

Youth Suicide Prevention



PUENTE Charter School recognizes that youth suicide is a serious problem across the state of California. These policies and procedures outline PUENTE Charter School's approach to youth suicide prevention and intervention. This policy shall be available to all staff and reviewed and updated each school year.

PUENTE Charter School Mental Health Team:

Counselor:	Janette Rodriguez	323.780.0084
Principal:	Brenda Meza	323.780.0084
Vice Principal:	Diana Juarez	323.780.0027

List of Resources:

- Los Angeles Unified School District Mental Health Department
(213) 241-3841
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline
1-800-273-TALK
- Child & Youth Your Life Your Choice Helpline www.yourlifeyourvoice.org
1-800-448-3000 / Textline Text VOICE to 20121
- Suicide Prevention 101 for Parents
[Suicide Prevention 101 for Parents in English](#)(PDF)
[Prevención del Suicidio para Padres](#)(PDF)
- www.suicidology.org
(American Association of Suicidality)
- Toolkit for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention K-12_
<https://www.sccgov.org/sites/bhd/Services/SP/Documents/2017/heard-toolkit-07-01-17.pdf>

Prevention

Suicide prevention is most effective when staff, students, parents, and community members have adequate information about prevention. The following resources will be available to our learning community:

STAFF Resources

- Review of policies and procedures during a professional development session to include training about the scope of youth suicide.
- Living Works Online Youth Summit Training
- Information about the signs of stress and depression and where to send students for support.
- Information on risk factors for suicide
- Information about signs of suicidal thinking
- Information about how to intervene when a student presents signs of suicidal thoughts
- Resources Included in Parent Handbook

Student Resources

- Mental Health classes that teach children coping skills and mindfulness practices will be taught by LAPD Hollenbeck PALS
- Calm Classroom Mindfulness practices practiced daily
- “Family Circles” practiced to encourage students to discuss problems or feelings in a safe environment
- Behavior Flip App behavior management system used to track student behaviors.

Parent Resources

- Comp Therapy, an annual workshop including the Information about the signs of stress and depression and a parent’s role in helping, risk factors for suicide, Information about signs of suicidal thinking.
- Resources for families about communication strategies and mental health
- Resources available for our school community via PUENTE Learning Center

Protective Factors

Protective factors are the positive conditions, personal and social resources that promote resiliency and reduce the probability for youth suicide as well as other high-risk behaviors.

These include:

- Presence of social support
- Family support system
- Problem solving skills and history of coping skills
- Good impulse control
- Having a safe place to discuss feelings
- Coping skills
- Presence of hopefulness
- Pets
- Being involved in activities

Warning Signs & Risk Factors

Warning signs should be taken seriously. If a staff member notices warning signs, he/she should alert a member of the mental health team as soon as possible. These include:

- References to suicide
- Giving away meaningful possessions
- Withdrawal from friends
- Not wanting to participate or attend class
- Declining academic performances/failure to complete work
- Frequent talk about death or frequently sad or feeling hopeless
- Mood swings
- Impulsive or aggressive mood
- Victim of abuse
- Dramatic changes in personality/appearance
- Bullying or being bullied

Family Risk Factors:

- Child sexual abuse
- Use of extreme physical punishment
- Lower family socioeconomic status
- Changes of parents/family (e.g., divorce, remarriage, recent death of loved one)
- Poor parent-child attachment
- Parent alcohol problems/drug use
- Low parental monitoring
- Family history of suicide or suicide attempt

Intervention

The following procedures will be observed when it comes to a staff member's attention that a student is experiencing a crisis and may include suicidal thinking or behavior:

- Staff members must take threat of self-harm behavior seriously. The staff member will then share this information verbally with a member of the mental health team immediately.
- If the information comes from another person such as a peer or a parent, the staff member will refer the situation to a mental health team member immediately, who will schedule a meeting with the student. If a mental health team member is not available, a member of student support staff trained in risk assessment will meet with the student immediately.
- The student support/mental health team member will further discuss the situation with the student to obtain information about the crisis and assess their needs. If additional support is needed, the mental health/student support team should reach out to the Los Angeles Unified School District Mental Health Department for consult (213) 241-3841 for support.
- The parent or guardian must be notified of the risk assessment and informed of the severity. An appointment with a mental health professional will be made ASAP.
- Share concerns and provide recommendations for safety with the parent or guardian
- Provide Mental Health Resource List and information about outside referrals.

Postvention

Procedures for Assisting the Suicidal Student:

- Keep the student safe and under close supervision. Never leave the student alone. Designate one or more staff members to stay with and support the individual in crisis while help is being sought. Call 911 if student needs emergency medical help.
- Notify the school administrator or designee who will immediately communicate with the designated crisis intervention team members and/or law enforcement.
- Notify the guardians what has occurred and arrange to meet them wherever appropriate (as student might need emergency transportation to hospital).
- Consult with Department of Mental Health (800-854-7771) as necessary to assess the student's mental state and to obtain a recommendation for needed treatment.
- In the event that the situation requires transportation to a hospital emergency department for medical treatment, contact administrator to assess the situation, call 911, and expedite the transition to the hospital.
- Explain that a designated school professional will follow-up with parents and student regarding arrangements for medical and/or mental health services.

- Make arrangements, as necessary, for class work assignments to be completed at home if the student is unable to attend school.
- Hold a mandatory debriefing for staff, administrators, and crisis response team members who directly dealt with the student in crisis.
- Document actions taken as outlined in school incident reporting protocol. (Dissemination of information about at-risk students is governed by provisions of the United States Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, Public Law 93-380, as amended by Public Law 93-586, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, Public law 94-142, and 20 A MRSA. §§ 6001 — 6001-B).
- Upon re-entry, it must begin with a re-entry meeting. Confidentiality is extremely important in protecting the student and enabling school personnel to render assistance. The re-entry meeting will be attended by the student's guardian(s), appropriate support team members, the building administrator, and the student, if developmentally appropriate.