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Acknowledgements

This resource is a revision of a previous document, and reflects many years of experience and wisdom gained in helping our communities cope with grief and loss. It is a resource to equip you and your community to navigate through these painful times.

Our hope is that the ideas we offer here will give you confidence and a sense of direction when you are called to support individuals, a class, or the entire school community in times of loss or crisis.

We are grateful for the work of the writing team of the 2003 revision of the *Bereavement Response Protocol*, upon which much of this material is based.

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All of us who lovingly embrace this ministry of accompanying others through loss are so blessed to have Jesus as our foundation – our guide. Jesus tells us, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (*John 14:6*). Jesus will never leave us; he stays with us in joy and in sorrow. As he reminds his disciples, “Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (*Matthew 28:20*).

Taken from *Dealing With Loss and Grief* (Gross, McKeever, Debly), Novalis, 2007

Rationale

There are many types of events which can adversely affect a school community. The purpose of the Bereavement and Crisis Response Protocol is to provide a framework for responding to a bereavement or crisis. These may include involvement in an accident, serious illness or the death of a student, staff member or other significant person. While some documents in this protocol specifically refer to death, the resources may be used, with modification, in a variety of circumstances which cause sudden grief and anxiety in a school community.

School crises are often unpredictable. Advance planning in reviewing this protocol is necessary to enable the school community to respond effectively. The goal is to properly mark such events with Christian dignity and compassion, and to assist in the healing process by supporting grieving communities.

It is most appropriate that our school response to tragedy reflect our Catholic beliefs, values and traditions, while respecting the increasing diversity of our community. Cultures can greatly differ in their responses to bereavement and it is important to be sensitive to related practices and traditions.

As school staff members know their community well, they are often more sensitive to local needs and characteristics. A local tragedy is always shared by the broader community of the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board and , therefore, the support of the Board Crisis Response Team may be made available as described in this guideline.

Our hope is that the ideas we offer here will give you confidence and a sense of direction when you are called to support individuals, a class, or the entire school community in times of loss or crisis.

In the final analysis, our collective response as a Catholic, Christian community gives witness to the fundamental truth of our faith that Jesus is “the resurrection and the life” (*John 11:25*).

Recommended Composition of School Crisis Response Team

In General

1. Select individuals with an interest in and capacity for providing a pastoral response.
2. It may be appropriate that the staff component of the Caring and Safe Schools Team would constitute the School Crisis Response Team.
3. The composition of the team should be reviewed annually (before the start of each school year) by the Principal, including an updating of the staff phone tree.

Suggested Members of the School Crisis Response Team

Elementary School:

Principal/Vice-Principal	_____
Teacher Representative	_____
Secretary/Office Manager	_____
Custodian(s)	_____
Youth Worker	_____
Other	_____

Secondary School:

Principal/ Vice Principal	_____
Teacher Representative	_____
Student Services Representative	_____
Office Manager	_____
Custodian(s)	_____
Pastoral Representative	_____
Youth Worker	_____
Religion Department Representative	_____
Other	_____

The Board Crisis Response Team

In some cases, principals and supervisors may be able to cope with a crisis, death, or tragic event on their own, without the support of the Crisis Response Team. At other times, however, the impact of the event requires additional resources to assist those within the affected community. The impact of the tragic event or death can place extraordinary demands on the principal or supervisor and adversely affect his or her ability to function. In all cases, principals are to contact their superintendent who may call the Board Crisis Response Team to provide added support and direction.

The Board Crisis Response Team Members Are:

Coordinator of Religious and Family Life Education

Social Worker

Special Assignment Teacher – Religious Education

Chaplaincy Leaders

Youth Workers

Others as deemed appropriate (e.g. school psychologists, pastors and parish staff, guidance staff)

Responding to a Crisis

The responsibilities of the Board Crisis Response Team members may include any or all of the following:

- Gather relevant data and facts about the situation
- Be available for initial staff meeting where crisis information is shared with all staff; plan and offer to implement a prayer service at that time
- Assist principal to develop a response plan
- Provide direct support to students in the form of in-class discussion, care stations
- Provide informal support to staff as needed
- Provide resources to school and teachers
- Assist in identifying students who are high-risk and be available to provide support or referral to outside agencies when needed
- Facilitate the notification of other personnel and agencies, when appropriate, and provide direction and support as needed
- Assist with planning a memorial service
- Communicate with parents when necessary

Guidelines:

The Bereavement Protocol serves to:

- Provide a framework for support action in the event of a traumatic occurrence in a school community, recognizing that all members of that community will be emotionally affected
- Provide consolation and comfort to students, staff members and families
- Consider and respect the wishes of the family affected by the trauma directly (as appropriate)
- Provide direction to the school community to respond in a tangible manner to the bereaved
- Provide appropriate follow-up supportive services for students, teachers and other staff members



The Principal

September Tasks

1. It is recommended that the complete Bereavement Response Protocol be reviewed each September with the view to confirm:
 - The establishment of the Bereavement Team
 - Ensuring members are aware of roles
 - Phone numbers of community resources (Appendix A)
 - Location and management of care stations (Appendix D)
 - An opportunity for the school bereavement team to be in-serviced
 - Any necessary adaptations as indicated by the unique character of your school community
 - The history of school families (staff and students) who have suffered significant loss in the past and/or may be currently in crisis

2. Review the Bereavement Response Protocol with school secretary and team members.

3. Update staff phone tree. (Appendix B)

The Principal

Immediate Response Checklist

(Depending on the circumstances, these tasks may be delegated to another staff member.)

Completed Task

- ___ 1. Address any safety or health issues that may have arisen related to the death and take the necessary steps to resolve them in a manner consistent with the Board's Safe Schools and Occupational Health and Safety policies
- ___ 2. Refer to the bereavement and crisis response protocol and delegate duties accordingly.
- ___ 3. Clarify the wishes of the immediate family and respect their wishes for sharing of information regarding the death.
- ___ 4. Notify appropriate Board personnel:
- ___ Director (613) 354-6257 ext. 449
- ___ Superintendent (613) 354-6257 ext. ___
- ___ Office of Religious and Family Life Education (613) 354-6257 ext. 462 or 471
- ___ Youth Worker (613) _____ ext. ___
- ___ 5. Notify members of the school bereavement and crisis response team and establish time and place of the initial meeting.
- ___ 6. Notify school staff via phone tree, being sensitive to those most directly affected.
- ___ 7. Notify Pastor of local parish church. Name: _____
(613) _____.
- ___ 8. Contact an administrative colleague to provide support as required.
- ___ 9. Identify students at risk; be sensitive to their needs when informing all students.
- ___ 10. Arrange a staff meeting/prayer service as soon as possible. Share copies of *Talking to Students About Death: Do's and Don'ts* (p. 18)
- ___ 11. Set up a temporary memorial in the school (e.g. front foyer, trophy case. etc.) consistent with the wishes of the family and if the school bereavement team feel it is appropriate.

- 12. Inform parents (e.g. letter) of any memorial liturgy/assemblies according to the wishes of the family.
- 13. Consult school calendar of events and make adjustments as required (e.g. postponing/cancelling guest speakers, assemblies, field trips, etc.)
- 14. As appropriate, provide basic information to neighbouring ALCDSB schools where family and friends may be affected.
- 15. In a secondary school, inform Student Council Staff Advisor to co-ordinate student response.

The Principal

Follow-up Tasks

Completed Task

- ___ 1. Review any safety issues that may have arisen related to the death and take the necessary steps to resolve them in a manner consistent with the Board's Safe School and Occupational Health and Safety policies.
- ___ 2. Direct clerical staff to remove student's name from any active files (i.e. attendance, library files, computer files, seating plans, book orders, bus lists, lunch clubs etc.).
- ___ 3. Plan appropriate prayer celebrations or Eucharistic Liturgies to address the needs of the school community, and the family
- ___ 4. Formally acknowledge those who provided services and support throughout the crisis within one week of the funeral. (Appendix D)
- ___ 5. Provide an opportunity for follow-up involving all staff. (Appendix I)
- ___ 6. Begin considerations for creating any suitable memorials (e.g. School Year Book, plaques, scholarships, tree planting, etc.) consistent with the wishes of the family. (Appendix N)

Secretary/Office Manager

Response Checklist

Completed	Task
-----------	------

- | | |
|-----|---|
| ___ | 1. Identify siblings and friends who may be in attendance at other schools in either our system or with the co-terminus school board; pass on relevant information to the Principal. |
| ___ | 2. Contact other relevant staff, including part-time teachers and support staff, staff who may be absent or on leave, previous staff, including any other educational service staff involved with the deceased. |
| ___ | 3. Bring to the attention of any teachers who may have had absent students during the time of the death of the need to inform those students about the death upon their return. |
| ___ | 4. Inform CUPE and OECTA local executive |
| ___ | 5. Inform bus/taxi driver and crossing guard(s) as required. |
| ___ | 6. Post information with regard to the wake, funeral, and memorial liturgy in staff room. |
| ___ | 7. Direct all inquiries regarding the death or tragic event to the Principal. |
| ___ | 8. Track bills to be paid. |
| ___ | 9. Complete other duties at the direction of the Principal. |

Pastoral Representative (Secondary – Chaplaincy Leader)

(In an elementary school, these tasks may be assumed by another member of the School Bereavement and Crisis Response Team.)

