



Florence Melly Community Primary School Attendance Strategy and Policy

IF YOU CAN DREAM IT, YOU CAN DO IT!



Policy Approval

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Written by:	Lucie Sainsbury (Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Attendance Lead)					New or revised policy:	Revised		
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Attend School, Arrive On Time, Every Day!

Introduction

Florence Melly Primary School is dedicated to ensuring every pupil attends school, arriving on time, every day. Regular attendance is crucial for academic success, social development, and overall well-being. This strategy, guided by the '[Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#)' document, 2024 and recent internal and external reviews of our practice, outlines our comprehensive approach to promoting, monitoring, and improving school attendance. Our goal is to proactively address attendance issues and support each child in reaching their full potential through specific, actionable steps and responsibilities.

Intentions/Aims

The aim of this attendance strategy is to:

1. Foster a Culture of High Attendance

- Emphasise the importance of regular attendance in all school communications and activities.
- Engage students, families, and staff in valuing and supporting high attendance.
- Implement creative incentives to encourage and reward good attendance.

2. Proactive Identification and Support

- Identify attendance issues early and intervene with targeted support.
- Develop personalised plans to address attendance challenges.
- Engage families and external agencies to support sustained improvements in attendance.

3. Address Barriers to Regular Attendance

- Identify and reduce factors contributing to absenteeism.
- Ensure inclusive practices that support the attendance of all students.
- Work closely with external partners to provide comprehensive family support.

4. Effective Monitoring, Review, and Accountability

- Implement robust systems for monitoring attendance.
- Regularly review attendance data and adjust strategies accordingly.
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities for improving attendance across the school.

Our Approach to Improving Attendance

1. Promoting Attendance

- Daily Operations
- Communication and Engagement
- Incentives and Rewards

2. Early Identification and Intervention

- Attendance Monitoring Systems

- Chronology on CPOMS
- Home Visits
- Watch List for Avoidable Absences
- Support, Support, Challenge Model

3. Reducing Barriers to Attendance

- Inclusive Practices
- Financial and Practical Support
- Community Partnerships

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Data Analysis and Reporting
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Continuous Improvement

5. Next Steps and Continuous Improvement

6. Attendance Tracking and Incentive System - Our Leading Initiative

7. Appendices

8. References

Our Approach to Improving Attendance - Promoting Attendance

Daily Operations

First Response Calls

- **Start Early:** The Attendance Officer will make first response calls to parents or guardians by 9:30 AM for any unexplained absences.
- **High Expectations:** Use SIMS to access real-time data and ensure accurate discussion of the child's attendance record during calls. Communicate high expectations for daily attendance and prompt arrival.

Communication and Engagement

Parental Involvement

- Host termly coffee mornings to discuss the importance of attendance and strategies to support it.
- Use ClassDojo for daily communication about attendance and punctuality.

Pupil Engagement

- Encourage students to talk about their own attendance, understand their attendance records, and know the next steps for improvement.
- Introduce a "Headteacher for the Day" reward for students with exemplary attendance, allowing them to shadow the headteacher and participate in decision-making.
- Attendance Champions JLT selected members to pioneer & promote good attendance.

Incentives and Rewards

Class Competitions

- **Leading initiative:** Incentivise attendance by creating a competitive football-themed system where teams earn points based on their members' daily attendance.
- Organise weekly competitions where the class with the highest attendance wins a reward.
- Announce winners through newsletters and assemblies.
- Implement competitions between year groups to foster a collective effort towards high attendance.

Termly Raffles

- Enter students with 100% attendance each term into a raffle for larger prizes such as vouchers or trips.

Weekly Spotlights

- Highlight a "Student of the Week" with excellent or hugely improved attendance and punctuality on the school's social media and in assemblies.

Special Incentives

- Popcorn and/or ice cream machine for a month to reward the class with the highest attendance.
- Offer art activities, extra playtime, extra football sessions, daily dance, or a trip to Costa Coffee as incentives.

- Organise a cinema trip with Mr. Leach or the attendance team for top attendees. (Crosby Cinema daily showings at 10am for £3)
- Award badges, medals, and feature social media photos for students with perfect attendance. (Newsletter)

Our Approach to Improving Attendance - Early Identification and Intervention

Attendance Monitoring Systems

Real-Time Tracking

- Utilise SIMS/Arbor to monitor daily attendance and generate automated alerts for students with patterns of absence.
- Identify and address attendance issues before they become persistent.

Weekly Reviews

- The Deputy DSL/DSL and the Attendance Officer will review attendance data weekly to identify students with attendance below 95% and below 90% plan interventions.

