The Colorado Health Foundation™

Colorado Health Foundation Statement on Denver Area School Threats

Threats of violence against children came knocking on our doors again here in the Denver area, as parents and caregivers were put in the disheartening position of having to explain to their children why schools were closed due to a safety threat.

The events that unfolded over the past couple of days undoubtedly shook families and communities across the state. Knowing that planned violent attacks can happen anywhere and at any time is a horrific reality that we all must face. It's a 'new normal' that we simply cannot accept. And its impact on the well-being of those we're raising is detrimental.

Children deserve to have safe environments that enrich their learning and their lives. Places where fear is nonexistent. Places where they feel supported. Places where they can be happy and healthy.

The trauma and re-traumatization that violence presents are a real threat to our youth. And resiliency becomes a distant dream when more pressing matters are at hand.

It is our civic duty as adults to protect our youth and make them feel safe. It is our responsibility – as parents, caregivers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, teachers, mentors, mental health professionals – to have open and honest conversations that will teach them violence is never the answer. We must give them space to voice their concerns, ask questions and share their feelings. Most importantly, we must

reassure their safety.

Resources are available to help usher these conversations along in a way that supports their mental well-being. Please share them with your loved ones and use them in conversations with your children.

Resources

- Coping during Tragedy, *Mental Health Center of Denver*
- Helping Your Child Understand a Traumatic Event, *Littleton Public Schools*
- Resources for Talking to Children about Violence, *Denver Public Schools*
- Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers, *National Association for School Psychologists*
- Talking with Kids About Fear and Violence, *Mental Health America*

Articles

- How to talk to your kids when their school is closed over a violent threat, *The Denver Post*
- Tips on how to talk to your kids about threats and violence, *9NEWS*
- University of Northern Colorado psychology professor offers guidance for talking with children about violence, *Greeley Tribune*

TYPE

Announcements

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