



A Script to Help Counselors and Teachers Announce a Death to Their Students

This is a hard task- to tell your students about a death that has occurred.

First and Foremost: If you do not feel that you want to be the one to tell your students, then don't. The crisis team will make available to you someone who can lead the discussion for you, or take over your class while you seek the support you need. Please take advantage of this resource! We care about your needs in this sad time and want you to feel our support.

If you do want to lead the discussion, then here are the facts and some suggestions for procedures:

"I have something very sad I want to share with you. Write here the factual information (agreed upon by the crisis team) e.g.:

Joe Smith, a student who attends our school, who was missing, is dead. Yesterday, the police found the little boy's body and he had been murdered. The police are investigating the crime and will give us information they can as they make progress in finding the killer.

I am feeling very sad about what's happened and a little scared, too. I would like to spend some time together now to share with each other. Maybe we could help each other in expressing how we feel about (name the one who died) and how she/he died."

- Take some time for discussion.
- Attached are handouts: (Handouts could include: How Counselors and Teachers Tell Students about a Death, Counselor/ Teacher's Guidelines on How to Lead A Discussion with Grieving Students Handout; and Handouts about grieving children).
- After your discussion, tell the children that there are counselors in the building if they need to talk further and arrange with them a procedure for going to see the counselor or to a support room.

- After your discussion you may want to:
 1. Take a time of recess or playground play;
 2. Do some drawing, art project or other projects- leave the subject matter up to the student;
 3. Do some Journal Writing- write down thoughts about whatever is on the child's mind.
 4. Go back to curriculum.

- These activities may be useful to continue to do at intervals during the day and to intersperse throughout your curriculum in the coming days.

If you need some support, please call the office. Do not hesitate to ask.