Response Checklist

Completed Task

- | | |
|-------|---|
| _____ | <p>1. At the direction of the principal, prepare appropriate prayers for:
<i>(Appendix H)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency staff meeting • Initial school announcement • Assembly |
| _____ | <p>2. Assist with the identification of persons in need. Direct to care station(s) as required.</p> |
| _____ | <p>3. Assist in the identification, as appropriate, of student and staff caregivers</p> |
| _____ | <p>4. Following the initial contact by principal, and at his or her direction, offer support to the deceased person's family</p> |
| _____ | <p>5. In consultation with the principal, coordinate formal expression of condolence to family on behalf of the staff (e.g. flowers, card, charitable donation, etc.)</p> <p><i>Note: Principal will provide funds through appropriate school budget.</i></p> |
| _____ | <p>6. Plan liturgies as required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite family of deceased (co-ordinate with Principal/team leader) • Contact Students' Council for support • Inform custodian of needs |
| _____ | <p>7. In conjunction with the Principal, assist as required in the funeral and reception planning.</p> |
| _____ | <p>8. Participate, with the Principal, in a debriefing opportunity.</p> |

Youth Worker

Response Checklist

Completed Task

- _____ 1. Consult with the Principal and Board Social Worker regarding initial steps. If necessary, arrangements will be made for your presence at the grieving school.

- _____ 2. Assist in the identification of students/staff that may be at a higher risk for emotional and mental health distress and inform the Principal. In the event of a suicide, consider those students/staff closest to the deceased, especially those who may have known of the plan. Be available to provide one-on-one or small group support.

- _____ 3. Respond to those most immediately in need of care in a supportive Christian manner, being attentive to any groups with whom the deceased may have been involved.

- _____ 4. Provide insight and resources to the process of grieving to support the community.

- _____ 5. Assist office staff with phone calls, the notification of appropriate individuals, and other duties as required.

- _____ 6. Provide assistance/and or support to students and staff in planning student activities related to the death. (ie. Visit to the funeral home, writing letters of condolence, etc.)

- _____ 7. Distribute, as appropriate, information regarding community-based agencies (e.g. EAP) for those in need of more intensive services and support.

- _____ 8. In collaboration with the Principal and Board Social Worker, notify local agencies about potential referrals.

- _____ 9. Complete additional duties at the direction of the Principal.

Custodian

Response Checklist

Completed Task

- _____ 1. Check flag as directed by the Principal.
- _____ 2. Make provisions for extra facial tissue to classrooms, and other gathering/care stations.
- _____ 3. Ensure additional seating and set-up of any identified gathering stations.
- _____ 4. Respond to parking needs for a liturgy, as directed by the Principal.
- _____ 5. Make provisions for a school assembly as directed by the Principal.
- _____ 6. Direct all inquiries concerning the loss or tragic event to the Principal.
- _____ 7. Perform any additional tasks as directed by the Principal.

Bereavement Care

Bereavement care involves two basic kinds of work: 1) caring for those who are bereaved and 2) taking care of yourself.

Caring for Those who are Bereaved:

Understanding your own losses and personal attitudes towards them is the first important step to helping those who are bereaved. If you are aware of your own feelings, especially your feelings of helplessness, you can be more realistic about what you can offer in terms of support.

- When you can, be there for those who are experiencing loss and grief. When you are with them, be present, open yourself to let them in and share their pain.
- Talking about feelings does not create them; sadness, anger, guilt, hopelessness are already there. Take the time to listen to others talk about their grief. Listen with acceptance. Don't judge what the loss means to them.
- Asking gentle questions about the loss can help people to start talking. Some may talk to distract themselves from their feelings. Moments of silence can help bring feelings to the surface.
- Offer time and encouragement rather than advice. People often realize for themselves what it is they need to do.
- Knowing about grief and mourning will help guide you through your discussions with people who are bereaved.
- The healing process is facilitated by the expression of emotion. As you develop trust in grief as a healthy process, you will feel comfortable with expressing emotion and this confidence will be communicated to others.

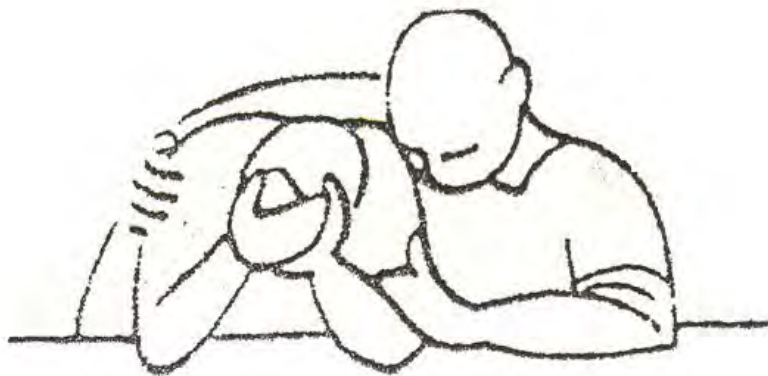
Addressing Your Own Grief:

- Accept the fact that you need to grieve and experience your feelings. It is okay to cry and to let your feelings out.
- Talk about your feelings to someone with whom you are comfortable, someone who is a good listener.
- Take your time in resuming your regular activities. Be patient with yourself when you are confused or forgetful.
- Look after yourself physically. Try to eat well, exercise and get lots of rest.
- Acknowledge any guilt and, if necessary, get help.

- Explore your understanding of the meanings of life and death and let this be a process of growth.
- It is natural to want to take time for yourself, but don't isolate yourself completely. Meet with friends and talk about your loss.
- Get help if you need it. Visit with a counselor or join a support group where you can share your feelings with others in a similar situation.
- Available supports include:
 - Family Services Employee Assistance Program – 1-800-668-9920; 613-549-5561; or 1-888-409-4400
 - Local pastor and parish staff
 - Coordinators of Pastoral Care (chaplaincy leaders at each secondary school)
 - Office of Religious and Family Life Education 613-354-6257 ext. 462 or ext. 471

Conclusion:

Grief, like birth and death, is a universal experience. It is not an illness that needs to be cured or a sign of weakness. Grief is a natural and essential process of restoration that occurs in response to life's ongoing losses and changes. Grief helps us to free ourselves of sorrow so we can celebrate and enjoy life.



Children's Understanding of Death

The death of a friend or relative is one of the most difficult and stressful events in life. The experience can be even more difficult when the bereaved individual is a child or adolescent, particularly in situations where a parent has died. Grief is a normal and necessary reaction to the death of a loved one. Being a compassionate and open listener may be all that is necessary for most children to progress normally through the stages of grief and bereavement. A child's reaction to death depends on his or her emotional maturity and level of cognitive development. Emotional reactions can be delayed and may be due to the consequences of the loss rather than the loss itself. When providing support and care to children who have experienced the death of a parent, friend, or classmate, it is important to be mindful of the child's developmental level.

3 to 7 years

Among 3- to 7-year old children, thinking tends to be mostly rigid and concrete, and limited to one aspect of a situation at a time. Their thinking and acquired beliefs are strongly influenced by the way things appear at the moment. In addition, children this age often have difficulty understanding how events and their causes are connected, especially when they have limited experience with an event. Because most children have very limited experience with death, they often resort to "magical" or illogical explanations for why the death has occurred. Thinking is characterized by **egocentrism**, in that they are unaware of perspectives other than their own. They believe that everyone else perceives, thinks, and feels the same way they do. Again, egocentrism is especially evident with events or situations with which the child has little experience. By age **5 years**, however, most children can understand that death is irreversible, universal, has a cause, involves permanent separation, and that dead people differ from live people in a number of respects

Common Reactions:

- They may see death as a temporary state; they may forget a person has died.
- They are easily confused about the circumstances of the death, and often require simple and frequent explanations, in concrete terms, about what has happened and what death means.
- They may have difficulty explaining, with any clarity, the cause of any emotional upset.
- Emotional reactions may be fleeting or absent because they lack the ability to sustain emotions for extended periods. This apparent lack of sadness or grief can deceive people into believing that they are unaffected by the death.

7 to 11 years

Among 7- to 11- year old children, thinking gradually becomes more adult like. Reasoning is more logical, flexible, and organized. They have greater ability to understand the perspectives and view points of others, and their increasing experience with the world helps to interpret and understand unfamiliar events. They have a growing sense of empathy, and can imagine the experiences of others who are also affected by death.

Common Reactions:

- They have a more realistic understanding of what happens when death occurs
- They understand that all living things die eventually
- The bereaved child may show some difficulty adjusting: difficulty concentrating, poor school work, difficulty re-engaging in normal activities. Because school personnel can be sympathetic toward these difficulties, it important to monitor functioning so that disruption in normal activities is not prolonged.
- They have difficulty understanding the source of their emotional reactions of grief, and may be reluctant to seek out support

11 years and older

As children approach adolescence, the capacity for more complex and abstract thinking begins to emerge more strongly. Children and adolescents no longer require direct experience with events to make sense of them. They are now able to use internal reflection to influence their decisions and they use deductive reasoning as a form of problem solving. However, as their ability to imagine or speculate on what others are thinking improves, they can become increasingly self-conscious and their sense of self-importance can become inflated. Adolescents may have an increasing sense that no one understands what they are experiencing, which can feel isolating, and which can intensify feelings of loss.

