



For Immediate Release  
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**Guidelines for How Families Can Talk to Children About  
Traumatic Events in Wake of Connecticut School Shootings**

*Wilmington* – In response to the school shooting in Connecticut on Friday morning, the Delaware Children’s Department provided a list of guidelines for families who may wish to talk to their children about traumatic events.

“We are deeply saddened and offer our sympathy to all of the families, friends and co-workers affected by today’s events,” said Vivian Rapposelli, secretary of the Delaware Children’s Department. “Traumatic events such as these can be difficult for children, families and schools to process and can have a significant impact on the entire community.”

Here is a list of tips shared by the Department’s Mobile Crisis Team:

- Stick to the normal family routine
- Remain calm around children
- Reduce the amount of exposure to images shown on TV
- If children asks questions, talk openly but at a level appropriate for their age and maturity level
- Acknowledge their concerns and feelings, but re-assure them that incidents such as this don’t occur frequently
- Assure children they are safe

In addition to these instructions, it is important for parents to consider updating their emergency contact information with their child’s school administration.

Resources are available for schools, communities and families who may be experiencing fear, questions or anxiety in relation to these events. Those who are experiencing a mental health emergency should contact the crisis team at 1-800-969 HELP (4357).

Additional information is available online:

Nemours web info specific about school violence:

[http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/talk/school\\_violence.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/talk/school_violence.html)

Talking to Children About Violence:

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

Talking to Kids About School Violence:

[http://www.aboutourkids.org/articles/talking\\_kids\\_about\\_school\\_violence](http://www.aboutourkids.org/articles/talking_kids_about_school_violence)

Helping your child manage stress in the aftermath of a shooting:

<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/aftermath.aspx>

The Children’s Department provides services to children who have been abused, neglected, are dependent, have mental health or substance problems, and/or have been adjudicated delinquent by the Courts. For more information, please visit [www.kids.delaware.gov](http://www.kids.delaware.gov).

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