications of the student's statements/behavior.
 - c. The School Resource Officer will take the appropriate action with the student, which may involve filing a citation against the student.
 - d. The School Resource Officer may transport the student to a mental health or law enforcement facility if deemed appropriate in their professional judgment.
6. Administration will notify the superintendent's office if appropriate.

CRISIS RESPONSE PROTOCOL

If a student, staff, or community catastrophic event occurs, Cranberry Area High School will provide support for students, parents, and members of the school staff by establishing the following procedures to help all individuals react in a positive fashion, and deal effectively with the situation.

Immediate Response:

1. The principal notifies the superintendent and C.A.R.E. Crisis Team.
2. The C.A.R.E. Crisis Team will make arrangements for postvention procedures in the district.
3. The details of the situation are reported to C.A.R.E. Crisis Team.
4. The building administration initiates the emergency phone chain.
5. Arrange for substitute teachers for all C.A.R.E. Crisis Team members if necessary. Notify all substitutes in the building to report early for a special staff meeting.
6. All building staff will be notified of an early morning staff meeting. Activity Period will be cancelled to allow time for staff debriefing.

Day One in School:

1. A faculty meeting held before school will give teachers the facts and plans they need for the day.
 - a. The Building Administrator will review the facts and involve the C.A.R.E. Crisis Team in the review process to implement the postvention process.
 - b. A policy for handling media contacts is discussed. All media contacts will be directed to the superintendent. Building administrators will discourage media personnel on school property to discourage contact with the general student body and faculty immediately following a crisis.
 - c. The C.A.R.E. Crisis Team will describe the feelings which students may be experiencing, procedures of the C.A.R.E. Crisis Team, and the need for awareness of warning signs in students. Time is allowed and needed for staff support and discussion. Staff members should be encouraged to seek help should they experience personal difficulty.

2. Acknowledgement of the catastrophic event will be announced by individual classroom teachers, reading a prepared statement at a specified time.
3. All students who are distraught or express a need to talk to someone are referred to the postvention C.A.R.E. Crisis Team. It is stressed that all classes follow a routine schedule.
4. A letter is to be sent to the parents of all students enrolled in the building regarding the recent catastrophic event when appropriate.
5. The outline of the C.A.R.E. Crisis team operation is as follows:
 - a. C.A.R.E. Crisis Team members assemble before the school day begins. Members may be assigned space and responsibilities for either group or individual intervention work. All distraught students must have adult supervision. All students reporting to these areas will use sign-in sheets.
 - b. Any students identified as "critically distraught" by the C.A.R.E. Crisis Team will be seen for individual or group interviews. Students will be excused from school only when accompanied by parent/guardian.
 - c. C.A.R.E. Team members will meet and discuss any identified critically distraught individuals who may require mental health referral and/or other follow-up.
 - d. The building administrator will call a faculty meeting at the end of the school day to review the day's happenings and to develop further strategies, if necessary. Staff are reminded to be on the lookout for any of the warning signs of distressed students.
 - e. The C.A.R.E. Team coordinates phone calls to parents of individual students identified as particularly distraught. Resources within the community are shared and appropriate advice is given on how to handle their son/daughter.
 - f. Feeder schools who might be affected by the catastrophic event should be notified.
 - g. In the case of student or staff death, a building administrator contacts the funeral director to obtain funeral arrangements and discuss release of students and their attendance at the funeral proceedings.
 - h. Students released for funeral proceedings must have written parental permission submitted to the building administrator prior to attendance. An adult must accompany the students.

Day Two in School:

1. Students should participate in normal classroom activities to the extent possible.
2. The C.A.R.E. Team will be available to assist teachers and students.
3. C.A.R.E. Team monitors the behavior of the critically distraught students. Parents of students who continue to seek counsel are so informed. These calls are documented.
4. Faculty members who are experiencing personal difficulty with the situation should be encouraged to seek help.

Day Three in School:

1. A faculty meeting may be held at the end of day three to provide the staff with time for reflecting, support, and to discuss interventions which have taken place.
2. Periodic, discreet checks should be made by a guidance counselor or the C.A.R.E. Team to assess the critically distraught students overall adjustment following an individual interview.

Follow-Up:

A C.A.R.E. Team meeting can be held at the end of the first week to discuss the interviews which took place and provide staff with a time for reflection and support. Staff are reminded to continue to monitor the behavior of all students especially those identified as critically distraught.

CHILD ABUSE

What is abuse?

The term "child abuse" shall mean any of the following:

- a. Any recent act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes nonaccidental serious physical injury to a child.
- b. An act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes nonaccidental serious mental injury to or sexual abuse or exploitation of a child.
- c. A recent act, failure to act or series of the acts or failures to act by a perpetrator which creates an imminent risk of serious physical injury to or sexual abuse or exploitation of a child.
- d. Serious physical neglect by a perpetrator constituting prolonged or repeated lack of supervision or the failure to provide the essentials of life, including adequate medical care, which endangers a child's life or development or impairs the child's functioning.

Who must report?

Reporters fall into two categories. Everyone is a permissive reporter and may make a report of suspected child abuse. Mandated reporters are those individuals who come into contact with children in the course of their employment, occupation, or practice of their profession. Mandated reporters are obligated by law to make a report any time they have reasonable suspicion that a child they are aware of through their employment has been abused. Permissive reporters may report anonymously; mandated reporters may not.

How to Report

All Cranberry Area School District employees are required to follow district established procedures and protocols. Any other person not required by the law to report may report suspected cases either orally or in writing to Childline.