Common Reactions:

- They have a greater capability to sustain emotional reactions, such as sadness or anger
- They have a greater ability to express feelings directly, rather than through somatic complaints or behaviour disturbances

Talking to Students about Death

Adapted from Crisis Response Guideline (Bruce-Grey CDSB) and Dealing With Loss and Grief (Gross, McKeever, Debly; Novalis 2007)

DO

1. Administration will direct the staff as to the information that can be shared, taking into consideration the family's wishes and the needs of the community
2. If you are not able to share information, say "I don't know all of the circumstances. All that we know is that ___ has died and we are grieving."
3. Recognize your own capacity to respond and ask for help if you need it.
4. Develop a climate in which students feel safe to ask any questions. Encourage them to find someone to talk to if they are struggling.
5. Use correct terminology related to death. The person has died and is not just 'gone away' or 'asleep.'
6. Listen and empathize. Silence may be an effective tool.
7. Allow the students to express as much grief as they are able or are willing to share with you. Organize activities that will allow students to tangibly express their grief, e.g., good memory cards, sympathy wall, prayer sharing.
8. Share honest feelings about the loss. If you are able, share your own memories of the person.
9. Share your faith with the students to facilitate their growth in faith. Do take time to pray as a class, aloud or in silence.
10. As much as possible, maintain routine, a sense of continuity and care-giving.
11. Encourage students to be authentic with their feelings about God, including anger.
12. Be sensitive to cultural differences in response to loss. Help students become aware of appropriate behaviour.
13. Don't dismiss or discount a student's loss because it may seem minor to you as an adult.

DON'T

1. Don't provide additional information without consulting your administration
2. Don't focus on the cause of death or entertain speculation.
3. Don't feel you must handle this alone. Ask for help, but don't ignore the death.
4. Don't force a student to participate in a discussion; only invite.
5. Avoid clichés. Don't say, "I know how you feel ... it takes time ... try to get back to normal ... he/she is better off." Do say, "I'm sorry for your loss"... I'm here for you."
6. Don't link suffering and death with guilt, punishment and sin.
7. Don't lecture or moralize about the event.
8. Don't force a regular day upon grieving students but at the same time don't allow the class to be totally unstructured. Offer choices of activities; e.g., letters, journals, discussion.
9. Don't expect adult responses from students. Responses to grief vary widely.
10. Don't use pious statements, e.g., "It's God's will," or "God took him/her."
11. Don't judge or minimize a person's response.

Suicide

Death invariably is accompanied by difficult questions, but seldom are they more disturbing than in the case of a suspected or confirmed suicide. For this reason, a crisis resulting from such an event must be approached with additional considerations.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* importantly states that “we should not despair of the eternal salvation of persons who have taken their own lives.” (CCC #2283) Those who die by suicide are most often of diminished capacity due to mental illness, and cannot be held fully responsible for their actions. Only God can judge what is in our hearts, and God is more compassionate and loving than we can even imagine. Our pastoral response should attempt to minimize any stigma that may be associated with this kind of death.

Suicide is the product of a complex interaction between many factors in the life of a person at risk. It is not the result of normal stresses nor is it the result of one single event. Individuals who died by suicide were likely struggling with substantial psychological pain due to a mental disorder that may not have been apparent to others (or that may have shown as behavior problems or substance abuse).

We strive to treat all student deaths in the same way. Having one approach for a student who dies of cancer (for example) and another for a student who dies by suicide reinforces the unfortunate stigma that still surrounds suicide and may be deeply and unfairly painful to the deceased student’s family and close friends.

Suicide contagion

Exposure to suicide or suicide-related behaviours influences others to contemplate, attempt, or die by suicide. This phenomenon is called “suicide contagion”. Be aware that children and adolescents are vulnerable to the risk of suicide contagion. It is important not to inadvertently simplify, glamorize, or romanticize the person who has died or his/her death.

The suicide death of a schoolmate is a stronger predictor of suicidal thoughts and attempts than a suicide death of someone personally known to the student. Suicide contagion and cluster suicides are not myths; they are legitimate mental health concerns that require appropriate post-vention (procedures aimed at identifying those affected by a suicide in order to decrease negative reaction and to increase adaptive coping) to reduce the risk of occurrence. Having a well thought out and organized response to a student suicide death can help mitigate the risks of suicide contagion among the school population.

Post-vention

It’s important for school administrator(s) to assess the suicide’s impact on their school community in consultation with the superintendent before establishing post-vention supports. Underestimating the impact of a suicide can result in failure to provide needed coping assistance, while overestimating impact and providing unnecessary services may sensationalize the death. For example, if it is likely that students are not and will not become aware of the

suicide, post-vention services may not be required. If it is judged likely that students will be aware, the next steps are to consider the probability that the death will create coping challenges, and to identify those who might be at increased risk following a suicide.

Coping challenges are especially likely among those who have:

- geographical proximity - refers to physical closeness to the incident, those who were an eye-witness or exposed immediately after the event;
- psychological proximity - refers to those who can relate to the victim including through cultural connections, i.e. individuals experiencing bullying, team members, classmates and individuals who perceive having similar characteristics;
- social proximity - refers to the relationships one has with the person, including family, friends, classmates, social circle, or a previous or current romantic interest.

Recommended considerations and support following a suicide:

- Consult with the family prior to discussing the circumstances around the death.
 - *A family may wish to keep the cause of death private. There may be times, however, when their wishes to disclose information about a student's death may cause unanticipated harm to other students or school personnel. In this situation, be cautious about the potential increased risk of suicide contagion. Before making decisions about sharing information, consult with the Superintendent and document your decision making process.*
- Provide students with developmentally appropriate factual information about the circumstances.
- Students may display a broad range of emotions, including anger, guilt, sadness, and anxiety. Some students may show or report very limited emotional reactions.
 - *No two students will react in the same way or follow the same path as they grieve a death by suicide. Each person has a unique response to crisis.*
 - *Students with known mental health concerns, however, such as histories of depression or anxiety, may be at higher risk of having difficulties adjusting to a death by suicide.*
 - *Staff should collaborate with parents/guardians and other agencies when appropriate to ensure that students with documented mental health problems have access to appropriate treatment.*
- Make support available to all students and staff, and allow them the opportunity to access that support as they see fit.
 - *Students or staff should not be forced to participate in counseling or de-briefing if they choose not to participate, as this can cause harm and undue distress.*
 - *Let students and staff know that additional resources exist now and in the future if the need arises.*

- Reassure students that thinking about suicide is not the same as dying by suicide.
 - *Students who are concerned about their own suicidal ideation should be referred to further clinical assessment or intervention.*

- Students may find comfort in regular routine; however, classroom activities may need to be altered, especially in the first few days after the suicide.
 - *As much as possible, try to maintain the structure of the school environment. If you have questions about a particular activity planned for your classes, consult with a member of the Board Bereavement Response Team.*

- Those who have died by suicide should not be glamorized or memorialized in a 'heroic' sense. Consult your superintendent before planning any events or memorials.

Serious Illness

During the serious illness of a classmate, sibling, parent, or other close family member, students may experience anticipatory grief, which is the reaction to a loss that may occur in the future. Some situations will be best handled privately with an individual child or small group of children, while others will affect an entire class or school community. Please keep in mind the following important considerations:

Information sharing

- Honour the family's wishes concerning discussing the illness.
- Encourage the students to pray for the person who is ill and their family.
- Be honest and sensitive in talking about the illness and give simple, accurate information to students. Keep in mind that incomplete or inaccurate information can confuse and complicate students' understanding of the illness.
- Keep informed of the status of the illness and up-date the students sensitively.
- Remember that every situation is unique. All serious illness will not result in death.

Supporting students and staff

- Do not judge the actions and reactions of others. Remember that the way that others respond is not the same as the way you would respond.
- Pay attention to unusual or extreme behaviours in students. (i.e. anger, inattentiveness, sullenness, quietness, and aggression)
- Listen, affirm, and validate the wide range of feelings the students may or may not have: (Sadness, fear, anxiety, insecurity, anger, guilt, emptiness, apathy, despair, silliness, and feeling alone.)
- Allow the students to be involved in doing little things for the one who is seriously ill. (e.g. Draw pictures, write letters and notes, send photographs, send little homemade gifts.)
- Maintain a predictable and safe routine of creative, academic, and recreational activities for the students, being mindful of the need for flexibility.
- Encourage students to take care of themselves, through attention to healthy eating, adequate sleep, and physical activities.
- Take care of yourself as a teacher and caregiver, through attention to diet, rest, and exercise.

- Access the reading resources for teachers, parents, and students in the Bereavement and Crisis Response Lending Library (an annotated bibliography can be found on the Religion page of the Board's website). Within that resource are such useful books as:
 - **Good Luck Mrs. K!**, by Louise Borden
 - **Helping Children When a Family Member Has Cancer: Dealing With Diagnosis** (*Duotang*), American Cancer Society.
 - **Let My Colours Out**, by Courtney Filigenzi,
 - **The Memory Box**, by Mary Bahr
 - **Nowhere Hair**, by Sue Glader
 - **Sammy's Mommy Has Cancer**, by Sherry Kohlenberg
 - **Side Effects**, by Amy Goldman Koss
 - **Someone Special is Very Sick**, by Jim and Joan Boulden
 - **Talking to Kids About Cancer**, Cancer Council, New South Wales
 - **Vanishing Cookies**, by Dr. Michelle B. Goodman
 - **The Twelve Gifts of Healing**, by Charlene Costanzo
 - **What About Me?**, by Allen Peterkin
 - **What's Happening to Grandpa?** by Maria Sriver
 - **When Eric's Mom Fought Cancer**, by Judith Vigna
 - **When Hope is Tried: Meditations for those who are Ill and the people who love them**, by Carol Winters
 - **When Someone You Love Has Cancer – A Guide to Help Kids Cope**, by Alaric Lewis
 - **When Will I Feel Better? Understanding Chronic Illness**, by Robin Prince Monroe and Trudy Calvert
 - **When You're Sick or in the Hospital – Healing Help for Kids**, Tom McGrath
 - **Why Am I So Tired?**, Pat Thomas

Anticipatory Grief

Anticipatory grief is the reaction to a loss that will occur in the future. Patients anticipating their own death will grieve not only for the loss of their own life, but for any number of losses that may precede their ultimate passing. These could include:

- the anticipated loss of loved ones
- loss of role functions (e.g. within a family, employment, social roles)
- loss of ability to address basic bodily functions
- loss of ability to eat
- loss of control
- loss of hair
- loss of memory
- loss of ability to concentrate or even to stay awake
- loss of the need for future plans
- loss of self-esteem
- loss of income
- loss of capacity to pursue regular interests (e.g. reading, walking)

Keep in mind that there is no schedule or predictable timetable for these experiences. Not only will they overlap, but also any number of them may be re-visited often.

