

## Tips for supporting your Child after the Hate-Motivated incident that occurred on March 7, 2023 at St. John Elementary School.

**Set the stage.** It's very typical for children to say they don't want to talk. Try to start a conversation while you are doing an activity together, so the conversation does not feel too intense or uncomfortable (i.e., while going for a drive, or preparing dinner). If your child does not want to talk, don't force it. Just let them know you are there to listen if/when they are ready.

**Find out what they know.** Ask them, "What have you heard about the racial slurs and knife incident at the basketball court at John a few days ago? And then really listen to what they have to say. Resist the urge to correct or minimize any feelings that may come up; instead, just validate them (i.e., "That must have felt really scary").

**Give space to ask questions.** This helps to give you a better idea of what they may be worrying about and gives you an opportunity to gently correct any misinformation that may be fueling their concerns.

**Model calm.** Children/Youth look to adults for reassurance after stressful events have occurred. Do not discuss your worries with your child or around them, as they quickly pick up on the worries of adults.

**Remind your child that their school is safe.** You can give some examples such as school emergency procedures, staff supervision, etc. that are in place to keep them safe at school. You can also remind them that incidents like these are very rare.

**Know that it's okay to say, "I don't know".** You don't have to have all the answers or know all the 'right' things to say. What children need most is to feel heard, validated, and to know you are there for them.

**Encourage healthy ways to cope with stress.** Help your child to think about how they can cope with stress in a healthy way. Talking to a trusted friend/adult, physical activity, distractions, a creative outlet, good nutrition/sleep, and prayer can all be helpful.






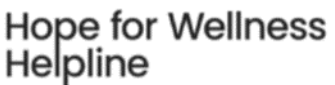
**Keep an eye out for signs your child may be having difficulty coping.** In the days after a stressful event, it is very common for children to have a physical and/or emotional reaction to what they've experienced. These are all *normal* reactions to a very *abnormal situation*. They may experience physical symptoms such as headaches or stomachaches. They may seem more moody, irritable, or worried than usual. You may notice changes in their eating or sleeping patterns. If these concerns persist, it may be a sign professional help is needed. Some additional resources are attached to this tip sheet that may be helpful.

*If you are concerned about your child, please reach out to their Teacher or Administrator. We are here to help.*

## Resources

WCDSB is committed to ensuring those we serve---staff, students and communities-- are treated with respect and dignity. To learn more about equity, dismantling racism, and identity specific supports please visit:

[Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: A Transformational Lens – Waterloo Catholic District School Board \(wcdsb.ca\)](http://www.wcdsb.ca/equity-diversity-and-inclusion)

 <p>Addictions, Mental Health &amp; Crisis Services Waterloo - Wellington</p>	<p><b>If you or someone you know is in crisis or requires immediate support, contact HERE 24/7.</b> HERE 24/7 serves as both a crisis service as well as a guide to help figure out how to get help for mental health and addictions in Waterloo-Wellington.</p> <p>Phone: <b>1 (844) 437-3247 (HERE247)</b>          Website: <a href="http://here247.ca">here247.ca</a></p>
	<p><b>Kids Help Phone</b> connects children and youth to a trained counsellor either by phone, text, or live webchat 24-hours a day. Services are anonymous.</p> <p>Phone: <b>1 (800) 668-6868</b>          Text: <b>CONNECT to 686868</b>          Website: <a href="http://www.kidshelpphone.ca">www.kidshelpphone.ca</a></p>
	<p><b>Black Youth Helpline</b> serves all youth and specifically responds to the need for a Black youth specific service, positioned and resourced to promote access to professional, culturally appropriate support for youth, families and schools.</p> <p>Phone: <b>1 (833) 294-8650</b>          Website: <a href="http://www.blackyouth.ca">www.blackyouth.ca</a></p>
	<p>Confidential and non-judgmental <b>peer support</b> through telephone, text and chat services. Get in touch with a peer support volunteer from Sunday to Friday, 4:00PM to 9:30</p> <p>Phone: <b>1 (800) 268-9688</b>          Text: <b>647-694-4275</b>          Website: <a href="http://www.youthline.ca">www.youthline.ca</a></p>
	<p><b>Naseeha</b> is a mental health hotline answering calls from Muslim and non-Muslims. Naseeha Mental Health is a bridge for individuals going through life's challenges. They provide a safe zone for youths and individuals to talk and get the help they need. They offering texting support 7 days a week.</p> <p>Phone: <b>1 (866) NASEEHA (627-3342)</b>          Website: <a href="http://www.naseeha.org">www.naseeha.org</a></p>
	<p><b>Hope for Wellness Helpline</b> is available to all Indigenous people across Canada. Experienced and culturally competent counsellors are reachable by telephone and online 'chat' 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Telephone support is available upon request in Cree, Obibway (Anishinabemowin) and Inuktitut.</p> <p>Phone: <b>1 (855) 242-3310</b>          Website: <a href="http://www.hopeforwellness.ca">www.hopeforwellness.ca</a></p>

Written by WCDSB Social Workers, and Mental Health Lead with information from the following sources:

Child Mind Institute [Helping Children Cope With Trauma \(childmind.org\)](http://childmind.org)

American Psychological Association [www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)

## Counselling Services

 <p><b>Front Door</b> Access to Child and Youth Mental Health Services</p>	<p><b>Front Door</b> is a collaboration between Carizon and Lutherwood and provides assessment, single-session counselling services, and referral to appropriate services in the community for youth up to their 18th birthday.</p> <p>Phone: (519) 749-2932 Website: <a href="http://frontdoormentalhealth.com">frontdoormentalhealth.com</a></p>
 <p><b>CARIZON</b> Inspiring Hope + Wellness in Our Community</p>	<p><b>Carizon</b> specializes in children’s mental health, youth engagement and development, family violence, individual and family counselling, credit counselling, settlement supports and collective wellness. Fees are assessed according to a sliding scale based on income and number of dependents.</p> <p>Phone: (519) 743-6333 Website: <a href="http://www.carizon.ca">www.carizon.ca</a></p>
 <p><b>KW Counselling Services</b></p>	<p><b>KW Counselling Services</b> provides counseling services to individuals, couples, and families. Counselling services are available for up to eight (8) sessions. Fees are assessed according to a sliding scale based on income and number of dependents.</p> <p>Phone: (519) 884-0000 Website: <a href="http://www.kwcounselling.com">www.kwcounselling.com</a></p>

If you have access to a benefits plan through your employer, you could also contact your HR representative to determine if your plan includes coverage for counselling services and/or if you have access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). To learn more general information about mental health and wellbeing, please visit the following resources from WCDSB and School Mental Health Ontario.



<https://wcdsb.ca/programs-and-services/mental-health-and-well-being/>



<https://smho-smsso.ca/>

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