

Documentation of Suicide Prevention Efforts

School Resources to Support Military-Connected Students is a project by the Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness an applied research center at The Pennsylvania State University and is funded by the Department of Defense Education Activity Grant number HE1254-19-0009.

For more information click on the links below:

<https://schoolresources.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/>

<https://militaryfamilies.psu.edu/>

<https://www.psu.edu/>

<https://dodeagrants.org/>

Our goal is to provide school personnel with free, evidence-based resources to support military-connected students. This training is part of our *Suicide Prevention* series.

Important Reminders

Before starting this training, please read the items below carefully and check the box in front of each item to indicate your understanding.

- The following content discusses suicide and may be upsetting to some individuals.
- Follow all district, local, state, and federal regulations. This training is **NOT** intended to replace or override existing procedures or laws.

Introduction

What is the purpose of this training?

Proper documentation is emphasized throughout this series of trainings because it can be a safeguard for student support personnel (i.e., school psychologists, school counselors, and school nurses) and the students they serve. Important documentation discussed in other trainings in this series include:

1. Annual suicide prevention trainings must be documented, including attendance, as one possible safeguard against schools being found negligent for a student's suicide.

Go to Programs to Prevent Student Suicide

Click on the link below to visit the training titled *Programs to Prevent Student Suicide*. The objective of this training is to increase your confidence in your ability to identify evidence-based programs to prevent student suicides.

https://learning.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/school-resources/modules/suicide_09-programs-to-prevent-student-suicide_201022/

Go to Risk Factors of Student Suicide

Click on this button to visit the training titled *Risk Factors of Student Suicide*. The objective of this training is to increase your confidence in your ability to identify risk factors of student suicide.

https://learning.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/school-resources/modules/suicide_10-risk-factors-of-student-suicide_201022/

Go to *Warning Signs and Stressful Precipitating Events of Student Suicide*

Click on this button to visit the training titled *Warning Signs and Stressful Precipitating Events of Student Suicide*. The objective of this training is to increase your confidence in your ability to identify warning signs and precipitating stressful events of student suicide.

https://learning.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/school-resources/modules/suicide_11-warning-signs-and-stressful-precipitating-events-of-student-suicide_201022/

2. Following a risk assessment, documentation of parent notification for all students via the Crisis Intervention Documentation is required. All actions and parent contacts should be documented. Crisis Intervention Documentation is covered in the training titled *Suicide Screening Process Documentation*.

Go to *Suicide Screening Process Documentation*

Click on this button to visit the training titled *Suicide Screening Process Documentation*. The objective of this training is to increase your confidence in your ability to identify and implement best practices for documenting the suicide screening process.

https://learning.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/school-resources/modules/suicide_19-suicide-screening-process-documentation_201022/

3. When coordinating with other providers or conducting a re-entry following doctor approval, plans and updates must not only be documented but also communicated. For instance, updates to safety plans are important to track.

Go to *Safety Plans to Prevent Student Suicide*

Click on this button to visit the training titled *Suicide Screening Process Documentation*. The objective of this training is to increase your confidence in your ability to help students at risk of suicide create a safety plan.

https://learning.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/school-resources/modules/suicide_19-suicide-screening-process-documentation_201022/

Go to *Re-entry and Management Following Student Absence*

Click on this button to visit the training titled *Re-entry and Management Following Student Absence*. The objective of this training is to increase your confidence in your ability to implement best practices regarding re-entry and management following a student absence.

https://learning.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/school-resources/modules/suicide_27-re-entry-and-management-following-student-absence_201022/

Objective

The goal of this training is to increase your confidence in your ability to:

Identify and implement best practices for documenting the suicide prevention process.

How confident are you in your ability to do this now?

Please click on the link below to submit your response.

https://pennstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6Gp3iBHLvhcTluR?modulenumber=suicide29

Verify that you have completed each of the tasks below before proceeding with this training.

Answered the survey question in the link.

Clicked the arrow underneath the survey question to submit your response.

Recorded the ID number provided after you submitted your answer to the survey question. You will need it to complete the survey at the end of this training.

Research

What is most important for me to know?

In the words of Gutheil (1980), legally speaking, “if it isn't written down, it didn't happen.” Returning to the ethics codes, there are a number of common requirements for documentation. Sections from several organizations are included to illustrate.

Please note that this list does not cover all ethical or legal requirements for documentation.

- “Psychologists create, and to the extent the records are under their control, maintain, disseminate, store, retain, and dispose of records and data relating to their professional and scientific work in order to (1) facilitate provision of services later by them or by other professionals, (2) allow for replication of research design and analyses, (3) meet institutional requirements, (4) ensure accuracy of billing and payments, and (5) ensure compliance with law” (APA, 2017).
- Further, “Psychologists have a primary obligation and take reasonable precautions to protect confidential information obtained through or stored in any medium, recognizing that the extent and limits of confidentiality may be regulated by law or established by institutional rules or professional or scientific relationship” (APA, 2017).
- More specifically, “School nurses maintain protection of, and confidentiality with, student health records according to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Family Education Rights Protection Act (FERPA), other applicable federal laws, state laws and regulations, and professional standards of practice to safeguard privacy” (NASN, 2016).
- When it is impossible to avoid a dual relationship, school counselors should “document the nature of interactions that extend beyond conventional parameters, including the rationale for the interaction, the potential benefit and the possible positive and negative consequences for the student and school counselor” (ASCA, 2016, p. 3).
- “School psychologists review all of their written documents for accuracy, signing them only when correct. They may add an addendum, dated and signed, to a previously submitted report if information is found to be inaccurate or incomplete” (NASP, 2010).

