



## TENNESSEE SCHOOLS PREPARE

### School Crisis Debriefing

#### “Cheat Sheet”

**Introduction:** Define process, goals, rules: We have all been through a difficult time, and we know that talking about it can help. Today we will talk in a circle about what we know, how we are reacting, and what feelings are normal. We will go around and give everyone a turn. If you do not want to talk, just say “pass”. Let’s try to listen to each other without interrupting. Let’s also try to have this be a safe place for everyone to talk.

**Fact and Thought Phase:** Let’s begin by going around and saying what we know....what have you heard? Where were you when you found out? What have you heard about the facts?  
Can you remember your thoughts when you heard about that? .... And what were you thinking when that happened?

**Reactions:** Now will go around the circle again, and talk about how this is affecting you....what were your first reactions? What are they now? What impact is this having on you? What was the worst part for you?

**In the event of a death:** (counselor should use judgment about whether this step would be helpful) Help students’ access positive memories, ask what they will miss most about the person, ask how they would like to remember the person....

**Symptom Phase:** help students identify symptoms they might be having as they react to the crisis, pull for similar themes in the group...i.e. sleep problems, nightmares, appetite disturbance, flashbacks, anxiety, other body reactions.

**Teaching Phase:** Normalize reactions to stress, including thoughts, feelings, body reactions. Teach about normal trauma reactions. (Your body might have “emergency” symptoms even when the emergency is over)

**Closure/Re-Entry:** Summarize the major themes of the discussion. Reassure students that what they are going through is normal. Identify support systems available for further help. Allow for a question and answer time.