



BOA Stage & Screen Production Academy

Trauma, Bereavement or Severe Stress Policy

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The following is a series of guidelines in the event of a youngster suffering parental breakdown, a bereavement of a parent, sibling or close relative or friend, or who is suffering severe stress over something else that has happened. Such procedures should not necessarily be implemented unquestioningly, since there will always be the need to respond by heart rather than by letter according to each individual case.

PRELIMINARY STATEMENTS

1. The overriding principle is a course of support that seeks the wellbeing of the child.
2. It is recognised that not all students respond the same way to parental breakdown or the loss of a loved one. Some youngsters display their grief publicly, while others carry it within in an attempt to distance themselves from further pain. In general, the first response is more psychologically healthy than the second.
3. Youngsters may need counselling, the variable factor is when. For some, there will be the need to counsel as soon as possible after the loss, for others this may be too soon. Close monitoring with guardians, friends and carers is essential, so that the right time may be chosen for the youngster to begin talking and offloading.
4. When counselling a young person having undergone the separation of parents or bereavement, it may not be possible to predict the outcome. Dealing with heavy issues like bereavement is to challenge the natural response of denial, and this is traumatic in itself. A planned programme is therefore more beneficial than spontaneous support.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

1. When it has been learnt that a youngster has suffered parental breakdown or bereavement, information sharing will be the first task:
 - i) inform the Pastoral Care Lead, the Curriculum Leader, and the tutor
 - ii) the notified to make an announcement in Staff Briefing so that staff are aware;
 - iii) make clear to the person informing the Academy that we want to offer support
2. The tutor/Pathway Director and Pastoral Care Lead will liaise over monitoring the students and there must be regular reviews with appropriate staff until such time that the student has come to terms with the loss (in a relative sense) and/or the need for counselling has ceased.
3. Where appropriate a Counsellor will engage the young person in a programme of counselling.
4. In cases (after full negotiation with guardians or carers) where the youngster is displaying extreme emotional behavioural symptoms which indicate that the grieving is requiring the input of a Clinical Psychologist, the Counsellor will promptly refer the case to an appropriate agency.

Some families will engage professional therapeutic support from other agencies and care will be taken to ensure that what is done in the academy is appropriate in relation to that. It is recognised

that some guardians may send their youngster to the academy prematurely in order that they or their youngsters may learn to cope by getting back into normal routines quickly. While this might be a right course of action for the family, it will nevertheless leave a youngster prone to become spontaneously upset or difficult to manage.