

## How to talk with your children or react to their questions about school tragedies.

- Please carefully restrict TV news reports. Because the graphic nature of school shootings is unpredictable, it's best to change the channel or turn the TV off when children are present. Young children don't need to see any coverage of the event. Research has shown that some young children believe that the events are reoccurring each time they see a television replay of the news footage.
- Be honest. If appropriate, it is best that you provide the information to your child. You could say, "A sad thing happened at a school in Michigan but not very close to Ann Arbor. A young man shot people, and some of them died. The police got the bad guy. A lot of people are very sad, but there will be lots of help to make them feel better." Parents should acknowledge to children that bad things do happen. There are many people who are working to keep them safe, including their parents, teachers and the police.
- After learning of such an event, your child might worry that something similar will happen at Angell. Explain that school shootings are rare and there has not been one in Ann Arbor. If needed, remind your child of the safety measures that are in place at the school, e.g. locked doors, cameras, no adult visitors are permitted. Most importantly, the entire staff is trained to keep students safe. Remind them how much their teachers care about them and will do everything in their power to always keep them safe and secure. The teachers practice "unwanted stranger" drills with their students. The students are excellent at these drills. Angell Eagles look out for each other and protect each other.
- Encourage your children to share their feelings and concerns with you. If they are aware, reports of the shooting may frighten them, even if they're afraid or embarrassed to admit it. Assure them that it's all right for them to be upset, and that you'll do everything you can to protect them from harm.