

INFORMATION SHEET

Children's Services and Learning

Multi-agency Critical Incident Support Team

This is a description of the support that is available for professionals working with children following a critical incident or unexpected distressing event. Support for individual children/families would be accessed in the usual way.

What is a critical incident?

In this context we are defining critical incidents as significant unexpected distressing events that impact on our staff and fellow professionals, the children they care for and their families.

We are able to offer advice and support to our staff and fellow professionals, following such an event, in order to enable them to continue to support the children and families they work with during this time.

Who is involved in the multi-agency critical incident support team?

We represent a range of services that currently work within the city for both Solent NHS Trust and Southampton City Council. The work is co-ordinated by a group of managers representing all of the professional groups involved.

Educational Psychologists (EPs) can offer initial psychological support and advice to head teachers and school staff, parents, professionals and to children and young people to help them in the event of a critical incident or unexpected distressing event. This can be on an individual or group basis using appropriate psychological interventions which could include: debriefing, counselling, advice regarding dissemination of information to the wider community, group work, liaison with key professionals and sign-posting on to appropriate services. Should further psychological support or intervention be required, this can be obtained through the school's Link EP or by contacting Children's Services and Learning, locality bases or Inspire.

Emotional Well-being Development Officers (EWDOS) work in collaboration with EPs to offer emotional support and practical advice to school staff, including teaching staff, support staff and Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs). This support can include direct work in school with staff or pupils to facilitate group support and practical problem solving.

School Nurses are all qualified nurses often with additional specialist qualifications. Many of our School Nurses are able to do a good health assessment of the child and family, and can prioritise what is needed as a trained nurse. The qualified public health nurses again have significant assessment skills and knowledge related to Public Health issues. All School Nurses had medical updates for many conditions which may be helpful, depending on the type of incident. Most of our School Nurses have undertaken Emotional First Aid training and in the event of an incident would be able to offer emotional support to children and families.

Solent Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) work with children and young people up to the age of 18 years of age and provide support for their families and carers. The service cares for those suffering from mental ill health and psychological distress covering a wide range of disorders and conditions. There is a wide range of assessments, interventions and treatments available working with partner agencies from statutory, third sector and volunteer services across the city. During the time of a critical incident, CAMHS will be available to offer emergency assessment and therapeutic intervention as prescribed. Urgent access to a consultant psychiatrist in times of acute distress will be prioritised for clients and their families in need.

Behaviour Resource Service (BRS) - is a multi-agency specialist CAMHS service. The BRS are also able to offer initial psychological support and advice to practitioners to help them to support children and young people in the event of a critical incident or unexpected distressing event. The target group is mainly Children's Services and Learning safeguarding teams and foster carers. The BRS is also able to offer emergency mental state assessments for children in care. Should further support be required this can be accessed via the therapeutic panel.

When can support be provided?

We are there to provide support as soon as we have been notified of an incident and will select appropriate members of group to contact those involved to see what support is needed. We will then keep in contact and provide assistance in the short term or until we have arranged for long term support if this is required.

This system is for short term crisis support only and not a main route of access to routine services.

We are not emergency services and therefore phone lines are only staffed during office hours.

Contact details: In the first instance please contact Justine Bailey, Critical Incident Team Coordinator on **02380 716677** or **07733 002162** or email Justine.bailey@solent.nhs.uk (please note for emails contacting personal data please use jbailey6@nhs.net) OR contact BRS on **02380 799100**.