In an effort to address high rates of youth suicide, the Anchorage school district is expanding its crisis response team. Made up of more than a dozen staff members, the team helps schools respond to traumatic events in their communities. Their crisis response protocol is based on the PREPaRE model, which was developed by the National Association of School Psychologists to prevent and respond to psychological trauma in schools. After a suicide death, the crisis response team is sent to the school to meet with faculty and students, identify and assist those in distress, and ensure that the necessary mental health services are available. The team tailors its response to the needs of the school, in collaboration with school principals, and works closely with school counselors and mental health staff, bringing in outside psychologists as needed. The Anchorage school district also provides suicide prevention education to middle school students, and has developed a handout for parents that includes information on risk factors and warning signs for suicide.

Spark Extra! Check out After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools [2].

Links within this resource