Serious Illness (cont.)

Prayer Celebration for Healing - Presider's Version

Introduction

Leader: Welcome, everyone, to this special prayer celebration.

We gather in faith and love today, as members of the _____ school community, to pray for _____ and his/her family.

We who know him/her well are struggling with the reality of this crisis/illness. We're sad, confused, and broken that such a person, (a husband/wife, father/mother, colleague and friend), so full of life and love, is suffering so seriously.

We don't have any answers that satisfy our wonderings. In our struggle we turn to God in prayer, confident that God is with (name) and with us all the time.

Let us stand and sing together our opening song.

Opening Song: Show Us Your Mercy (NTY #183), Come to the Water (NTY #67) (or
another suitable song)

Opening Prayer

Leader: We begin with the sign of our faith. In the name of the Father ... Let us pray ... *(brief pause)*

All-powerful Father, God of compassion and mercy, your Son accepted his sufferings to teach us the virtue of patience in human illness.

Be with _____(name) in his/her time of suffering and hear the prayers we offer for him/her. Free him/her from fear, despair and anxiety and show him/her the power of your loving care. Strengthen him/her with the patience and courage of your loving Son, Jesus.

May his/her family and friends continue to be enfolded in the comfort of your Holy Spirit during this critical time.

This we ask through Jesus, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Please be seated while we listen to the proclamation of the Word of God.

Reading: A reading from the letter of James (5: 13-16)

Responsorial Psalm (27)

Psalm Refrain: The Lord is my light and my salvation.

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
 The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
 When evildoers assail me to devour my flesh - my adversaries and foes –
 they shall stumble and fall. **R.**

Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear;
 though war rise up against me, yet I will be
 confident. One thing I asked of the LORD,
 that will I seek after:
 to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,
 to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple. **R.**

For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble;
 he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me
 high on a rock. Now my head is lifted up above my enemies all
 around me,
 and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy;
 I will sing and make melody to the LORD. **R.**

Reflection Song: Lay Your Hands (*Glory and Praise 1 #32*) (*or another suitable song*)

(Please stand.)

Gospel: A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew (11: 28 - 30) **R.** Glory to you O Lord.

(Please be seated for a brief period of silent reflection.)

The Gospel of the Lord . R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Song Response: Holy Spirit, Come

Holy Spirit, come; to you our hearts appeal.
 Holy Spirit, come; send your power to heal. (repeated)

General Intercessions:

Leader: Let us pray for an increase in faith in Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life.

The response to each petition is: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

1. For _____(name), our dear friend/colleague/classmate in our school community, that his/her belief in Jesus sustains him/her throughout this time of trial, we pray to the Lord. **R.**
2. For _____(name)'s family, that the power of God working through family and friends brings them comfort and strength, we pray to the Lord. **R.**
3. For all of our sick and broken members of our communities, that God's healing power may restore them to the fullness of health, we pray to the Lord. **R.**
4. For those who do not know you, heavenly Father, and for those who have no hope; bring them comfort and peace in the face of their suffering, we pray to the Lord. **R.**
5. For the particular intentions of our own hearts, we pause and place them in faith before our providential God ...
(brief pause) ... we pray to the Lord. **R.**

Leader: Lord Jesus, You promise to be with us always. Help us especially when we feel lonely, sad, afraid, or angry. Strengthen us to be instruments of your healing and peace. We make all of these prayers in the name of Jesus, our risen Lord. **Amen**

Gesture: Sealing with Oil
(*This oil can be made from olive oil mixed with a small amount of perfume.*)

Leader: In James' letter we heard how the early Christians used oil to anoint their sick.

Throughout the history of our Church we have used oils not only as a sacramental sign of God's healing touch, but as a sign of commissioning, in Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders.

We recall how we all have been called to be God's hands in our broken world.

And this you have been in the many ways in which you already have been reaching out to _____ (name) and his/her family; in your prayers, in your visitations, in your food preparations, in your conversations, indeed, in your reaching out to comfort each other during this difficult time.

And so today we invite you to affirm each other in these roles that you have so faithfully and naturally taken upon yourselves on behalf of _____ (name) and his/her family. As you have been ministering to each other, we ask you now to continue in that role as you anoint one another with this scented oil.

As the oils are passed amongst you, you are invited in pairs to anoint your colleague's hands. As you do so simply say:

"You are God's healing hands, instruments of his peace."

Throughout this ritual we will sing: *Transfigure Us O Lord* (NTY #186) (*or another suitable song*)

Closing Prayer:

God, our Father,
our help in human weakness,
the source of wholeness and healing in our lives,
show _____ (name) the power of your loving care.

Bless us whose hearts yearn to bring peace, comfort and healing into his/her life:
May the Christ, who walks on wounded feet, walk with you on the road.
May the Christ, who serves with wounded hands, stretch out your hands to serve.
May the Christ, who loves with a wounded heart, open your heart to love.
May you see the face of Christ in everyone you meet and may everyone you meet see the face of
Christ in you.

We make this our prayer in the name of our Lord Jesus
Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit,
one God, forever and ever. Amen

Closing Song: **Blest Are They (CBW III #522)**

**Prayer Service for
Healing Order of Service**

Introduction

Opening Song:

- *Print or project the lyrics to the chosen song here.*

Opening Prayer

(Please be seated while we listen to the Word of God.)

Reading: A reading from the letter of James (5: 13-16)

Responsorial Psalm (27)

Psalm Refrain: The Lord is my light and my salvation.

Reflection Song: Lay Your Hands (*Glory and Praise 1 #32*)

(Please stand for the reading of the Gospel.)

Gospel: A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew (11: 28 - 30) **R.** Glory to you O Lord.

(Please be seated.)

Song Response:

- *Print or project the lyrics to the chosen song here.*

General Intercessions:

Gesture: Sealing with Oil

**“You are God’s healing hands, instruments of
his peace.”** Closing Prayer:

Closing Song: Blest Are They (*CBW III #522*)

- *Print or project the lyrics to the chosen song here.*

Pet Loss

The death of a pet can be a very significant loss for a child of any age. Pets are often considered to be cherished “friends” by children. As such, children can suffer and grieve deeply. Children need to be told simply and honestly, in age-appropriate and sensitive language what happened to the pet.

Process the loss with the child. Help the child to “absorb” the death of the animal by talking with him/her and by encouraging him/her to express feelings. Support the child in his/her feelings and perhaps even use the word “grief” to describe what the child is going through. Explain the variety of feelings associated with grief. Hug the child; share favorite memories of the pet. Ritualize the death in some way through a formal sharing of memories of the pet, a burial, or a brief service.

Grieving pet loss is an opportune moment to teach children about death in general, the unique sense of loss, emptiness, anger, and sadness associated with it and the movement beyond death into life. Encouraging children to express their feelings about the loss is particularly therapeutic. Reassuring them that time will heal and that they will feel better again are important realities to affirm in children.

Some excellent resources can further assist teachers in supporting children with pet loss:

Cocoa’s Collar, by Garyanna Stalick
Goodbye Mousie, by Robie H. Harris
Grunt, by Suzanne Schlossberg Tamberrino
I’ll Always Love You by Hans Wilhelm
Jasper’s Day, by Marjorie Blain Parker and Janet Wilson
My Pet Died, by Rachel Biale
The Tenth Good Thing About Barney by Judith Viorst
When a Pet Dies by Fred Rogers
When Your Pet Dies – A Healing Handbook for Kids, by Victoria Ryan

These and other books are available from the Office of Religion & Family Life Education. Consult the annotated bibliography of bereavement resources found on the religion page of the Board’s Web Site.



Prayer Celebration on the Loss of a Pet

Opening: We gather in prayer today, as we remember our special pet who has died. He/she was like a friend to us and was a special part of our lives. We had fun playing with him/her and will certainly miss him/ her. Let us bow our heads in prayer.

Prayer about the Death of a Pet

Loving Father,
you have given us everything good
– the nights and days,
the sun and moon, the lakes and rivers,
the trees and every kind of flower.
You have given us every creature,
and you gave us _____, our pet.

But now _____ has died
and gone back to the earth.

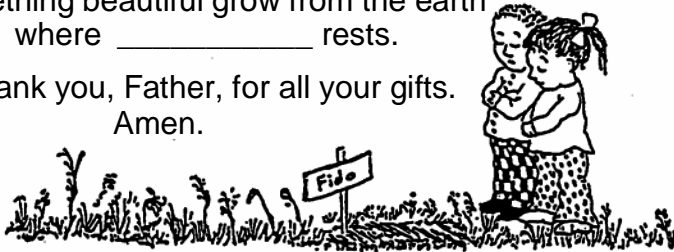
_____ gave us great fun
and was such a good friend.
_____ even helped us to share our
love.

We miss _____ very much.

We ask you to fill up
the empty space in our hearts.

We ask you to let
something beautiful grow from the earth
where _____ rests.

Thank you, Father, for all your gifts.
Amen.



