Annex 11

# Content of Special Class Period

* + 1. Provide concise information about the incident
* Report the verified facts gathered by the school;
* Clarify news that are untrue, e.g. information from newspapers;
* If the incident involves suicide, teachers should point out that the incident is under police investigation and it is inappropriate to make any speculation. Teachers should also point out that suicide is a complex phenomenon influenced by multiple interacting factors and causal pathways. No single cause or stressor is sufficient to explain a suicidal act in most circumstances. At the same time, teachers should emphasise that students should actively seek help when they encounter difficulties
  + 1. Answer students’ queries
* Let students ask questions. Avoid describing unnecessary or disturbing details when answering the questions;
* Only provide verified basic information and facts;
* Answer students' questions as far as possible. If teachers are uncertain or do not know the answers of the questions instantly, clarify and get back to the students later;
* Do not ask students to recall/share their crisis experiences.
  + 1. Prepare students for the common reactions after crisis incident
* Emphasise shock, sadness, self-blaming, anger and unsettling reactions, etc. are common responses (References 1A and 1B);
* State that different people react to the same incident in different ways; students should respect the different crisis reactions of peers;
* Remind students the importance to seek help when they display enduring warning signs or excessively intense reactions (Reference 1D).
  + 1. If necessary, teach students how to respond to the media’s enquiries
* Students to choose whether or not to respond to the media’s enquiries;
* Be respectful to the feelings of the victim’s family. Do not disclose the victim or his/her family’s personal information;
* Do not speculate or make judgment on the incident;
* If necessary, ask the media to contact the school directly.
  + 1. Share proper coping strategies and channels to seek help with students (References 3 and 4)
* Teach adaptive coping strategies (e.g. relaxation techniques and seeking social support);
* If the incident involves suicidal behaviours, emphasise that committing suicide is not an appropriate coping strategy;
* Learn about students’ social support network to ensure that they are able to receive appropriate support;
* Share channels to seek help with students, for example, they can seek help from the school guidance personnel, teachers or parents;
* Encourage students to seek help from their family or teachers as soon as possible when they experience emotional disturbance or encounter difficulties.
  + 1. Understand and observe students’ reactions, identify students in need of additional follow-up and support
* Identify students who show excessively intense emotional or behavioural reactions (e.g. depressed mood, anger, blaming of self or others);
* Observe reactions of students who have close relationship with the victim (good friends, boyfriend/girlfriend, siblings or peers with unsatisfactory relationship with the victim);
* If the crisis incident involves suicide, be aware if there are students who identify with the suicidal behaviour of the deceased;
* Refer students in need of additional support to school social worker or guidance teachers;
* Teachers can refer to Reference 2 for suggestions for responding to students’ emotional reactions towards a crisis incident.