

# RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS, FAMILIES TO DISCUSS SCHOOL SHOOTINGS

May 24, 2022

The school shooting today at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, is the latest horrifying act of violence in our country.

This senseless loss of life will be difficult for adults to process on their own while trying to support children and young people. Our students want and need to talk about what they see, remember, and are feeling now; they need the guidance and safety of adults in their lives to be able to navigate their own emotions and trauma in a healthy, safe, and productive way. Adults need to be able to acknowledge and address their own emotional responses in order to best support young people.

## RECOGNIZING AND HONORING BIG FEELINGS

The [National Association of School Psychologists \(NASP\) tips](#) for parents and educators to talk with children about violence suggests adults:

- Reassure children they are safe and review safety procedures
- Create a sense of safety by returning to normal, predictable routines as soon as possible
- Make time to talk and listen to the concerns and feelings of children
- Limit the use of media consumption of these events to lower their stress and to maintain balance and perspective
- Acknowledge that sleep difficulties are common and can lead to fatigue and poor participation

The [American Psychological Association \(APA\) has tips for managing your own distress](#) following a mass shooting including:

- Reaching out for support from other adults (friend or professional)
- Honoring your feelings and taking time for yourself, especially if you're experiencing personal loss or grief
- Limiting your amount of media coverage of these events
- Find ways to help in your community

Call the [National Parent Helpline](#) at 1-855-4A PARENT (**1-855-427-2736**) to get emotional support from a trained Advocate. They are available Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The APA recommends honesty with children – acknowledging that bad things do happen, but reassuring them with the information that many people are working to keep them safe.

**Helping Children Cope With Terrorism from NASP** offers tips for families and educators. Translations of this handout are available in Amharic, Chinese, French, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese. There is also a companion infographic.

**Common Sense Media** has suggestions on how to talk to kids about school shootings in a way that's age appropriate and helps them feel safe again.

**Very Well Family provides open-ended questions** to discuss school shootings with your child.