



Critical Incidents

Definitions of a Critical Incident

An event or circumstance can be described as a critical incident when it causes normally stable and healthy people to experience strong emotional or psychological distress which has the potential to interfere with their ability to function either at a time of the event or later. This distress may be present as trauma responses, grief responses, stress responses, a combination of any of the previous three. (Jackson, 2005, p5)

*As a general rule, a critical incident is **determined by its impact** on individuals and the community as a whole, **rather than by any predetermined list of events**. (Jackson, 2005, p5)*

CEOM Critical Incident Responses

All schools are required to have a policy in place to respond to a critical incident.

In the event of a critical incident principals should contact Dennis Torpy (Manager, Wellbeing & Community Partnerships Unit) on 9267 0228 or 0408 565 063 or their Regional Manager on the following numbers:

- John Mills Northern Region 9329 8800 or 0400 801 284
- Jan Elliott Southern Region 9532 1922 or 0407 908 047
- Marwin Austerberry Eastern Region 9724 0200 or 0400 092 981
- Jeff Burn Western Region 9731 3900 or 0409 352 771

Following the report of the critical incident the CEOM can provide service and advice to support schools in the management of the incident through the Wellbeing & Community Partnerships Unit. CEOM can also provide support in relation to media management by contacting David Ahern (Coordinator, Media) on 9267 0228 or 0418 351 383.

References

Jackson, Colleen 2005, *Towards healing and stability after distressing events: critical incident management for schools*, Outreach, Devonport.