

Teacher Script for Supporting Student Transition Back to School

The following script is provided to support teachers with students' transition back to school following recent events shared in the media. It's important to note that an act of violence did not occur in our schools. Providing a sense of normalcy with rituals and routines is important.

Daily activities should be predictable, stable, and structured. Teachers are encouraged to consult with their building school psychologist, social worker, counselor, and/or nurse for support with implementation.

****Principals & School Teams - Please consider having one or more staff members who are able to step in if a teacher is struggling so that classroom routines/instruction can continue.*

The script provided below is optional. Staff are encouraged to gauge the need of their students prior to implementing additional supports.

I want to begin by welcoming everyone back to school today. You may have seen things on the news or online that may have made you feel uncomfortable or unsafe. I want to reassure you that I am here to help you in any way I can and that you are safe. Please let me know if you need to check in with somebody.

People have many different kinds of thoughts and feelings. There is no right or wrong way to feel. Some of the ways we respond may be helpful like how being around family and friends can help us feel happy or safe, while some of the ways we respond can make us feel very sad, scared, or angry. You also might not have any of these feelings and that is okay too. We all feel differently when things happen in our community. Please remember that we are all here for you

For our morning activity today, I want us to be able to check in with one another to see how you're feeling today.

[Insert an activity of choice such as drawing, circle meeting, activity of choice, etc.]

Example sentence stems:

- What do you do to make yourself feel better when you are sad?
- It sounds like you are feeling XXX (sad, angry, confused, guilty), I would like for you to come with me to see my friend to talk more about this.
- I hear you are feeling unsafe, what can we do to make you feel safe?
- Who is a good person you can talk to at school?
- Who is a good person you can talk to at home?
- There may have been others that felt scared too. Most people feel like this when there is something that is unknown. What can we do to make you feel safe?
- Sometimes we don't have answers to those questions. The important thing to do is make sure you feel safe and supported. Do you need to talk with someone?
- When you feel unsafe, it can be helpful to tell yourself, "I'm upset now and may need to talk to someone. These feelings will likely go away, but I can always talk to my teacher or my parent."
- Watching the news can make us feel unsafe or worries, because they are playing the same images over and over. How can we find some other activity that makes us feel good and safe?
- When our routines are disrupted, we can feel more scared or upset. It might not seem like it, but we will feel better when we get back to our routines and activities.

For students needing more support:

- I know you have questions, we all do, let me help you get to someone who can help support you today.

Please refer to the handouts shared with your school mental health team. Links are also provided below. They highlight the importance of normalcy, listening to students, and accessing additional support for students requiring crisis support.

- [Full document on Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers \(English/Other Language Downloads\)](#) – Link includes Infographic for Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Educators [1-page handout] (English/Spanish)
- [Managing Strong Emotional Reactions to Traumatic Events: Tips for Families and Teachers](#)
- [Mitigating Negative Psychological Effects of School Lockdowns: Brief Guidance for Schools](#)
- [School Violence Prevention: Brief Facts and Tips](#)
- [Anniversaries of Traumatic Events: Guidance for Educators](#)
- [Trauma: Brief Facts and Tips](#)

Staff Resources

As you continue to support our students and families, it is also important to remember to engage in self-care. As a reminder, the [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) will give you and your dependents confidential support, resources and information for personal and work-life issues. EAP is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to all DPS employees. Please consider sharing this resource with other school staff as a resource.