*(Adapted from **Prayer After Rainy Days and Other Family Prayers**
by Pat Corrick Hinton, Winston Press, Inc., Minneapolis, MN 55403.)*

Song: Let us join together in singing a little song:

All your gifts of Life (Hi God II: p. 126) or Signs of New Life (Song #20, We Belong to God: Year 1, 1983)

Story Recitation: **The Tenth Good Thing About Barney**, by Judith Viorst

Response Activity: Make a memory book about the animal. Draw pictures or write stories about each person's special memories of the pet; organize them into a booklet.

Appendix A
Community Resources
A1 Where To Turn:
School Site Summary Form

Immediate Response Support

Internal

Director' Office	(613) 354-6257 ext. 449
Superintendent's Office	_____
Office of Religious and Family Life Education	(613) 354-6257 ext. 462, 471
Rainbows Program Co-ordinator (In House)	_____
Secondary School Chaplaincy Leader	_____
Board Social Worker	(613) 354-6257 ext. 514
Youth Worker	_____
Student Services – Guidance Dept. (Secondary)	_____
School Board Psychologist	(613) 544-5449
Parish Priest / Chaplain	_____
Public Health Nurse (School Assigned)	_____
Family Services Employment Assistance Program 613-549-5561; or 1-888-409-4400	1-800-668-9920;

External

Local Police: _____

Ontario Provincial Police: **1-888-310-1122**
 Local Detachment

Local Funeral Home(s):

The following pages list possible resources to assist in dealing with a sudden death or critical incident.

The Board Bereavement and Crisis Response Team may provide additional resources.

Appendix A (cont.)

A2 Kingston and Area Community Resources

- Bereaved Families of Ontario.....Tel: (613) 634-1230
 Kingston Chapter Fax: (613) 634-2328
 Web: www.bfo-kingston.ca Email: bfo@kingston.net
- Canadian Mental Health AssociationTel: (613) 549-7027
 Web site: <http://www.kingston.org/cmha> E-mail cmhstaff@kingston.net
- Employee Assistance Programs (FSEAP Kingston).....
 Tel: (613) 549-5561 or 1-888-409-4499
- Family and Children's Services of Frontenac, Lennox and Addington
 Tel: (613) 545-3227
Toll-free Number: (855) 445-3227 **Fax:** (613) 542-4428
Web: www.facsfla.ca **Email:** Info@facsfla.ca
- Kingston Community Counselling Service (K3C) Tel: (613) 549-7850
- Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington Public Health Unit
 Tel: (613) 549-1232
 (Suggested Contact – Co-ordinator of School Programs)
- Kingston Military Family Resource Centre.....Tel: (613) 271-8444
- Land O'Lakes Community ServicesTel: (613) 336-8934
 Toll-free: 1-877-679-6636
- Lennox and Addington Community Mental Health Services
 Tel: (613) 354-7521
 Crisis line numbers 613-354-7388 and 1-800-267-7877
- Pathways for Children and YouthTel: (613) 546-8535
 (Mental health services for children under 18 – servicing Frontenac, Lennox
 and Addington Counties)
- Sexual Assault Crisis Centre (24 hour crisis and support line).....
 Tel: (613) 544-6424 or 1-877-544-6424
- Victim Services of Kingston and FrontenacTel: (613) 548-4834
- Victim/Witness Assistance Program(Kingston).....Tel: (613) 548-6213
- Victim/Witness Assistance Program(Napanee).....Tel: 1-866-537-7785

A3**Quinte Area Community Resources**

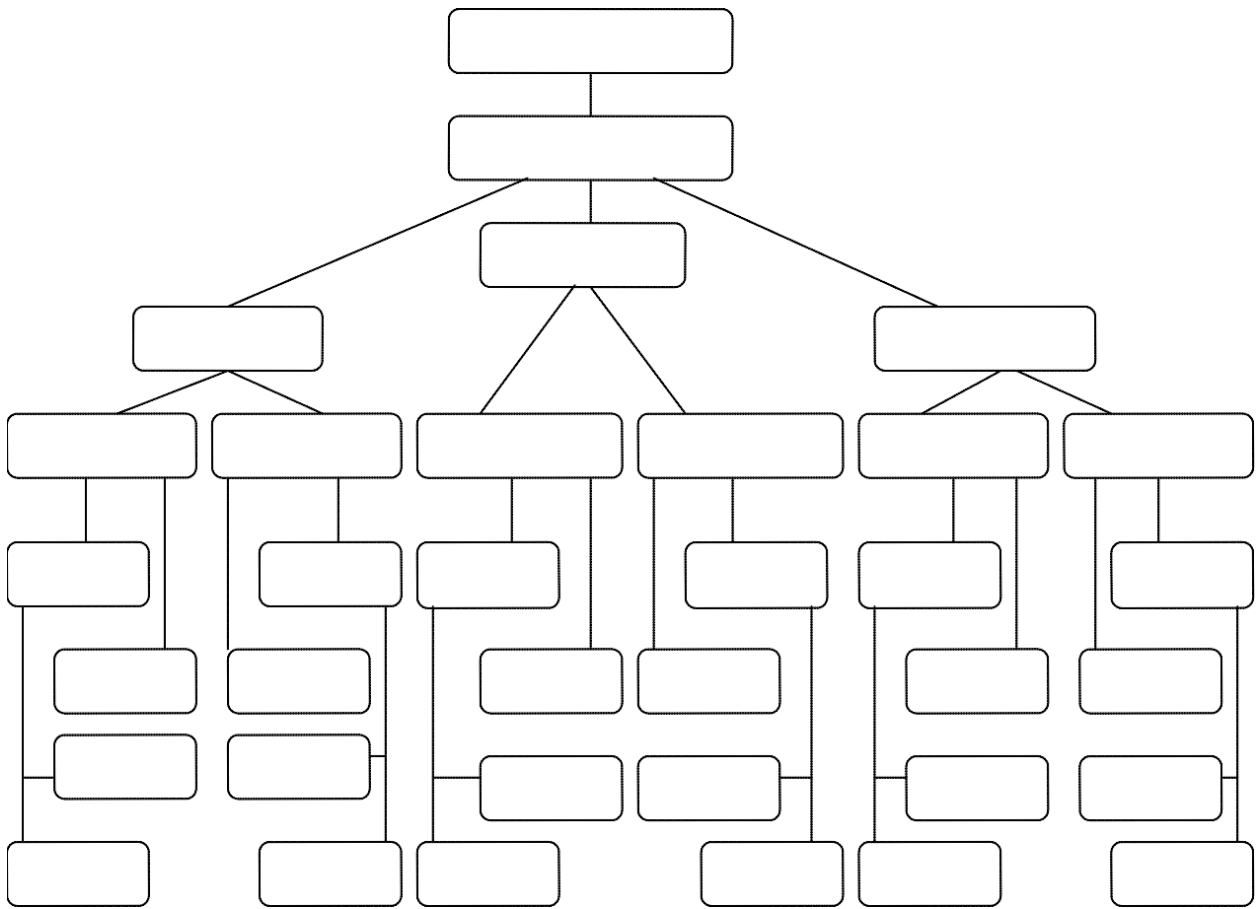
- Bereaved Families of OntarioTel: (613) 634-1230
Kingston region Web: www.bfo-kingston.ca
Email: bfo@kingston.net
- Canadian Mental Health AssociationTel: (613) 969-8874
Hastings and Prince Edward Branch Fax: (613) 969-8294
Belleville, ON web site: <http://hastings-cmha.org/>
- Children's Mental Health ServicesTel: (613) 966-3100
Web site: www.cmhs-hpe.on.ca
- Counselling Services of Belleville & District (EAP provider)Tel: (613) 966-7413
- Gateway Community Health CentreTel: (613) 478-1211
Tweed Web: <https://www.gatewaychc.org/>
- Hospice Prince Edward (COPE) Tel: (613) 645-4040
Picton
- Hospice QuinteTel: (613) 966-6610
Belleville Web: <http://hospice-quinte.ca/>
e-mail: we.care@hospice-quinte.ca email:
info@hospicepe.com
- Open Line Open Mind (Mental health and Addictions Service).....Tel: (613) 310-6736
Web: <http://www.openlineopenmind.com/>
- Pathways to Independence Tel: (613) 962-2541
Belleville Web: <http://www.pathwaysind.com/>
- Quinte Counselling Services Inc.Tel: (613) 966-4262
Belleville Web: <http://www.qxplore.com/qcs.html>

Bancroft and Area Community Resources

- Bereaved Families of OntarioTel: (613) 732-7894
Pembroke Chapter Web: <http://www.griefsupport.ca/>
Email: programdirector@bfopembroke.ca
- Children's Mental Health ServicesTel: (613) 332-3807
Web site: www.cmhs-hpe.on.ca
- Open Line Open Mind (Mental health and Addictions Service).....Tel: (613) 310-6736
Web: <http://www.openlineopenmind.com>

Appendix B

Staff Phone Tree



Appendix C

School Announcements

C1 Guidelines

The method used to inform students will vary according to the situation.

1. Disclosure of any information must take into consideration the wishes of the family.
2. Certain students may need to be notified privately.
3. Whenever possible, students should be informed personally by the classroom teacher, prior to an announcement. It is best that the news be delivered by someone familiar to students.
4. If an announcement must be made on the P.A., it is important that it be made to the students not later than 20 to 30 minutes before the end of class. This will give time for some discussion. The teacher should be sensitive to their reaction and allow time for support. The availability of support staff and the location of care stations should be given to the students at that time. If support personnel is available to meet with students or staff individually, this could be made known at this time.
5. The announcement should be shared with staff prior to any public sharing.
6. The announcement should include:
 - who died and the individual's relationship to the school
 - information about the death as per the wishes of the family
 - a prayer and/or a quiet time of reflection as appropriate

Note: It is not the role of the school to determine or discuss the cause of death. We do need to be concerned with the vulnerability of students/staff, and what they believe to be the cause of the death.

