

SAMPLE ESC Region 11 Open Letter Home to Parents about a Death

Dear Parents,

It is with great sadness that I inform you that one of our students, , has died from an apparent suicide. Our deepest sympathies go out to his family.

We believe your guidance and support is important to your child at this time. You know your student best, and talking about this together will give you a chance to explain how your family understands and copes with loss. You may want to discuss with your child how to be a supportive friend to classmates.

Given the current social distancing requirements our crisis support will be conducted virtually. Counselors will be available next week to support students in a virtual group setting. Fostering environments that bridge social connection, even in a virtual world, is critical to the healthy processing of grief for students. Additionally, we have included links at the bottom of this correspondence that may be helpful to you in discussing suicide with your child. Now more than ever we must work collaboratively to support the mental health needs of children.

The situation may remind your student of past losses. The most important thing children need is to have an opportunity to be heard and to be able to express their feelings. Please communicate to your child that he/she may participate in a counselor-led group session to discuss their feelings. The schedule below details the crisis group counseling support session times. Links will be shared by Monday morning with further directions for logging in and participating in the scheduled grief virtual group sessions.

At this time, we want to respect the family's need for privacy, as we also join together in expressing our heartfelt sympathy.

Virtual Crisis Counseling Support Schedule

Monday 3/23/20

1:00-2:00

2:00-3:00

Tuesday 3/24/20

10:00-11:00

11:00-12:00

1:00-2:00

2:00-3:00

Wednesday 3/25/20

11:00-12:00

2:00-3:00

Sincerely,

Principal, School Name

Tips for Parents when talking to your children about suicide

<https://childdevelopmentinfo.com/how-to-be-a-parent/communication/talk-to-kids-death/#gs.11dh36>

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/death.html>

<https://centerforparentingeducation.org/library-of-articles/healthy-communication/talking-with-children-about-death/>

