

## OEA Crisis Response Team Request for Assistance Protocol

The OEA Crisis Response Team (CRT) may be available to assist Labor Relations Consultants and the local CRT team. Two to four members will be available to be on site for local associations that have experienced an act of violence at a school site, at a school activity or on a school bus.

In addition, the CRT may be available on a lesser or more limited basis to local associations where members have experienced trauma. While we cannot provide assistance in every event of a crisis, we may be available on a case-by-case basis to meet with members and facilitate interventions in instances where our OEA members are affected.

While the CRT must look at each request on a case-by-case basis, should assistance be requested, the following procedures should be followed.

### Protocol for Requests for Assistance:

- Assistance may be provided when there are acts of violence or disasters which affect OEA members and which occur at a school site or event.
- The LRC, the local association or the school administration may initiate the request.
- Requests should be made through Kim Lane, CRT Chair, (Mentor Office) at 440-639-1300 or 1-800-686-4228.

### Internal Protocol:

- The LRC will first be contacted and notified of the request (if the request comes from a local association or the school district).
- The LRC may be involved (to the degree determined by each LRC) in assessment of the event and development of an assistance plan.
- The Regional Program Delivery Manager must be contacted.
- Notice of the disaster/event and composition of the Ohio CRT will be provided to OEA officers and managers.

Once a team is put together, periodic updates of the event will be sent to the LRC, the Regional Director and the OEA officers and managers.

### Protocol for Requests for Limited Assistance:

The Ohio CRT (depending upon availability) may be able to work with local associations if they are experiencing such crisis as the death of an OEA member, the death of a student(s) that is affecting the staff of a building, trauma to the school (fire, tornado, etc.), trauma to OEA members (school violence), or acts of violence that are affecting our members' ability to do their jobs. The intervention might not necessarily be scheduled immediately after an act or event, but might also be scheduled for a time afterwards if needed (for example, grief stricken members who are dealing with the death of a colleague weeks after the death has occurred).



## History of

### **The Ohio Education Association's Crisis Response Team / Safe Schools Cadre**

The Ohio Education Association has created a Safe Schools Cadre and Crisis Response Team. Following the NEA Safe Schools Conference in Savannah in January 2000, seven OEA staff members formed the initial cadre, which was eventually expanded to include about 12 staff members. In June 2000 members of the Cadre received 4 days of training from Myra Rinehart, a Pennsylvania State Education Association Communications staff person. Following this training session, members of the Cadre formed the Crisis Response Team (CRT).

In June 2000 10 staff members of the Crisis Response Team received 5 days of training focusing on group intervention in disaster/crisis situations from the National Organization for Victims Assistance and are now certified by NOVA. The Cadre has regularly scheduled meetings throughout the year and as part of our plan for continued learning and improvement of our knowledge and skills we have been meeting with staff and members of the Ohio chapter of NOVA. Currently six members intend to join the Ohio NOVA and lend assistance in Ohio and elsewhere as requested.

The members of the Cadre include field, program and management staff from all parts of the state. The current cadre focus is to make districts aware of the services available and to provide knowledge and information about school safety plans, violence prevention programs, conflict management and mediation. Cadre members have shared information about our program with the OEA Executive Committee, OEA staff, the Ohio School Boards Association, the Ohio Department of Education, the Buckeye Labor Management Council and Articles about the cadre and Crisis Response Team have appeared in our state publication, Ohio Schools. Plans are to expand the training cadre to include OEA members from each of the five regions in Ohio to conduct local workshops in school safety and prevention programs.

The Crisis Response Team has developed a published protocol for responding to events. Each team member has a "Go Kit" at his or her disposal that includes flyers, fact sheets and a photo identification badge. Requests for assistance are directed to the designated in-house response person or to the cadre chairperson. The chairperson and the designated in-house response person select the team members based on availability, diversity, function, and geography. We always include a person trained to work with the media, try to include team members who are relatively close to the site, and create an initial team that includes at least one member who has been assigned to a previous event. Teams are expected to be in place at the site by the evening of, or morning following the event, and members are expected to stay 2 to 5 days. We are prepared to establish a rotation schedule if necessary.

In September 2000 five members of the Crisis Response Team provided assistance to the Gallia County schools following the murder of a school employee on school grounds. The assistance included group and individual intervention assistance, media releases, and post-event support.

Since that time, the Ohio Crisis Response Team has provided assistance to many school districts across Ohio with the most recent being February 27, 2012 when a student shooter at Chardon High School killed three students and injured 3 students.

## OEA Crisis Response Team

### Protocol for Out-of-State Crisis Response

The Ohio Education Association Crisis Response Team (CRT) shall be available to other states for crisis intervention under the following conditions:

- The request for assistance must be processed from the requesting state's Executive Director through the NEA Executive Director and then through the OEA Executive Director.
- Dennis Reardon, OEA Executive Director, Office: 1-614-228-4526.
- After discussion between the OEA Executive Director and the OEA CRT Chairperson, the CRT Chairperson shall decide which CRT members will be sent to assist in the crisis.
- All expenses related to the crisis response shall be paid by the requesting state affiliate.
- CRT members shall be covered for all liability matters and under the same conditions as contained in the Master Agreement between the Ohio Education Association and the Professional Staff Union.
- All expenses shall be at the rate established by NEA for UniServ training.
- While on assignment to the crisis situation, OEA CRT members shall be responsible solely to the CRT Chairperson and to the person designated as the lead person on the crisis team.