

## *Talking to Children about Violence*

### *Tips for Teachers*

Acts of violence, particularly in schools, can confuse and frighten children who may feel in danger or worry that their friends or loved-ones are at risk. Children look to adults for information and guidance on how to react. School personnel can help children feel safe by establishing a sense of normalcy and security and talking with them about their fears.

- Reassure children that they are safe.
- Make time to talk.
- Keep your explanations developmentally appropriate.
- Review safety procedures.
- Observe children's emotional state.
- Limit television viewing of these events.
- Maintain a normal routine.

### **Suggested Points to Emphasize When Talking to Children**

- Schools are safe places.
- The school building is safe because ... (cite specific school procedures).
- We all play a role in the school safety.
- There is a difference between reporting, tattling or gossiping.
- Don't dwell on the worst possibilities.
- Senseless violence is hard for everyone to understand.
- Sometimes people do bad things that hurt others.
- Stay away from guns and other weapons.
- Violence is never a solution to personal problems.

Source: National Association of School Psychologists

[http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis\\_safetv/talkingviolence.pdf](http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safetv/talkingviolence.pdf)

