

## Resources for Addressing Racism, Hate and Violence in the wake of Pittsburgh Synagogue Shooting

The tragic violence that occurred in Pittsburgh on Saturday is heartbreaking and deeply disturbing on multiple levels. We mourn with the friends and families who lost loved ones in the attack and pray for a speedy recovery for the injured. Proudly, we stand in solidarity with the Tree of Life Synagogue and Pittsburgh communities, who exemplify courage and resilience in the wake of such a senseless, hateful event.

We must stand ready to combat racism, bigotry and domestic terrorism by sending a very clear message that they will not be tolerated in our schools. As educators, the safety and well-being of our students, colleagues and school community is of paramount importance. Events like these are not only difficult to process, but they are also sometimes difficult to even talk about. Given this fact, I am sending this letter to provide you with resources for teachers, students and parents to help engage in a dialogue about racism, hate and violence as well as information on ways the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) can be of assistance.

### Written Materials:

- The National Education Association (NEA) has several online resources for teachers, students and parents to help engage in a dialogue about racism, hate and violence which can be accessed and found on NEA's website [here](#).
- The National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement developed a guide -- [Talking to Kids about Tragedies \(Such as Shootings and Terror Attacks\) in the News](#) – which offers insight and suggestions for how to handle talking to children in relation to tragic events, such as shootings and terrorist attacks, that they are likely to hear about at school and/or on the news. This document helps explain for parents and guardians the importance of discussing the event with children and helps inform parents of common questions children ask in the aftermath of tragic events.
- The Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress (CSTS) has made available several resources on disaster response and recovery specific to the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting, including ideal interventions that promote the evidence-based principles of Psychological First Aid (PFA) such as safety, calming, self- and community-efficacy, social connectedness, and a sense of hope/optimism. Information relevant to this event and links to succinct, actionable education fact sheets can be found [here](#).
- [Resources for Addressing Trauma, Violence, and Grief](#) is a compendium produced by CSDE staff. Please consult this guide for links to additional resources.

We are hopeful that these resources are useful and must continue to assure our students that they are in safe environments where everyone - - regardless of race, gender, gender identity, religion, nationality or sexual orientation - - has the same right to learn without feeling threatened and be treated with respect and dignity as everyone else does.

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