Chronology on CPOMS

Detailed Recording

- Maintain detailed chronologies on CPOMS with specific subheadings for attendance issues, including home visits, letters home, fines for holidays, actions taken, and the impact of these actions.
- Use these detailed records to deter drift and delay in addressing attendance issues.

Action Plans

- Develop individual action plans in CPOMS for students with attendance below 90%, detailing support strategies and review schedules.

Home Visits

Day 3 Policy

- Conduct home visits by the third day of unexplained absence, led by the Deputy DSL/DSL and supported by the Attendance Officer. This ensures every child is accounted for every day.

Follow-Up

- Document the outcomes of each visit in CPOMS and follow up with parents to review progress and provide additional support if needed.

Watch List for Avoidable Absences

Proactive Monitoring

- Maintain a watch list in SIMS for students with 90%-95% attendance. Monitor this list closely and implement early interventions to prevent further decline.

Parent Communication:

- Send monthly letters to parents of students on the watch list, highlighting attendance concerns and offering support to improve attendance.

Support, Support, Challenge Model

Balanced Approach

- Offer consistent support to families and students through early identification and tailored interventions.
- Apply the challenge step when there is no improvement, escalating to involvement with the EWO or legal interventions if needed.

Our Approach to Improving Attendance - Reducing Barriers to Attendance

Inclusive Practices

Flexible Learning Options:

- Implement flexible learning options for students with chronic illnesses or special needs, including access to online resources and reduced timetables as interim measures.

Support for SEND Students:

- The SENCO will meet weekly with the Attendance Officer to review attendance data for SEND students and develop tailored support plans.

Financial and Practical Support

- Minibus pick ups/walking bus approach to bring pupils in.
- Provide financial support for school meals, uniforms, and transportation through the school's hardship fund.

Community Partnerships

External Agency Collaboration

- Partner with local health services, social services, and housing authorities to support families in overcoming barriers to attendance.

Our Approach to Improving Attendance - Monitoring and Evaluation

Data Analysis and Reporting

Advanced Analytics

- Utilise SIMS/Arbor and CPOMS for detailed analysis of attendance patterns and trends. Generate weekly and termly reports to identify areas for improvement and inform strategic decisions.

Regular Reports

- Provide termly attendance reports to the SLT and governing body, highlighting successes, areas for improvement, and action plans.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Attendance Officer	Daily attendance tracking, first response calls, maintaining the watch list, and preparing reports for EWO.
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Implement attendance strategies, conduct home visits, coordinate with external agencies, lead weekly data reviews.
Safeguarding Lead	Address attendance issues linked to safeguarding, provide comprehensive support for vulnerable students.
Class Teachers	Monitor daily attendance, address issues, engage with parents, and support students in maintaining attendance.
Parents/Carers	Ensure regular attendance, communicate issues affecting attendance, participate in interventions.
Pupils	Attend school regularly and communicate any barriers to attendance to a trusted adult.

Continuous Improvement

Termly Reviews

- Conduct termly reviews of the attendance strategy, making adjustments based on data insights and feedback.

Annual Evaluation

- Conduct an annual evaluation of the strategy's impact to inform the development of the strategy for the following year.

Stakeholder Feedback

- Collect feedback from pupils, parents/carers, and staff through surveys and focus groups to refine and improve the attendance strategy.

Our Approach to Improving Attendance - Next Steps and Continuous Improvement

Immediate Actions

- Clarify and communicate the specific roles and responsibilities to all staff and stakeholders.
- Launch incentive programs and attendance workshops at the start of the next term.
- Send a leaflet outlining the new attendance strategy and expectations to all parents before the end of the Summer term.

Ongoing Monitoring and Adjustments

- Conduct weekly reviews of attendance data and the effectiveness of interventions, making adjustments as needed.

- Hold termly strategy meetings with the SLT and Attendance Team to review overall progress and plan future actions.
- Evaluate the strategy's impact at the end of the school year, using feedback and data to inform the development of next year's strategy.

Long-Term Goals

- Aim for a sustained school-wide attendance rate of 97% and maintain a lower persistent absence rate, below 15%,
- Involving the whole school community in supporting high attendance. **Embed Attendance Culture:** Continue to foster a culture where attendance is valued and prioritised. Ensure that every teacher, every person, every day contributes to supporting high attendance.

Florence Melly Primary School is committed to continuous improvement and excellence in all areas, and our approach to attendance is no exception. By working together, we can ensure every student attends regularly and reaches their full potential.

