

CRISIS RESPONSE INFORMATION

Youth want people in their lives in whom they can place personal confidence. Many youth workers want to be that kind of confidant for youth. Youth leaders can be placed in difficult positions because of the kind of information you might hear from a student.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Do not refer to yourself as a counselor unless you are a certified professional counselor.
- Remember that sometimes students exaggerate or stretch the truth.
- Never promise total confidentiality. Instead, let them know you are available to listen, but are willing to take action to protect them. LOVE = acting in the best interest of another.

CRISIS RESPONSE TECHNIQUES

1. Pray immediately with the student asking God to give them hope.
2. Pray through scriptures that reveal a value for life and the future.
3. Don't show open shock regardless of what a student shares.
4. Get the issue into the hands of a person higher in the authority chain, (teacher, counselor, parent, youth pastor, pastor, or parent).

CRITICAL ISSUES

If details come to us on these issues, we are required to take action and involve those who can help students and assess the validity of their claims.

PHYSICAL or SEXUAL ABUSE

The youth might be the abuser or the abused, but action is required. The quickest action is to get the information to the next person up in the authority chain, (parent, youth pastor or pastor, dfacs, legal authorities) – that's why they get paid the big bucks.) If you come to us, we will ask students for details, then we will contact the necessary authorities.

SUICIDAL COMMENTS

Love: Act in the best interest of the individual. A response is demanded. We have an ethical and moral obligation to the person who intimates suicide. We also have a legal statute that requires us to attempt to prevent people from willfully harming themselves or others.

Quick Pointers in cases of suicidal comments.

1. Take every suicidal comment seriously. (Cutting may be a physical demonstration of suicidal intent.)
2. Most comments are a cry for someone's attention. Make sure they get some attention.
3. Get them to someone with more expertise as soon as possible for a proper assessment.
4. Ask them if they have a plan. (The more definite & violent the plan, the more serious the case.)
5. Make a plan for the future, ("Think about this, and promise me you will call me in the morning.")
6. Tell them, "I think we are going to need to talk to the pastor, counselor, parent. I'll go with you."

BORDERLINE ISSUES

- **A Broken Law** – Time frame and type of law broken call for differing actions.
- **Drug Abuse** – Past or Present
- **Abortion** – All those who have experienced abortion have a serious need for counseling.
- **Pregnancy** – It is going to show up sooner or later, so building a bridge to the parents.
- **Sexual Promiscuity & Identity Issues** – Be guided by the Holy Spirit.

GENERAL RULES FOR BORDERLINE ISSUES

- Don't make this sheet a law. Get help from staff or professionals. Move up your chain of command.
- Support parental authority. Build bridges to parents when possible.
- Offer to go with a student to talk to the appropriate parties!
- On past issues, offer accountability. Covenant with them to help them walk toward maturity.

SUPERWOW RESPONSE

The Camp Director has the phone number of a counselor on retainer who will guide them. We have no choice but to report serious issues. There is a great responsibility we have. In past years, we saved 2 girls from living in a home with an abuser. Don't take risks if students confide in you.

STAY FOCUSED ON YOUR MISSION

Students in crisis concern us all, but if you get obsessed with helping a student in crisis, you are not seeing the dozens of other students in front of you who are depending on you to do your job well in all the other times of the day. **WE HAVE A PROCESS IN PLACE SO YOU CAN STAY FOCUSED ON YOUR JOB.** Get the serious challenges in the hands of those entrusted to handle those, then keep praying for them, and serving others.