(See sample announcements on the following page)

**Announcement
Sample One**

Today is a very sad day for all of us because _____ (name), a grade ____ student in our school, died yesterday. We are going to miss him/her as part of our school family. His/her own family and friends will need our prayers and gestures of support.

Please remember _____(name) and his/her family as we pray together:

Heavenly Father, generously extend to us your compassion as we mourn the loss of one of our own. Bless the _____(name) family and help us all to provide each other with the signs of love and support we all need at this time of sorrow. May we find comfort in the promise of eternal life made visible in the resurrection of your son, Jesus, and may your Holy Spirit guide _____(name) to his/her eternal place of rest. Amen.

**Announcement
Sample Two**

This morning I have some sad news to share with all of you. Our school community is saddened by the death of _____.

We will provide our prayerful support throughout this time of grief and provide information about the arrangements as it becomes available. Let us pause now and offer this prayer for _____ and his/her family and friends.

(Insert prayer – see Appendix G)

Appendix D

Care Stations

1. On the first and second day of the event, include in the morning announcements that Care Stations are available to the students.

Sample: Today has been a sad day for many of us. We encourage you to talk to your friends, your family and whoever else can give you support. We have _____ (staff/service providers' names and/or roles) located in _____ (designated area) to offer help and support in dealing with this loss. If you feel the need to speak to someone, let your teacher know and they will assist you.

2. The Care Station should be facilitated by appropriate personnel who can provide active listening and support. Suggested personnel could be drawn from, but are not exclusive to the Youth Worker, Chaplain, chaplaincy leader, Student Success Team, and the Board Bereavement Team. In some scenarios, outside agencies would appropriate.
3. The Care Station is located in a designated private and quiet area. It should be inviting for students to gather in a safe and caring environment. The students should be able to share, listen and be open with each other without fear of judgment.

Recommended areas: School Chapel, Youth Worker Office, Meeting Rooms, Library, etc.

4. Establish procedures for leaving class. (eg. Will a pass be required?) Be sure to provide attendance reporting for students in the Care Stations throughout the day. This provides an accurate account of the whereabouts of all students. It is preferred that students are accompanied to a care station by a peer or an adult, particularly in an elementary school.
5. Ensure that the physical needs are accommodated. In particular, pay attention to seating, privacy, comfort and tissues as well as the provision of healthy snacks and beverages.

Appendix E

Letter to Parents - #1

Date _____

Dear Parents/Guardians,

It is with sadness that I inform you of the death of _____(name) on _____ (date). _____ (name) was a _____ student/staff member) in grade __.

The Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board's Bereavement and Crisis Response Team has been at the school today and will continue to support all students and staff. Care stations are available where students can talk, grieve, and pray with a caring adult.

Parents should be aware that each student's response to loss is unique. If you have particular concerns for your child, do not hesitate to make the school aware.

Our staff and students will be holding a memorial service at the school.

Visitation will be at _____(name of funeral home) from _____ (day/time) to _____ (day/time).

The funeral will be held on _____ (date) at _____ (time) at _____(place) in _____(city/town). Some of our staff members will be attending to represent our school community. Those students who wish to attend the visitation or funeral should be accompanied by their parent or guardian.

Please keep _____ and his/her family in your thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely yours,

Appendix E

Letter to Parents - #2

Date _____

Dear Parents/Guardians,

It is with sadness that I inform you of the death of _____(name),
parent/brother/sister of _____ in M _____'s grade _____
class (and _____ in M _____'s grade ____ class).

Please note that support is available for students as needed. Parents should be aware that each student's response to loss is unique. If you have particular concerns for your child, do not hesitate to make the school aware.

Funeral arrangements are unknown at this time.

Please keep the _____ family in your thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely,

Appendix F

Sample Thank You Letter

Date _____

Dear Parents/Guardians,

On behalf of the school community I would like to express gratitude for the kind support that you have provided to the _____ family. All of your contributions have been most appreciated.

Continued support for our students and staff as we grieve is available. The _____ (youth worker, chaplaincy leader, etc.) can provide this support for students on an individual or group basis.

Do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any concerns or questions or are in need of assistance. Please continue to pray for the needs of our community.

Sincerely,

Appendix G

G1 Prayers in Response to a Death

Prayer Suitable Following the Initial Announcement of a Death

(Suitable Song if desired)

Let us begin ... In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit
Amen.

Let us pray...

Loving God, You are the source of all life and the font of compassion. It is with heavy hearts that we gather here today as we mourn the death of (name).

We know, Lord, that You will understand that for us, right here and right now, our sense of loss may seem bigger than Your gift of life; our questions may seem to echo louder in our hearts than any words of consolation. Yet the comfort of Your words still reaches us:

Insert suitable scripture reading.
(Appendix G3)

God of compassion, sustain us as we struggle to come to grips with this loss. We who believe in Your love know that death is not an end. We share the faith of Your Son's disciples and the hope of the children of God. Bring the light of Christ's resurrection to this time of pain as we pray for _____ (name), his/her family, and his/her friends.

With confidence in Your sustaining grace, we pray together ... Our Father ...

We offer our prayers this morning in the name of Jesus, our brother and first born from the dead, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Amen.

(Suitable Song if desired)



Prayer of Loss

Merciful God, this morning we grieve the loss of our friend _____ (name) whose (sudden) death has caused us all to experience a sense of loss.

Tender as a parent with a child, You are gracious to us, O Lord. We know how we are fashioned and sustained by

Your love; each of our names are written on the palm of Your hand. Continue to care for our (brother/sister/friend) _____ (name) in death and bring him/her into the everlasting peace of heaven. Bless his/her family as they mourn the loss of a (son/daughter; father/mother). We make this our prayer in the name of Jesus, our risen brother, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Prayer During a Time of Loss

Loving God, our community is sad because _____ (name) has died. We know in our hearts that he/she lives now with you forever in heaven.

We are comforted by the promise that _____ (name) lives beyond the experience of all physical pain in the eternal peace and joy of your loving embrace.

Thank you for the gift of love and happiness he/she shared with us. Please give us the courage to live now as he/she did with great love and happiness. And let us all be together again someday.

Amen.

Prayer for Consolation

Lord Jesus, you cried when your friend
Lazarus died.
You understand our grief.
Please help us in these difficult
times and teach us how to help
one another.
Give a special comfort to _____'s family
who are going to feel very sad
and lonely.
Help us all find consolation
in the hope that _____ is
now happy with you forever.
Amen.

When Someone I Love Dies

God of kindness and mercy,
You created us so we could share in
your eternal life and happiness.
Please welcome into your loving arms _____ who
has just left this physical world.

God our Father,
help us to remember that
death is like a door we need to go through to
get to heaven. It is really a mysterious part of
all of our lives.
When someone goes through the door of death help us to accept
that that does not mean that _____ no longer loves us.

Help us to remember that your love is stronger
than death,
that you always care for us.
We trust in you.
We love you.
Amen.

Prayers For The Dead (from Book of Blessings, CCCB)

Lord Jesus, have mercy on all who have died.
Bring them into the fullness of your joy and let them live with you in heaven.
Lord Jesus, hear our prayer, for you are our Saviour and our Lord forever and ever.
Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, listen to our prayer for _____ (name). Have mercy on him/her, and in your love lead him/her to the unending joys of the kingdom. Lord Jesus, hear our prayer. Amen!

Heavenly Father, be merciful to _____ (name) whom you have called into eternity. Forgive all his/her sins, and let him/her live with you in joy.
Father, we ask this grace through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer For a Staff Upon Learning of a Death in The School Community

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God of compassion, we have gathered here this morning as a community, broken by the news of the death of _____ (name).

Truly, our questions weigh heavily upon us this morning.

Again it is to you, the God of the living, whom we turn to for consolation.

We ask you to send your Spirit among us that we might open our hearts and our arms to all those who mourn, especially the most vulnerable among us.

Guide us through the experiences of our grieving to the place not where our sense of loss is no more, but rather where we are more able to share that burden with Jesus who has conquered death and restored all life. Give to us a renewed vision of your kingdom, where there is no more pain, no more suffering, and where the mourning veil will once and for all time be lifted from your people.

We pray for the repose of the soul of our brother/sister _____(name). May your infinite mercy be a beacon of hope, guiding him/her into your eternal embrace of love.

Sustain _____(name)'s family throughout this time of great sorrow. May they come to know ever more profoundly the depth of your love for them.

In confidence that you know our needs even before we know them

ourselves, we say together ... Our Father, who art in heaven, ...

May God bless us, this day and always ...

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



Appendix G2 Prayer Services Prayer Service (#1)

Leader: We pause today as a school community to remember and pray for the repose of the soul of _____ (name).

Opening Prayer: In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Let us pray ...

Heavenly Father, you have called _____ (name) from this world, into the glory of the Resurrection. He/she loved and served you on earth, with joy, humility and commitment. He/she believed and trusted in your abundant love for all of us. May he/she enjoy the fullness of the Kingdom, where you live forever and ever.

Amen.

(Please be seated as we listen to the Word of God.)

Reading: (1 Thessalonians 4: 13 - 14)

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians: We want you to be quite certain, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, to make sure that you do not grieve about them, like the other people, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and that it will be the same for those who have died in Jesus: God will bring them with him.