Our Approach to Improving Attendance - Summary of the Attendance Tracking and Incentive System - Our Leading Initiative

Teams and Structure

- **20 Teams:** Split into two classes, each class has 10 teams of 3 members, randomly allocated to teams.
- **Team Names:** Inspired by Liverpool places/areas/landmarks (e.g., Albert Dock Attackers, Penny Lane Playmakers).
- Automated competition schedule - the fixture list!

The Albert Dockers	Lime Street Wanderers
Penny Lane Lions	Sefton Park Athletic
St. George's Hall Rovers	Cavern Club City
Goodison Park Rangers	Anfield Legends
Pier Head Mariners	Liverpool Cathedral Colts
Echo Arena Warriors	Strawberry Field Falcons
Walker Art Gallery Stars	Philharmonic Thunder
Speke Hall Eagles	Bold Street Knights
Radio City Tower Titans	Museum of Liverpool Falcon
Royal Liver Dynamos	Williamson Tunnels United

Scoring Mechanism

- **Daily Goals:** Each team earns 1 goal if all three members are present on a given day.
- **Competition Format:** Teams compete against each other in a league format.

Collating the Data

- **Class Scoring:** Templates are provided to each class so that they can track the goals across a week. These are collated by our Attendance Champions on a Friday and the results calculated.
- **Whole-School Results:** These encapsulate the final results. These are presented in assembly and form a focal point of our whole-school display. They are also published and promoted on the school website.

Appendices

- Appendix A: Sample Attendance Policy
- Appendix B: Attendance Monitoring and Intervention Flowchart
- Appendix C: Attendance Reward System Overview
- Appendix D: Contact Information for External Support Agencies

References

- 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (2024) Gov.UK
- Recent audit review actions
- Attendance Hub meeting training

Key Phrases to Emphasise:

- Attend School, Arrive On Time, Every Day!
- **Every Teacher, Every Person, Every Day:** Highlight that every member of the school community plays a role in supporting pupil attendance daily.
- **Strong School Approach:** Stress that Florence Melly Primary School has a robust and cohesive strategy for improving attendance.

Appendix A: Florence Melly Primary School Attendance Policy

1. Introduction

Regular attendance is essential for students to achieve their full potential. At Florence Melly Community Primary School, we believe that promoting regular attendance is a shared responsibility involving the school, parents, and students. This policy outlines our commitment to improving and maintaining high levels of attendance. It is supported by our strong 'Attendance Strategy'; this can be found on our school website.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our children every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all pupils attend regularly and on time. Pupils should aim to attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation all pupils achieve at least 97%. As a school we define regular attendance as 97% or above.

At Florence Melly Community Primary School, we believe that teachers, parents/carers, pupils and all members of the school and the community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality. This policy sets out how we will achieve this together.

The name of the person responsible for leading Attendance at Florence Melly Community Primary School is Mrs Sainsbury, our Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Mrs Sainsbury can be contacted via email: l.sainsbury@fmp.liverpool.sch.uk

2. Aims

- **Promote Regular Attendance:** Encourage students to attend school regularly and punctually.
 - Maximise the overall percentage of pupil attendance and punctuality.
 - Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent and raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community,
- **Consistent Monitoring:** Establish clear procedures for monitoring and managing attendance.
 - Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
 - Ensure a whole school approach to ensure consistency of intervention strategies.
- **Addressing Barriers:** Identify and mitigate factors that contribute to absenteeism.
 - Ensure an inclusive environment in school for parents/carers to work in partnership to ensure excellent school attendance and achievement for all pupils
- **Collaboration:** Work with parents, students, and external agencies to support consistent attendance.
 - Provide support advice and guidance for parents, pupils and staff.
 - Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, Health and other partner agencies.

3. Responsibilities

Attendance is everyone's responsibility, all members of staff, parent/carers and pupils.

- **Parents/Carers:**
 - Ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually.

- Inform the school on the first day of absence.
 - Attend meetings to discuss attendance issues if requested.
 - **Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.**
- **Pupils:**
 - Attend school regularly and on time.
 - Communicate any barriers to attendance to a trusted adult at school.
- **School Staff:**
 - Monitor daily attendance and follow up on absences.
 - Support students in maintaining good attendance.
 - Communicate effectively with parents regarding attendance issues.
- **Attendance Officer:**
 - Track and record daily attendance using SIMS.
 - Make first response calls to parents for unexplained absences.
 - Prepare reports and coordinate with the Deputy Head of Safeguarding for interventions.
- **Deputy Head of Safeguarding:**
 - Oversee the implementation of attendance strategies.
 - Conduct home visits and manage serious attendance concerns.
 - Lead weekly data reviews and plan interventions.
- **Governors:**
 - Monitor the effectiveness of the attendance policy and support its implementation.

