

# Myths & Facts

about the

## *Youth Crisis Response Team*

**Myth #1:** It is better not to bring attention to this crisis/event. Talking about it will only make it worse.

**Fact:** If the crisis/event is NOT addressed, this will more likely create even more problems for students and staff within the school. Not talking about it leads kids to stifle their emotions, and when this occurs you may see: increased behavioral issues, decreased focus and concentration, lower academic performance, increased medical/physical ailments, and more school absences.

**Myth #2:** Kids will just want to get out of class; they will use talking to a crisis worker as an excuse to skip classes.

**Fact:** Crisis staff monitors for this when meeting with students. The goal of crisis intervention is to provide immediate support and a place to talk. Once students are stabilized, crisis staff returns students to class in order to get them back into their regular routine. The structure and routine of the school day helps to give kids the safety and support they need in the midst of a time of often feeling powerless, fearful, and sad.

**Myth #3:** The Pre-meeting prior to the crisis intervention is not really necessary.

**Fact:** Being prepared is the best way to be ready; knowledge is power! Often times, staff do not have all the information themselves, and the pre-meeting helps to get everyone on the same page. In addition, it helps everyone know what to expect as the actual crisis intervention work begins the next day. Finally, it allows staff to meet the crisis interventionists who will be at the school prior to the next school day.

**Myth #4:** If the kids don't know the student, they will not be impacted by the crisis/event.

**Fact:** The death of anyone can bring up feelings and emotions from previous deaths, traumas, and experiences. In this day of technology, students often find out about events immediately, so it is nearly impossible for a student to be "immune" from what has occurred, whether they knew the student or not. Likewise, it is a somber realization for students that someone their own age could die or have something bad happen to them. For all of these reasons, it is important not to assume who will or will not be impacted by the crisis/event.

**Myth #5:** If a student suicides, then bringing attention to this death will just encourage others to do the same.

**Fact:** When a student suicides, there is a high risk for others to do the same. If a student has already thought about suicide, then this might reinforce their intention regardless of the reaction from others. It is important to talk about the death so that others who might be contemplating the same thing can be identified and helped.

**Myth #6:** A death or crisis needs to be handled differently based on the circumstances of the death or the person who died.

**Fact:** All crises need to be handled similarly and according to the model. If crises are handled differently, there is a risk of alienating and isolating students. Consistency also helps to provide the structure needed for everyone - staff, students, and crisis workers - in the midst of a crisis.

**Myth #7:** The Youth Crisis Response Team services are very expensive.

**Fact:** This is a service provided at no cost to the school by well-trained volunteers from throughout Ashland County. Many of them are already working in the schools and with the youth who are served. YCRT workers give of their time in order to ensure all youth and adults impacted by a significant crisis event are able to get the support they need.