

Script for Teachers – Informing Students about a Death or Other Tragic Event

Dear Staff:

Your students need to know that a (death/loss/accident) has occurred.

Please be aware that you have the choice as to whether you want to be the one to tell your students. If you don't feel comfortable in doing so, please let your administrator or a member of your School Crisis Response Team know. Arrangements can be made for someone else to take your class, while you get the support you need. If you feel that you can lead the discussion, here are the facts and some guidelines for discussion.

Share only the facts that have been scripted for you. Additional information will be provided to you and the students, as soon as possible. You can begin with, "I have something sad to share with you".

Then share the scripted information provided by the school Crisis Response Team that is listed below.

In leading the discussion, you can say, "I am feeling very sad about what has happened. I would like to spend some time talking about the (death/crisis/accident)."

Take some time for informal discussion, and let the students know there is counselling available, if they need further discussion. Often it is helpful to have the discussion in a circle or with younger children, on the carpet. After the discussion and depending upon the age of the students, you may want to modify your curriculum plans for today, but try to end the day with some form of routine activity. Some students benefit from drawing or writing about their feelings, but all expressions of grief/loss should be accepted. The Crisis Response Team will be sharing other ideas for appropriate classroom activities, as more factual information surrounding this tragedy becomes available.

Please identify any students that you feel are experiencing a severe emotional reaction, and pass their names to the Crisis Response Team within the next two hours (or recess). A counselling area has been set up in the following area of the school: (list place – e.g. in the resource room) _____

The following activities have been cancelled for today: (list below – e.g. guidance, physical education, resource)

If you need any support, please let the office or the Crisis Response Team know.

Thank you in advance for supporting your students and fellow colleagues.

(Please feel free to reprint this page for staff.)