4. Our Procedures

A child not attending school regularly is considered to be a safeguarding concern. This is why information about the cause of any absence is required, and where possible appropriately evidenced.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1) states:

"All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly, and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing from education procedures".

- **Registration:**
 - Class teachers will mark attendance at the start of each school day and after lunch.
 - Attendance is recorded in SIMS and monitored daily.
- **First Response:**
 - By 9:30 AM, the Attendance Officer will call parents of absent students if no reason has been provided.

- Immediate follow-up is conducted if the absence is unexplained.
- **Second Response**
 - Dojo and follow up phone calls.
- **Monitoring and Review**
 - Weekly reviews of attendance data are conducted to identify trends and issues.
 - Pupils with attendance below 95% are flagged for additional support and intervention.
- **Interventions**
 - Initial contact with parents is made to discuss attendance concerns and offer support.
 - Personalised action plans are developed for students with persistent absence issues (below 90% attendance).
- **Rewards and Incentives**
 - Various incentive programs are in place to encourage and reward good attendance (e.g., certificates, special activities).

5. Reporting and Record Keeping

- **Use of SIMS and CPOMS**
 - Maintain detailed records of attendance and interventions using SIMS and CPOMS.
 - Ensure all absences are accurately recorded and categorised.
- **Communication**
 - Provide regular updates to parents about their child's attendance.
 - Schedule meetings with parents to address ongoing attendance issues.
- **External Reporting**
 - Submit attendance data to local authorities as required by law.

Authorised absence: is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, or evidence to support the reason submitted, then absences cannot be authorised. It is the Headteacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

Unauthorised absence: is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request. This includes but is not exclusive to:

- Parents/carers giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings.
- Absences which have not been explained.
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get their mark.

This type of absence may lead to the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority.

5. Persistent Absenteeism

Pupils are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DfE) if their attendance falls below 90%.

This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The DFE expects schools to intervene well before pupils reach a level of persistent absence.

A pupil who is persistently absent is one who misses 10% or more of their schooling for ANY REASON, from the beginning of the school year to the end of any given half term period as indicated below:

- Parents/carers are responsible to ensure pupil attendance and punctuality, school can support this in many ways.
- Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a parent/carer has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school as soon as possible to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.
- Parent/carers are asked to contact the Inclusion Officer in the first instance. [?]

Below is a table which sets out current thresholds for Persistent Absence and can be referred to as a means of determining the amount of sessions missed to meet this criteria:

Terms	Number of sessions* missed to be defined as persistently absent	Number of days missed to be defined as persistently absent
September to October	7 or more sessions	3.5 days
September to Christmas	14 or more sessions	7 days
September to February	20 or more sessions	10 days
September to Easter	25 or more sessions	12.5 days
September to May	31 or more sessions	15.5 days
September to the Summer	38 or more sessions	19 days

**there are two sessions in a school day.*

6. Leave of Absence During Term Time

The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in truly exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

Parents/carers can receive a Penalty Notice for taking their child on holiday during term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively. The Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Pupils absent for 10 or more sessions (5 school days) will incur a fixed penalty fine of up to £60.00 per parent per child to be paid within 21 days, if not this will increase to £120.00 until day 28.

7. Requests for Exceptional Circumstances Leave of Absence

Requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence must be in writing to the Headteacher and can only be authorised by the Headteacher. Reasons such as:

- a close family bereavement
- taking part in a significant religious event

would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school include:

- general holidays
- weddings
- shopping
- concerts
- birthdays.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Updates will be made as needed to comply with new regulations or changes in school practices.

Appendix B: Attendance Monitoring and Intervention Flowchart

Florence Melly Community Primary School Attendance Monitoring and Intervention Process

Daily Monitoring and Response:

- **8:50 AM:** Registration begins in all classes.
- **9:30 AM:** First response calls for unexplained absences are initiated by the Attendance Officer.
- **SIMS:** Real-time attendance tracking is conducted throughout the day.

Weekly Review Process:

- **Every Friday:** The Deputy Head of Safeguarding and the Attendance Officer review weekly attendance data.
- **Identify Concerns:** Pupils with attendance below 95% are identified for further monitoring.
- **Planning Interventions:** Develop strategies for pupils with emerging attendance issues.

