



## Waterloo Region District School Board

The following resources are provided to assist parents, guardians and adult caregivers as they talk to, understand and support children and youth in the aftermath of tragedy, disaster and trauma.

These resources are adapted from the work of Kevin Cameron, *Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response* (consultant to WRDSB) and *The National Child Traumatic Stress Network* ([www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org)).

### Parents/Guardians:

- Listen and create an environment that acknowledges all feelings. When children ask questions use age appropriate language and a calm and reassuring tone of voice. Choose what information is to be shared based on the child's age and an assessment of your child's need to know.
- Limit media exposure for younger children and for older children let them know that the media may be too upsetting for them to watch.
- With older children discuss how the media may desensitize us all to violence. As a family talk about how to best respond to sensationalized media coverage.
- Spend extra time with your children to help them feel safe and secure again. Determine which children will be most affected. For example children who have recently lost a loved one, are depressed and anxious, traumatized children and children who have been the victim of violence.
- Contact your family doctor or school administration if you are worried about your child and would like professional support to assist with your child's reaction.
- Parents should be aware that being overly protective of their children is a normal response. Emotions may include: sense of helplessness, fear, anger and a heightened sense of vulnerability. As much as possible don't allow adult emotions to negatively affect a child's sense of security.
- Reassure children that with time their feelings of vulnerability will subside but if the feelings don't subside to let you know and you will get them help.