



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

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GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 27, 2022

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Kyle L. Guerrant, Deputy Superintendent
Finance and Operations KG

SUBJECT: School Safety Resources for Responding After School Violence

Our nation continues to grieve the senseless loss of life with the tragic events inside Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. State Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice and State Board of Education President Dr. Casandra Ulbrich expressed their call for urgent action in response to Tuesday's violent act ([State Superintendent, SBE President Respond to Texas Elementary School Massacre \(michigan.gov\)](#)).

Communicating with children in the wake of this tragic event can be challenging but is important to help children re-establish a sense of safety and normalcy. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is committed to work in cooperation with our school and community partners across the state to promote school safety and support the mental health and well-being of students, families, and school personnel.

This memorandum provides specific resources that you may find helpful to share with staff and families in your districts. We encourage districts to share these resources to help children and families talk about feelings associated with this tragedy.

High profile acts of violence, particularly in schools, can confuse and frighten children who may feel they are in danger or worry that their friends or loved ones are at risk. Our students want and need to talk about what they are feeling, and they need the guidance of adults in their lives to be able to navigate their own emotions and trauma in a healthy and productive way. Adults need to be able to acknowledge their own emotional responses to best support young people. Here are some resources to help schools and families respond:

- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network created [Helping Youth After Community Trauma: Tips for Educators](#). This tip sheet available in multiple languages describes how traumatic events, such as a natural disaster, school

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violence, or the traumatic death of a peer or educator, can affect students' learning, behavior, and relationships, and lists common reactions that educators might see in students.

- The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) created [Tips for Parents and Teachers to Talk to Children About Violence](#).
- Another NASP resource, [Helping Children Cope with Terrorism-Tips for Families and Educators](#), is available in multiple languages and includes a companion infographic.
- [Common Sense Media](#) suggests taking an age-based approach to discussing news of school shootings to help children feel safe again.
- [Verywell Family](#) understands having a conversation with a child and/or teen about gun violence or school shootings can feel overwhelming and provides suggestions on how to handle these hard conversations.
- You may be struggling to understand how a shooting could occur and why such a terrible thing would happen. The [American Psychological Association](#) offers tips on managing your distress in the aftermath of a shooting.
- [The National Parent Helpline](#) at 1-855-4 A PARENT (1-855-427-2736) offers emotional support from a trained advocate Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (PST).

Additional NASP resources:

[Responding to a Mass Casualty Event at a School: General Guidance for the First Stage of Recovery](#)
[Responding to School Violence: Tips for Administrators](#)

OK2SAY

Schools, students, educators, and community members are encouraged to report any instances of threats, bullying, or harmful behavior to Michigan's OK2SAY hotlines. Anyone can report tips confidentially on criminal activities or potential harm directed at students, school employees, or schools. OK2SAY is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week by calling 8-555-OK2SAY (855-565-2729); texting OK2SAY (652729); or emailing OK2SAY@mi.gov. Specially trained technicians receive the tips and filter the information to the appropriate agency to provide a timely and effective response. For more information, go to: www.michigan.gov/ok2say.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Departments