The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: *Psalm 23: The Lord is My Shepherd *(Come and See: Year 4, Program Cassette Tape*

Song #11) or CBW II # 146 or CBW III # 53.

(Please stand.)

Leader: Let us pray together in the words Jesus taught us:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Leader: Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, and grant us peace in our day. In your mercy keep us free from sin and protect us from all anxiety as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

All: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever.
Amen.

(A sign of peace may be offered at this time.)

Concluding Prayer

Leader: Let us pray...

God of kindness and mercy,
You created us so we could
share in your eternal life and
happiness.

Please welcome into your house, _____(name),
who has left this world.

We ask you this,
through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer Service (#2)

Introduction:

Leader: Welcome everyone, to this special celebration to remember _____. We honour his/her memory today, and entrust him/her to be with God, our Father. We gather here in faith, to pray for _____ and for his/her family, and for those who mourn his/her passing. As believers in Jesus, who know the power, light, and triumph of the Resurrection, let us stand and sing together:

Be Not Afraid (Rise up and Sing, #214)

Opening

Prayer: Leader:

We begin ...

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Let us pray ...

Heavenly Father, Lord and Giver of life, we thank you for the gift of _____. His/her presence among us will always be treasured. We praise you, Lord Jesus, and give you thanks, through Christ our Saviour, in the love and unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

(Please be seated.)

First Reading: *(Phil 1. 3-7, 9-11)*

A reading from Paul's letter to the Philippians: I thank my God whenever I think of you; and every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite certain that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes... My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognize what is best. This will help you to become pure and blameless, and prepare you for the glory and praise of God.

The Word of the Lord: R. Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm: *Psalm 91 – On Eagles Wings (Glory and Praise 2, #126)*

(Please stand.)

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia

Gospel: John 14: 1-6

General Intercessions:

Let us turn to Christ Jesus, the Resurrection and the life, as we present our petitions.

The response is: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

1. For the Church, the People of God, that we have the courage to share and live the Word of God with others, we pray to the Lord. **R.**
2. For world leaders, that they may learn to “see” with the eyes of Jesus, the value and dignity of all persons, we pray to the Lord. **R.**
3. For those among us who are suffering in any way...whether through illness, sadness, rejection, or loneliness...that the healing power of God working through us will bring strength and comfort, we pray to the Lord. **R.**
4. In particular, we remember _____, who has been called from this world. May the power and victory of the Resurrection bring hope and healing to her/his family and to all of us who grieve her/his loss, we pray to the Lord. **R.**
5. Christ Jesus, You promised to be with us always. Guide us in being Your faithful witnesses. Increase our faith and cradle us in Your love, we pray to the Lord. **R.**

Leader: We make these petitions and all those that echo in the silence of our hearts, with confidence in the name of Jesus, our risen brother. Amen.

(Please be seated.)

Gesture: Lighting of the Tapers

Leader: _____ is no longer with us. He/she remains, however, in our memories, as a friend, and a person of faith and light. As we reflect on and remember him/her today, perhaps we are inspired to be people of light and faith ourselves. We are challenged to be the “light of Christ” to others. We are called to be instruments of God’s love, right here in this school.

Let us light these candles as a sign of our commitment to further “light up” the world, by the power of God, at work in our lives. May we brighten up the lives of those around us by being people who can forgive, heal, serve, and indeed love others.

(Candles are lit.)

Closing Prayer: Leader: Let us pray ...

In gratitude, then, we commend _____ to his/her just and heavenly reward. We thank you, Lord Jesus, for gifting the world with his/her life. May his/her memory enrich our determination to do God’s work in the world. We make this prayer in Jesus’ name. Amen.

(Please stand.)

Concluding Song: *Children of the Light(Come See: Year 4, #12)*

Prayer Service (#3) For an Elementary School

Introduction and Welcome

Reader 1: Jesus told us that where two or more are gathered in his name, he is there with us. We trust that as we gather today to remember _____, Jesus is with us. Let us be quiet and still for a moment and welcome Jesus into our midst. (*brief silence*) As people of faith and children of the light, we pray for _____ and for his/her family and friends.

Song: *Prayer of St. Francis ; Children of the Light; or another appropriate song*

Leader: We begin our prayer with the sign of our faith ...
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Let us pray ...
Loving God,
Our hearts are saddened by the loss of our friend and classmate, _____.
Comfort his/her family, and comfort all of the students, staff, and parents of _____
Catholic School.
Welcome _____ into your loving arms where (s)he can be happy with you forever.
We ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen.

We listen now to God's word.

Scripture Reading

Reader 2: A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

All: Glory to you, Lord.

Reader 2: Jesus said, 'Do not let your hearts be troubled.
Believe in God, believe also in me.
In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places.
If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?
And if I go and prepare a place for you,
I will come again and will take you to myself,
so that where I am, there you may be also.

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Intercessory Prayer

Leader: We now bring our prayers to God, our Father.
God of comfort and peace, you know our sorrow.
Bless these people for whom we now pray.
The response is ... Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 3: For _____, who left this world and is now in your loving embrace,
we pray to the Lord ... **R.**

Reader 4: For _____'s family, that they may know that beyond tears lies your
peace, we pray to the Lord ... **R.**

Reader 5: For all of our relatives and friends who have died, that they may also feel
the warmth of God's love, we pray to the Lord ... **R.**

Reader 6: For all of the students, staff, and parents of _____ Catholic School,
that we will continue to love and comfort one another, we pray to the Lord
... **R.**

Leader: Caring God,
give us strength and hope to meet the challenges in front of us.
May we be your voice of comfort, your hands of peace,
and your heart of love, today and always.
This we pray in the name of Jesus.
Amen.

Ritual

Leader: We invite one student from each class (*or the students from the deceased
child's class*) to come forward to light a candle of remembrance for

(*Students come forward one at a time and light candles as the song is
sung, remaining at the front with them during the Lord's prayer.*)

Song *Children of the Light, May God be in My Heart (Andrew Chinn) or other
appropriate song*

Lord's Prayer

Reader 7: We gather all of our prayers for _____ and for one another, as we pray together in the words that Jesus gave us ...

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, ...

Leader: Let us pray,

God of kindness, we trust that you are with us in our sadness.

We thank you for giving us the chance to know _____,
even for just a short while.

We thank you for your steadfast love,
and we praise your son, Jesus,
who overcomes sadness and death forever.

Go in peace,

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Closing Song *Irish Blessing (Andrew Chinn), Peace My Friend (Never Too Young #211) or another appropriate song*



Appendix G3

A Short List of Suggested Scripture Readings for a Mass/Prayer Service

First Reading

Job 19: 23 - 29
Wisdom 3: 1 - 9
Isaiah 25: 6 - 12
Daniel 12: 1 - 13

Ecclesiastes 3: 1 - 8
Wisdom 4: 7 - 15
Lamentations 3: 22 - 24

Responsorial

Psalm 18: 1 - 6
Psalm 40
Psalm 24
Psalm 26
Psalm 27
Psalm 102
Psalm 139 ("O Lord, you have searched me and known me ...")

Psalm 23 ("The Lord is My
Psalm 34
Psalm 42
Psalm 46
Psalm 91 ("On Eagle's Wings")
Psalm 121 ("I lift my eyes up ...")

Second Reading

Acts 10: 34 - 43
Romans 8: 14 - 17
Romans 14: 7 - 12
1 Corinthians 15: 25 - 28
1 Thessalonians 4: 13 - 14
Revelation 7: 2 - 4, 9 - 14

Romans 5: 5 - 11
Romans 8: 31 - 39
1 Corinthians 15: 12 - 19
Ephesians 3: 14 - 21
1 John 3: 1 - 3

Gospel

Luke 10: 25 - 28
Matthew 7: 13 - 14
Matthew 28: 1 - 8
John 11: 32 - 38
John 14: 1 - 7

Mark 9: 43 - 48
Matthew 5: 1 - 12
Luke 20: 27 - 38
John 12: 23 - 26

Appendix H

Prayers in Response to Other Critical Events

“He did not say: You will not be troubled, you will not be belabored, you will not be afflicted; but he said: You will not be overcome.” (*Julian of Norwich*)

Lord, we know we will be forever changed by our brokenness,
Help us to remember that there is life even in the midst of that which is broken and painful.

Colour our lives with hope.

We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Spirit of the Risen Christ,
open our hearts to receive the vastness of your love.
Stretch wide our hearts to welcome all in the human family.
Holy Spirit, kindle enough love in us
that we might

forgive those who have hurt us,
embrace those who are different from us,
and reach out to all who appear weak and ungodly.

Take our hardened, judging hearts
and, instead, create in us
hearts of forgiveness and compassion,
hearts of peace and reconciliation.
Amen.

We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people’s trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. (*Ephesians 4:14-15, 31-32*)

Coping With Tragedy In Our Community

Loving God, our hearts are filled with dread and uncertainty. What do we say to our students? To each other?

And from the confusion pounding in our ears as we pray, comes a grace. Your words surface: *Take courage, it is I. Do not be afraid.* You first called those words across the turbulent surface of the wind and water to your apostles who were huddled in terror in the boat. You say it now to us.

Take courage. You are inviting us to take on your courage. We don't understand what has happened. We have no words. We know only that we turn to you and ask for courage and you offer it.

It is I. I am with you always. Yes. We take a deep breath and feel your presence. You are with each of us right now and with us as a community of faith. It doesn't help us to understand but it helps us to calm our breathing.

Do not be afraid. Really? Dear Jesus, right now it feels like that is all we have to cling to! The panic may return, our bewilderment and uncertainty. But yet, your invitation is clear: *Do not be afraid.* That is for me. For all of us.

