



# Conewago Valley School District Counselors' Corner

March 2017

## Talking To Your Child About Threats

### Why Should I Talk To My Child?

As parents and guardians, it is our responsibility to help our children understand the world they live in. Children are exposed to violence locally, nationally, and internationally in the 24/7 news culture of today's society. They are saturated with information and may not know how to process all of it. It is imperative for parents and guardians to take the time to listen to their children's concerns and to help them process through this difficult experience.

### What/How To Say:

- **Before you talk to your child:** collect the facts, find an appropriate place and time free of distractions, and stay calm. Remember not to impose your own fears onto your child.
- **Use age appropriate language:** don't oversimplify or over-dramatize the situation. Stick to the facts and verbally acknowledge these are the times in which we live. Remember all children will react differently. Some are more resilient than others. Furthermore, multiple children of various ages in the same household may respond differently.
- **Let your child talk:** ask them to tell you what they know or have heard and what they are feeling. Help them express their feelings. They may have heard incorrect information or exaggerated information.
- **Empathise with your child's concerns:** make sure your child feels heard and supported by you. Recognize and prepare your child that they may hear both factual information and rumors at school and on social media. This is why it is important to continue to check in with your child over the next few days.
- **Reassure your child:** talk openly and honestly with your child. Your primary goal is to reassure your child he/she is safe and secure. Remind your child that all schools have action plans in place should something go wrong. Remind your child the safety drills they participate in are part of these action plans.
- **When to seek help:** if you notice sudden behavior changes in your child, such as, increased withdrawal/isolation, trouble sleeping, or prolonged change in mood, then you should seek professional help.

#### Resources:

Butler, E. (February 2016). *School Bomb Threats: How to talk to your children about them*. Retrieved from The Herald Sun

Families Magazine (March, 2016). *How to talk to kids about school bomb threats and evacuations*. Retrieved from <http://www.familiesmagazine.com.au/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-school-evacuations/>

### Resources to Stay Connected :

- Look at Building Links (NOE, CTE, CVIS, NOMS, NOHS) for teacher emails, school news, and upcoming events. Helpful guidance links are found here..
- The Center for School and Emotional Education: *Talking to our Children about Violence and Terrorism: Living in Anxious Times* Retrieved from:  
[http://www.schoolclimate.org/parents/documents/Talking\\_to\\_our\\_children\\_about\\_Violence\\_and\\_terrorism.pdf](http://www.schoolclimate.org/parents/documents/Talking_to_our_children_about_Violence_and_terrorism.pdf)

- National Center for Children Exposed to Violence: [www.nccev.org](http://www.nccev.org)

## Contact Information:

### Elementary:

Conewago Township Elementary

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New Oxford Elementary

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