Application

How might this look in my professional practice?

The objective of this training is to:

Identify and implement best practices for documenting the suicide prevention process.

Below you will see a series of statements related to documentation of the suicide prevention process. Identifying whether the statements as true or false.

1. School psychologists are responsible for maintaining, storing, retaining, and disposing of student records relating to their work (psychological and testing data).
 - a) True
 - b) False

Correct Answer: a) True

2. School psychologists are required to ensure confidentiality by any means necessary, including in cases where records are subpoenaed.

- a) True
- b) False

Correct Answer: b) False

3. Acts that protect privacy of information include HIPAA, FERPA, and NCLB.

- a) True
- b) False

Correct Answer: b) False

4. When a dual relationship is unavoidable, school counselors should carefully document the nature of the relationship and consider possible positive and negative consequences of entering into that counseling relationship.

- a) True
- b) False

Correct Answer: a) True

5. School psychologists are unable to edit their written documents once they are signed.

- a) True
- b) False

Correct Answer: b) False

Implementation

How can I effectively implement this content in my professional practice?

Please review the considerations below regarding potential implementation strategies, barriers to implementation, and collaboration strategies related to this content. This will help you coordinate the next steps as you begin to incorporate the information presented in this training into your professional practice.

This information can also be found on a handout that you will be able to download at the end of this training.

Implementation Strategies

- Discuss with administrators the procedures for maintaining records.
- Regularly review your records to ensure consistency of documentation. The use of standard forms can assist with accuracy and completion.

Overcoming Barriers to Implementation

- When discussing documentation with colleagues, you may have some differences in training on how to maintain records. It is important that you discuss ways to combine your ideas for consistent documentation that is agreeable for all professionals.

Collaboration Strategies

- Consult with colleagues about documentation by periodically sharing redacted notes, forms, and other documents so that you can get feedback on your practice.

Resources

Are there any resources available to help me implement this content?

Click on the link below to download a tool that you can use to implement this content in your professional practice.

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:e010f749-4f8e-4c0f-aed3-2d9be6be7272>

Feedback

How can I help improve this training?

The objective of this training was to increase your confidence in your ability to:

Identify and implement best practices for documenting the suicide prevention process.

Answer the questions in the link below to let us know how well this training increased your confidence in your ability to accomplish this objective. Once you have answered all of the questions, click the blue arrow button underneath to submit your responses.

https://pennstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_d771mLr9ZgW3kyx?modulenumber=suicide29

Verify that you have completed each of the tasks below.

Answered all of the survey questions above. You may have to scroll to see all of the questions.

Clicked the arrow underneath the last survey question to submit your responses.

Additional Readings

Where can I learn more about this content?

The following resources were used to create this training. If you would like more information about the information presented in this training, we encourage you to start here.

American Psychological Association. (2017). American Psychological Association. Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct. *American Psychologist*, 57(12), 1–20. <https://apa.org/ethics/code/ethics-code-2017.pdf><http://doi.apa.org/getdoi.cfm?doi=10.1037/0003-066X.57.12.1060>

Code of Ethics. (n.d.). Retrieved November 23, 2020, from <https://www.nasn.org/nasn-resources/professional-topics/codeofethics>

Curry, J. R., & Milsom, A. (2018). ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors. *Career and College Readiness Counseling in P–12 Schools*. <https://doi.org/10.1891/9780826136152.ap04>

Gutheil T. G. (1980). Paranoia and progress notes: a guide to forensically informed psychiatric recordkeeping. *Hospital & community psychiatry*, 31(7), 479–482. <https://doi.org/10.1176/ps.31.7.479>

King, C. A., Foster, C. E., & Rogalski, K. M. (2013). The Guilford child and adolescent practitioner series. *Teen suicide risk: A practitioner guide to screening, assessment, and management*. The Guilford Press.

Lobachevsky, N. I. (2007). Principles of professional ethics for scientists. *Journal of Biological Rhythms*, 22(2), 195. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0748730407299347>

Thank You!

Thank you for taking the time to complete this training. If you have any questions or comments, please email us at schoolresources@psu.edu.

Proceed to the next training

Click on the link below to move on to the next training titled *Crisis Team Response to a Completed Suicide*. In this training, you will increase your confidence in your ability identify the responsibilities of school crisis team members after a student suicide.

https://learning.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/school-resources/modules/suicide_30-crisis-team-response-to-a-completed-suicide/

Return to the module directory

Click on this button to return to the module directory.

<https://schoolresources.militaryfamilies.psu.edu/modules/>