



**Mental Health
Recovery Board**
Clark | Greene | Madison

Pathways for everybody, every family.

Dear educators, parents, and community members:

It has come to our attention that there is a dangerous video circulating on social media, primarily via TikTok. The content, which shows a suicide, may initially be disguised as more innocuous content, meaning some of your students or children may unwittingly be exposed to it as they browse online.

It is our recommendation that teachers and parents do not bring the video to students' attention, as it may encourage them to seek it out. Instead, limit or monitor social media access if possible. This is not a time to respect the privacy of the young person's use of technology.

If a student appears in distress or approaches you about having seen the video, here are some immediate steps you can take. Please note that every child will react differently when exposed to traumatic experiences. Follow-up with a mental health specialist is strongly recommended and urgent if any thoughts, words, or actions about self-harm or suicide are expressed. **A caring adult talking about the problem of suicide with a young person does not increase risk of suicide.** However, witnessing another person's suicide on social media, in movies, or exposure to graphic details about a death by suicide can lead to contagion or copy-cat reenactment among children and young people.

1. Acknowledge the gravity of the situation and the student's feelings, from their perspective. For example, you could say, "That sounds terrible (e.g. upsetting, scary, confusing, etc. based on their reaction)" and "It's important to talk to me or an adult you trust whenever you see or hear something on social media that is upsetting."
2. Reassure them that they are safe here and now
3. Ask the student if they would like to talk about how the video made them feel, either with you, your school counselor, or another trusted adult. Seeing a suicide or hearing graphic depictions of a suicide may trigger strong emotions, suicidal thoughts or self-harm behaviors, or concern about a loved one who may be suicidal.

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(937) 322-0648
www.mhrb.org

4. Share resources – such as the Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-8255), TrevorLifeline (1-866-488-7386), or Crisis Text Line (text 4HOPE to 741-741) – and give the student time to explore those resources
5. Do not dismiss or minimize the situation with comments like, “It’s just a video” or “Focus on something else.” This sends the message that you do not care and are unwilling to talk about it.
6. Do not make promises like, “You’ll get through this” or answer questions for which you do not know the answer. If you do not know the answer to a question, be honest with the young person and reach out to someone who would know the answer. For instance, you could say: “That’s a great question. I don’t know the answer, but let’s ask someone who does...”

For immediate mental health support contact:

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-TALK (8255)

Crisis Text Line: Text 4HOPE to 741-741

TrevorLifeline: 1-866-488-7386

To explore additional resources, including suicide prevention information, visit:

<https://www.mhrb.org/find-help/>

To locate a behavioral health care provider, visit: <https://www.mhrb.org/providers/#results>

To download MHRB’s 2020 Suicide Prevention Month Toolkit, visit:

https://4906vn3kfjq1ngjgi2x9vlc1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/SPMToolkit_branded-1.zip

Resources for educators:

Responder Resilience Program: 937-727-4097

Clark, Greene, Madison Warmline: 937-662-9080

Resources for educators: <https://www.mhrb.org/resources/#education>

Please do not hesitate to reach out to MHRB at 937-322-0648 should you need additional information or resources.

Kindest regards,

Dr. Greta H. Mayer, CEO

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