Intervention Steps:

1. **Initial Contact:**
 - Phone call to parents to discuss attendance concerns.
 - Inform parents of their child's current attendance record.
2. **Formal Notification:**
 - Send a letter home outlining attendance concerns and the need for improvement.
 - Offer a meeting to discuss support strategies.
3. **Personalised Action Plans:**
 - Develop an action plan in CPOMS for students with attendance below 90%.
 - Include specific goals, support measures, and review dates in the action plan.
4. **Home Visits:**
 - Conduct home visits for students with persistent absence (below 88% attendance).
 - Address underlying issues and provide support.
5. **Escalation:**
 - Involve the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) if there is no improvement after initial interventions.
 - Consider legal interventions if necessary.

Ongoing Monitoring:

- **Continuous Follow-Up:** Monitor students' attendance closely after interventions.
- **Regular Updates:** Provide regular updates to parents and the Senior Leadership Team.

Support, Support, Challenge Model:

- **Support:** Offer consistent and ongoing support to families whilst making clear that attendance is a priority and focus.
- **Support:** Investigate and understand barriers to attendance.

- **Challenge:** Apply the challenge step when there is no improvement, escalating to formal actions as needed.

Appendix C: Attendance Reward System Overview

Florence Melly Community Primary School Attendance Reward System

Purpose: To motivate students to attend school regularly by recognising and rewarding excellent attendance.

Reward Types and Criteria:

1. **Weekly Awards:**

- **Class Attendance Trophy:** Awarded to the class with the highest weekly attendance.
- **Student of the Week:** Recognise individual students with perfect attendance each week.

2. **Monthly and Termly Incentives:**

- **Monthly Competitions:** Classes with the highest monthly attendance receive a special reward, such as extra playtime or a class party.
- **Termly Raffles:** Students with 100% attendance for the term are entered into a raffle for prizes such as gift vouchers or tickets to local attractions.

3. **Special Events and Activities:**

- **Popcorn or Ice Cream Machine:** The class with the best monthly attendance gets access to a popcorn or ice cream machine.
- **Exclusive Activities:** Offer additional activities such as art sessions, extra sports, or trips to Costa Coffee for students with excellent attendance.
- **Cinema Trip:** Organize a trip to the cinema with Mr. Leach or the attendance team for students who have demonstrated outstanding attendance.

4. **Recognition and Badges:**

- **Attendance Badges and Medals:** Award badges and medals to students with perfect attendance.
- **Social Media Recognition:** Feature students with exemplary attendance on the school's social media platforms.

Implementation Steps:

- **Communication:** Regularly communicate the rewards and criteria to students and parents through assemblies, newsletters, and ClassDojo.
- **Tracking:** Use SIMS to track attendance and determine eligibility for rewards.
- **Distribution:** Distribute rewards in assemblies and during special events to celebrate students' achievements. Feature highlights and Attendance Champions on the Attendance display.

Monitoring and Adjustment:

- **Review:** Regularly review the effectiveness of the reward system.
- **Feedback:** Gather feedback from students and parents to ensure the rewards remain motivating and relevant.
- **Adaptation:** Adjust the rewards and criteria as needed to keep them engaging and effective.

Appendix D: Contact Information for External Support Agencies

Florence Melly Community Primary School External Support Network

Local Authority and Education Support:

- **Education Welfare Officer (EWO):**
 - Name: Raquel Slater
 - Contact: [Email] / [Phone Number]
- **School Improvement Liverpool:**
 - Contact: [Email] / [Phone Number]
 - Services: Attendance consultancy and support

Health and Wellbeing Services:

- **NHS Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group:**
 - Contact: [Email] / [Phone Number]
 - Services: Health support and services for children and families
- **CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services):**
 - Contact: [Email] / [Phone Number]
 - Services: Mental health support for children and young people

Social Services and Family Support:

- **Liverpool Children's Services:**
 - Contact: [Email] / [Phone Number]
 - Services: Child protection, family support, and social care
- **Local Housing Authority:**
 - Contact: [Email] / [Phone Number]
 - Services: Assistance with housing-related issues affecting school attendance
 - SLA Family Support worker: [Email] / [Phone Number]

Community and Voluntary Organisations:

- **Local Food Banks and Community Support:**
 - Contact: [Email] / [Phone Number]
 - Services: Food support and community assistance
- **Volunteer Support Programs:**
 - Contact: [Email] / [Phone Number]
 - Services: Volunteer programs to assist with transport and practical needs

Transport and Logistics:

- **Local Transport Services:**
 - Contact: [Email] / [Phone Number]
 - Services: Information on transport options and subsidies for families

Emergency and Crisis Support:

- **Crisis Helplines:**
 - Contact: [Phone Numbers for Various Crisis Helplines]
 - Services: Immediate support for families in crisis