

Dear Parents,

As our hearts are heavy for those affected by the school shooting in Minneapolis, Minnesota, we know this can be a difficult time to process the violence and fears that come with living in a broken world. When tragic events like school shootings make the news, it can be hard to know what to share with children. If your child has not heard about the incident, it is okay not to bring it up. However, if your child comes to you with questions, concerns, or seems affected by this tragedy, here are some helpful steps for guiding a supportive, age-appropriate conversation.

Find out what they know. Ask your child what they have heard or seen through peers or media. Listen empathetically to their thoughts and feelings—this helps you understand their perspective and creates a safe space for discussion.

Minimize media exposure. Limit access to radio, television, and social media. Repeated exposure can be overwhelming and increase anxiety for children and adolescents.

Keep a calm presence. It is okay for children to see a parent feel sad or shed tears, but if you find yourself experiencing intense emotions, step away until you can re-engage calmly.

Reassure your child's safety. Remind them that Parkview has an action plan to keep students safe and secure. Share that you chose Parkview because you trust its leaders to make wise choices on behalf of your child.

Frame the tragedy through a biblical worldview. God's Word offers comfort, hope, and solutions that we cannot provide on our own. Take this opportunity to read scripture with your child and point them to the hope of Jesus Christ, God's Son—not the brokenness of the world.

Here are two scriptures especially comforting in times of tragedy:

- *"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you."* —Deuteronomy 31:6
- *"I have said these things to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."* —John 16:33

Having a safe place to process concerns, fears, and emotions is essential for children and adolescents, especially when they are encountering tragedy for the first time. Again, if your child is unaware of the event, it is okay not to bring it up. If the conversation does arise, sharing in a developmentally appropriate way will provide the information they need to cope with difficult news and build emotional resilience. Model healthy emotion regulation and coping by sharing your feelings appropriately. Remember, your attentive presence may be the very thing your child needs most.

We will be in prayer for your family as you walk your children through these challenging topics. Please don't hesitate to reach out if your child needs additional support in processing these events.

In Christ,
Parkview Baptist School Counselors