My dear ones, I know you will continue to grieve. Your pain and confusion will only gradually recede. My assurance is that you don't need to feel this pain alone. I will be with you. And the good news I am offering you will give you hope.

Dear Jesus, who understood fear and confusion so well, bless this community in our great hour of need. Be with us as we gather to weep and mourn at your altar. We beg you for the courage to delve into the silence, the wisdom to speak at the right time, and the fidelity to remember that you are with us in this great hour of need.

Amen.

God who is above all,
you have led us out of darkness into light,
and have promised to your faithful people comfort in time of sorrow.
Grant to the bereaved, comfort;
to the injured, healing;
and to those who despair, hope;
that in our time of trial we may know the consolation of your love.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Lord Christ, I ask only that I might have
the strength to endure what I must.
Lord Christ, I put my trust in you
that you will grant me life beyond death.

Be with us, God of consolation,
when we are made weary by this world;
turn our sorrow into joy
and give us lips to sing your praise
and lives to proclaim your victory in Jesus Christ,
our crucified and risen Lord. Amen.

At this very moment,
even when I'm not aware,
the Spirit is within me,
praying for what I need,
and is being heard by God.

At this very moment,
even when I don't know what I need,
what to pray for,
the Spirit does know,
and is asking from the depths of my being,
and God is listening.

At this very moment,
all I need to do is say yes.

Prayer in Time of Anger and Separation

Adapted from a prayer by Edward Hays

Lord, You who expressed Your divine anger
in fire, brimstone and lightning,
Look down with understanding upon my anger.
I am in pain;
a wound in my heart is the source of this suffering.
That heart of mine, Lord of Hearts, is filled with anger
so that I am unable to be loving and caring.
I feel a need to return injury for injury, pain for pain,
and so cannot truly desire to forgive the other.
Lord, You and I both know that such an attitude is wrong;
yet it is very real,
and its pain overflows into the rest of my life.
Before I can come to the point of wanting to forgive
I must find an antidote for the poison of this attitude.
Lord, I need Your help, for my feelings are confused,
And I so need to find some order among them.
Lead me to the graces of reconciliation
so that this relationship which is dead
may be resurrected to fuller life
through Your holy and healing power.
When my soul sheds its tears,
When my heart languishes in longing,
When my whole being shivers in fatigue,
Come, O Jesus, I beg you to come.
Draw near, Reviver and Consoler!
What is it you wish to tell me
by means of these people,
by these circumstances,
by this span of time?

A Psalm When Pardon Is Impossible

It feels impossible, O God,
totally beyond my reach,
to forgive what has been done.
You know my pain,
you know the hurt I hold.

Surely you, O God –
who in a moment of anger swept away all the earth in one great flood,
leaving only old Noah and his boatload of refugees safe from your rain-soaked rage –
surely you know the storm within my heart.

But I'm doubly caught in this bind,
snagged on the sacred fence
of my friendship with your son, Jesus,
who has told me that I must forgive,
seven times seventy times,
those who injure me,
who cause me pain.

Caught between pain and pardon,
I wish to choose his way of pardon.
Nailed by pain to his cross,
covered by the spit of scorners and whipped by his torturers,
he prayed the impossible prayer.
This prayer is one I now desire to make mine:
 "Father, forgive him, her, them, for they know not what they do."

O Infinite Sea of Mercy,
make this unworthy servant
the channel of your gift of pardon,
that I also may be healed
as your forgiveness passes through me to others. Amen.

Appendix I Debrief Meetings

End of Day One

1. Opening Prayer (see **Appendix G**)
2. All members of the Bereavement Response Team are given an opportunity to reflect together about how the loss and days events have affected them. Team support and cohesion are essential.
3. The Response Checklists should be used as a guideline in order to cover all information possible. Therefore, reports are heard from all members of the team.
5. Discuss and finalize all further plans for the upcoming days as follows:
 - family contact and involvement
 - funeral attendance
 - plans for a memorial
 - support and guidance for students who have been identified as in need
 - faculty and community announcements
 - further division of responsibilities among Team members

End of First Week

1. Opening prayer (see **Appendix G**)
2. Discuss the current status and review all events of the past week.
3. Each member of the Bereavement Response Team is called upon to give an updated report.
4. Assess the progress of any future plans needing to be addressed or followed up on. Divide or assign any responsibilities that are outstanding or are in the final stages of implementation.
5. Examine and discuss the stress and risk levels of the general community as well as those students and staff most closely affected.
6. Evaluate the need for continued support.
7. Invite each team member to discuss their reactions to the situation. Consider creating an opportunity for all staff to share their reactions to the situation.
8. Schedule any further meetings as necessary.

After the First Month

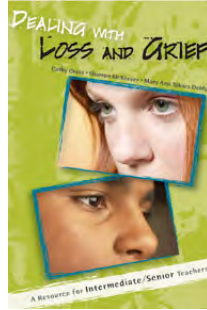
1. Opening prayer (see **Appendix G**)
2. Review events that have occurred since the last debriefing meeting.
3. Review the school community status.
4. Review and evaluate the school's response to the death.
To be addressed are:
 - communication
 - effectiveness and challenges met by the bereavement response team
 - discuss interactions with the family
 - functioning of the care stations
 - outside assistance
 - curriculum resources or any support materials
5. Be prepared for upcoming "triggering" events (e.g. graduation, masses, school events) and have strategies in place.
7. Follow up with Board crisis response team as needed

Appendix J

Resources

The following resource book was provided to all schools:

- Dealing With Loss and Grief: A Resource for Intermediate/Senior Teachers



Elementary schools also received:

- I Feel Sad: A Resource on Loss and Grief for Primary/Junior Teachers



For Other Print and Video Resources:

ALCDSB Office of Religious & Family Life Education

See annotated bibliography on Religion iShare site under Bereavement and Loss
613-354-6257 x 462 or 471

Queen's University Teacher Resource Centre (Faculty of Education, Duncan McArthur Hall)

511 Union Street W, Kingston, ON, K7M 5R7

613-533-6901 or 1-866-285-8648 (Toll free)

<http://library.queensu.ca/webtrc/>

E-mail: trcentre@queensu.ca

Archdiocese of Kingston Resource Library

390 Palace Rd, Kingston, ON, K7L 4T3

613-548-4461

(Your local public library branch may have additional resources.)

On-line Resources:

The following on-line resources contain relevant and appropriate material to assist with bereavement. The Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board is not accountable for the content of any external Websites.

<http://ishare.alcdsb.on.ca/reledu/pages/bereavement.aspx> The iShare page of the Office of Religious & Family Life Education contains many up-to-date resources to support those who are grieving, as well as access to the ALCDSB Bereavement and Crisis Response Lending Library.

<http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Grief/> Creighton University, a Catholic Jesuit University, offers online resources to support those who are grieving.

www.rainbows.org The official site for Rainbows, the largest international non-profit organization dedicated to helping children and teens grieve and find hope after loss.

www.rainbows.ca The Canadian affiliate for Rainbows offers additional resources to support those who are grieving.

www.nfda.org/grief-resources.html The National Funeral Directors Association provides information about the various aspects of grief and suggestions for coping with the death of a loved one.

<http://www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/topics/grief> The Sesame Street parent Website offers tips, videos, children's stories, and guides to help families communicate with one another, express emotions, and begin the process of moving forward.

www.childgrief.org The Children's Grief Education Association is dedicated to serving the needs of grieving children and families and to providing education and support to those who serve them.

www.bfo-kingston.ca The Kingston affiliate of Bereaved Families of Ontario services grieving families from the Kingston, Napanee, Gananoque and Brockville areas and everywhere in between. The chapter provides support services, public awareness and volunteer training in these regions.

www.compassionatefriends.org Whether your family has had a child die (at any age from any cause) or you are trying to help those who have gone through this life altering experience, The Compassionate Friends exists to provide friendship, understanding, and hope to those going through the natural grieving process.

Appendix K Creating Memorials

Memorializing a deceased member of a school community may prove to be a more complex enterprise than imagined. It often is difficult to honour a person's life appropriately without being perceived as doing too much or too little.

Any initiative to create a memorial should reflect the particular qualities associated with the person as well as the belief system of the school community.

Consideration also should be given to the following:

- any activity or tribute should be sensitive to the needs of the school community, and must be approved and supported by administration
- consideration of the immediate family
- the long term implications and/or maintenance of the memorial be considered during planning
- expressions should be simple, dignified and appropriate
- prepare for the need of support preceding and following a dedication service
- be conscious of setting a precedent

Some suggestions:

- scholarships
- dedication in a yearbook
- graduation awards
- fundraising events sponsored by the school to benefit the school, medical research or children's groups
- the purchase of materials to be used in the school by future students (i.e. resource /library books)
- purchase of art work with a small, tasteful plaque (plaques should be placed in a location that honours the memory, but does not become a primary focus)
- tree planting (trees should be planted in a location favorable to growth)
- memorial garden
- name a specific room or area in the school (consult board policy)
- tree of life

Keep in mind that maintenance of any memorial should fall within the normal routine of school care.

Be mindful that scholarships may require an ongoing financial commitment.

Appendix L

Funeral Liturgy

The planning of the funeral liturgy is not the responsibility of the school community; however, grieving families may ask for assistance. Excellent resources are available on the website of the Archdiocese of Kingston. It offers guidelines addressing:

- Planning a funeral
- Readings for a funeral
- Music for a funeral
- Funeral with cremated remains
- Should I have a Catholic funeral?

<http://www.romancatholic.kingston.on.ca/>

Go to Diocesan Offices – Liturgy Office – Sacraments – Funeral

