

Dear Families/Caregivers,

In light of the recent events, we have been talking about our emotions and how our emotions are natural responses to people, places, things, and events. Following a traumatic event, children often have difficulty understanding what they are feeling. We have been learning how to identify our emotions, as well as how to accept and express our emotions in healthy ways.

We learned that people often show their emotions on their faces, in their bodies, and through their actions or behaviors. We learned to identify and accept our emotions by:

- Pausing and taking a few deep breaths.
- Asking ourselves how we're feel and naming the feeling.
- Accepting the feeling by reminding ourselves that all emotions are okay.

Here are some suggestions for ways to help your child identify their feelings and process the current events:

- Reassure your child that they are safe. While elementary-age children are comforted by age-appropriate facts, it's important to limit their exposure to social media and other news outlets.
- As much as possible, stick to your typical routines such as mealtimes or bedtimes; or if your routines have been disrupted, establish new routines as soon as possible.
- Talk with your child. Let them know that it's okay to ask questions. Ask them how they are feeling and share your feelings with them.
- Help your child identify their emotions by noticing and pointing out the child's words or body language. For example, if your child is nervously tapping, say something like, *I see you're tapping, how are you feeling?* If your child isn't able to name their feeling, suggest some possible emotions for them to choose from such as, *Are you feeling nervous or scared or excited?* Talking with your child about their emotions will help them better identify their emotions.
- Look for signs of stress in your child. Some signs may include anxiety, aggression, moodiness, physical discomfort, lethargy, or withdrawal. Talk to me, our school administrator, or a healthcare profession about any concerns you have about your child.

Being able to recognize and accept one's emotions is an important first step to recovering from a traumatic event. I appreciate the opportunity to work together with you to help your child move beyond this event and continue to grow and learn.

Sincerely,

Your Child's Teacher