

Tips and Thoughts for Parents

This event might bring up questions, concerns or fears for your child. Here are some ideas for how you might support your child:

- Be sensitive about whether s/he is needing / wanting to talk.
- Bring it up in case s/he is reluctant to do so.
- Ask about his/her reactions to this, and **accept whatever s/he says!** Resist the temptation to minimize the pain, deny the feelings or give advice. **Simply listen!** Helpful responses on your part:
 - "Tell me more about that."
 - "What have other kids said about that?"
 - "I wonder if there are other things that are worrying you?"
- Be concrete and brief in your answers, especially with younger children. Allow some silence and processing time after a statement. Don't rush in with your thoughts.
- Allow for regressive behaviors. Kids might need to sleep close to an adult for a while.
- Be especially emotionally available and nonjudgmental.
- Youth move in and out of processing this at different times and different rates. Some kids who seem to be doing pretty well now may have periods of struggle later. Don't assume that just because they look OK on the outside they are doing OK. Ask them questions that encourage conversation and make it easier for them to talk:
 - "What are some things that have surprised you these past days?"
 - "How have you seen adults trying to be helpful to kids?"
 - "If you could tell me one thing I could do to help you right now, what would that be?"
 - "Are there kids you're worried about?"
 - "Do you have any ideas about what kids could be doing to
- Turn off the television
 - Media coverage of this creates psychological saturation. Just t
 - When television is on, you may have casual comments, but that isn't a deep conversation. The greatest gift you can give your kids is the gift of your time and full attention. Make room for that
 - Some kids talk when you're in the car together. Take a drive with your child in the front passenger seat and see if that helps.
 - Get out in nature. It is calming to the soul, even in stormy weather
- Kids can only recover as well as the adults around them. Good self-care is part of taking care of your kids.
- Some youth will have anger and may want to take revenge. Remember that you are the model for acting responsibly, which in the end, creates or destroys their sense of safety. Talk with them about your expectations that they remain responsible.
- Remember the importance of humor, laughter, and fun.

