



PRESS RELEASE

Prince George's County Public Schools • www.pgcps.org
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT VIOLENCE

Because children can be frightened by extensive media coverage and graphic images of violence related to yesterday's events at Virginia Tech University, Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) is providing information to parents, teachers and administrators to help young people feel secure in school and at home.

The following list of suggested points to emphasize, when talking to children about violence, was provided by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP):

- **Schools are safe places.** School administrators are trained in security and emergency response procedures. School staff members work with parents and public safety providers (local law enforcement and fire departments, emergency responders, hospitals, etc.) to keep you safe.
- **We all play a role in school safety.** Be observant and let an adult know if you see or hear something that makes you feel uncomfortable, nervous or frightened.
- **There is a difference between reporting, tattling or gossiping.** You can provide important information that may prevent harm either directly or anonymously by telling a trusted adult what you know or hear.
- **Don't dwell on the worst possibilities.** Although there is no absolute guarantee that something bad will never happen, it is important to understand the difference between the possibility of something happening and the probability that it will affect our school.
- **Senseless violence is hard for everyone to understand.** Doing things that you enjoy, sticking to your normal routine, and being with friends and family help make us feel better and keep us from worrying about the event.

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CHILDREN COME FIRST



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- **Sometimes people do bad things that hurt others.** They may be unable to handle their anger, when under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or suffering from mental illness. Adults (parents, teachers, police officers, doctors, faith leaders) work very hard to get those people help and keep them from hurting others. It is important for all of us to know how to get help if we feel really upset or angry and to stay away from drugs and alcohol.
- **Stay away from guns and other weapons.** Tell an adult if you know someone has a gun. Access to guns is one of the leading risk factors for deadly violence.
- **Violence is never a solution to personal problems.** Students can be part of the positive solution by participating in anti-violence programs at school, learning conflict mediation skills, and seeking help from an adult if they or a peer is struggling with anger, depression, or other emotions they cannot control.

NASP has additional information for parents and educators on school safety, violence prevention, children's trauma reactions, and crisis response at www.nasponline.org.

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