

## **Suggestions for Memorials**

*(adapted from AFSP & SPRC, 2011 & Brock, 2011)*

### DO NOT:

- Do not encourage spontaneous memorials, such as collections of objects. If they occur, respectfully remove them within a very short time. A memorial can be an upsetting reminder of a suicide or romanticize the deceased in a way that increases risk for suicide imitation or contagion.
- Do not conduct memorial assemblies as the emotions generated can be too grand to control.
- Do not make attendance at memorial events or creation of memorial memorabilia mandatory.
- Do not conduct any activities that might do harm or increase traumatization.

### DO:

- Develop a school or district-wide policy concerning memorials for all deceased students/staff.
- Involve all stakeholders in memorial decisions and procedures. Include students, staff, administration, parents, community members, and local government.
- Invite students to write personal and lasting remembrances in a memory book located in the guidance office that will be given to the family. (Be sure to read and review each student's writings/artwork for appropriateness).
- Encourage students to engage in service projects, such as organizing a community service day.
- Invite students to make donations to a scholarship fund or other fund in memory of the deceased student or participate in another form of a living memorial.
- Encourage teammates/classmates to dedicate one game or school show in the deceased's honor.
- Use this as an opportunity to educate students, families and the community about suicide and mental illness as well as positive mental health and well-being.