# **Suicide Prevention**

 McDonough High School NJROTC Suicide Prevention

One goal of the MHS NJROTC Unit is to provide the mechanisms necessary to identify and respond to students who are at risk of self-destructive behaviors or suicidal ideation. The following are essential components of our unit’s program:

a. Recognize behavioral patterns and other warning signs that indicate that a young person may be at risk of suicide.

b. Active intervention that explores the level of risk without increasing it.

c. Ensuring that at risk students receive the necessary services.

d. Working with our school’s counseling program for the implementation of measures following a crisis or traumatic event, to reduce the risk to those who have witnessed or been affected by the tragedy. The suicide, or violent or unexpected death, of a student or teacher can result in an increased risk of suicide for other vulnerable young people.

It can’t be emphasized enough that we are not counselors or professional mental health experts – our goal is not to treat or counsel but to identify those students who may have a need in this area and to lead them to mental health providers.

Teen suicide warning signs (from www.teensuicide.us)
It is important to take the warning signs of teen suicide seriously and to seek help if you think that you know a teenager who might be suicidal. Here are some of the things to look for:
• Disinterest in favorite extracurricular activities
• Problems at work and losing interest in a job
• Substance abuse, including alcohol and drug (illegal and legal drugs) use
• Behavioral problems
• Withdrawing from family and friends
• Sleep changes
• Changes in eating habits
• Begins to neglect hygiene and other matters of personal appearance
• Emotional distress brings on physical complaints (aches, fatigues, migraines)
• Hard time concentrating and paying attention
• Declining grades in school
• Loss of interest in schoolwork
• Risk taking behaviors
• Complains more frequently of boredom
• Does not respond as before to praise
Not all of these teen suicide warning signs will be present in cases of possible teen suicide. There are many cases in which a good student commits suicide. It is important to watch for two or three signs as indications of depression, or even teen suicidal thoughts.

**Operational Risk Management**

NJROTC OPERATIONAL RISK MANGEMENT (ORM) ASSESSMENT

1. IDENTIFY RISK HAZARDS:
a. Cadet becomes ill .
b. Cadet – falls to deck .
c. Cadet becomes dehydrated .
d. Cadet injured during team regulation drill .
e. Cadet injured during Armed Drill Team Exhibition
f. Cadet hit by private automobile or delivery truck .
g. Sudden electrical storm

2. ASSESS RISK HAZARDS FOR EACH OF THE ABOVE:
a. Cadet may become ill as result of eating too much, having flu, cold, fever, or other existing medical condition. May occur – moderate severity
b. Cadet feints and falls to deck as result of locking knees. May occur – minor severity
c. Cadet becomes dehydrated – did not hydrate prior to event. May occur – minor severity
d. Cadet injured during platoon drill – i.e. sprained ankle. May occur – minor severity
e. Cadet hits self or other cadet with rifle, cut, bruise, eye injury. May occur – moderate severity
f. Event held on bus ramp – private and delivery vehicles still use – driver looses control hits cadet– Unlikely to occur
g. Sudden electrical storm endangering cadets – May occur – moderate severity

3. IMPLEMENT CONTROLS:
a. On drill/PT days instructors brief all cadets on importance of eating breakfast/lunch as well as steps to take if they are not feeling well. Reemphasize Training Time Out (TTO)
aa. NSI and SNSI CPR certified. AEDs located in clinic and in Commons Area
b. On drill/PT days brief all cadets to not lock knees during long periods of Attention. Brief all cadets to pay attention to other cadets – catch before falling to deck.
c. On drill/PT days instructors will brief all cadets on hydrating and the effects of dehydration. Water/cups will be available for all cadets
d. Ensure first aid kit available. Nurse and trainers phone numbers available to contact if necessary
e. Instructors check weather station. Have foul weather plan in place.

4. MAKE RISK DECISIONS: ACTIVITY – DRILL / PT/ COLOR GUARD
1. Decide if the benefit of the activity outweighs the risk associated with it.

ACTIVITY RISK BENEFIT OUTWEIGHS RISK
ILLNESS YES
FEINTING YES
DEHYDRATION YES
INJURIES YES
VEHICLE TRAFFIC YES
WEATHER YES

5. SUPERVISE:
a. Instructors and Cadet Staff ensure controls remain in effect. NSI will monitor cadets during all phases of drill practice.
NSI will have cell phone in case of emergency.
b. Instructors evaluate and verify controls are having desired effects.
c. Any individual who recognizes a potentially unsafe situation should call a safety / training time out and bring that situation to
the attention of the NSI.

**Anti-Bullying/Hazing/Harassment**

McDonough High School NJROTC Anti-Hazing, Bullying and Harassment

While the SNSIs of the MHS NJROTC units are responsible for implementing programs to prevent hazing and bullying, cadets are expected to show good citizenship and leadership by assuring the fair treatment of all.  The cadets’ program should include ways to report improper conduct without fear of reprisal, corrective actions as deemed necessary to prevent recurrence in accordance with school policies regarding misconduct.

DEFINITIONS:

a. Hazing is the practice of rituals and other activities involving harassment, abuse, or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group (usually an informal association that acts in secret). Hazing is any action or situation, with or without the consent of the participants, which recklessly, intentionally, or unintentionally endangers the mental, physical, or academic health or safety of a student.

b. Bullying is any type of unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance with the intent to abuse, embarrass, control, or harm the victim. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or written (to include social media).

c. Cyber bullying uses electronic communications devices.  Social media must be guarded so as not become the avenue for bullying and sexual harassment. With the proliferation of social media, most students are aware of cyber bullying immediately and quite often know the perpetrator and the victim. However, most cyber bullying goes unreported. It is wrong to subject any one to bullying and it is our shared responsibility to ensure it doesn’t happen.

d. Sexual harassment is bullying of a sexual nature and includes the creation of an atmosphere of fear or mistrust.

Hazing/bullying is not acceptable in any form in the NJROTC program.  NJROTC cadets should feel confident in their knowledge of prevention of hazing and bullying and should apply that knowledge throughout their school and community. We expect our cadets to be role models for other students. As professionals we understand that there is no place for any form of hazing or bullying.

An outstanding web resource for recognizing and dealing with bullying is stopbullying.gov. This site has several pages, videos and other resources to help with this problem. Copy/paste the following url:

http://www.stopbullying.gov/prevention/training-center/index.html