

SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Ringwood Board of Education recognizes that self-destructive behavior and suicide occurs among children and adolescents in our country. Students identified as self-destructive are in need of appropriate help as quickly as possible. The primary obligations of school personnel working with a depressed or suicidal student are support, parental contact, and referral. To that end, student confidentiality may be waived in life-threatening situations.

With the intent of contributing to the prevention of suicide among students where possible, the board directs that an adolescent suicide awareness program be initiated, including:

1. In-service education--to increase the awareness of all building staff about the seriousness of the problem and possible suicide "warning signs",
2. Establishment of referral/response procedures in each school--to facilitate assisting students identified as possibly suicidal,
3. Infusion into the curriculum of appropriate understandings and information--to help students deal appropriately with feelings, to recognize possible suicide "warning signs" in themselves and others, and to increase awareness of alternatives and resources available for assistance,
4. Parental awareness--to increase understandings of parents about the problem and the resources available, and
5. Procedures in each school for dealing appropriately with tragedies--to ease the impact on students, staff, and community in the event of a student suicide.

District personnel cannot be expected to treat the suicidal adolescent. Rather, they need to recognize that they are in a position to aid in the identification of young people who may be prone to suicide, and to intervene in order to link these young people and their families to treatment programs in the community. In addition, school personnel need to be prepared to relate to suicidal young people following a suicide attempt, and to deal with the intense emotions/reactions of the school community following an actual suicide.

LEGAL REFERENCE: 70 O.S. Section 24-100.7

A POLICY ON THIS TOPIC IS RUQIRED BY LAW