

Dear RSU 10 Community,

In moments of uncertainty and adversity, it is crucial that we come together as one, supporting each other and offering comfort, regardless of our individual circumstances. Recent events have shaken not only our RSU 10 community but have also had a profound impact on all residents of Maine as well as across the country.

Whether you know someone directly affected by these horrific events or simply feel the weight of these events as a human being, we want you to know that you are not alone. We are here for you, and your well-being is a shared concern for all of us.

As Mainers, we take pride in our strong sense of community, resilience, and unity. We believe that during these challenging times, we can find solace in one another, extend a helping hand, and offer support to our neighbors.

Let us be vigilant and reach out to those who may be struggling. Kindness and empathy can make a significant difference in someone's life. By connecting with one another, we can build a network of support, providing comfort and strength to those who need it most.

In RSU 10, we are deeply committed to the well-being of all our students, staff and families. We take safety seriously, and we have a district as well as school emergency teams, which include our two School Resource Officers (SROs) All dedicated to ensuring and practicing safety and security in our schools.

If someone in our RSU 10 community is in need of support, please do not hesitate to reach out. We have staff who are ready to extend a hand, provide resources, and be a listening ear. Here is a link to [resources](#) (*attached below*) provided by Maine Dept. of Education.

If you feel a need to do something and you are able, you might consider giving blood as we understand the Red Cross has expressed this need.

Thank you for being a part of our resilient and compassionate community, of the RSU 10 family. We will reach out as we know more. Please take care.

Sincerely,

Deb Alden
RSU 10
Superintendent of Schools

Priority Notice from the Maine Department of Education



Resources for Talking to Children About Gun Violence

Dear Champions of Education,

In light of the tragic shootings in Lewiston, the Maine Department of Education (DOE) has pulled together some initial resources for talking to children about violence and shootings and supporting one another. The Maine DOE will be providing additional resources as we learn more.

Talking to Children

Provide a short statement of fact: Violence took place in our community and many people were hurt. Students are safe here. You are safe. There are people here who can help you.

- **Early elementary school children** need brief, simple information that should be balanced with reassurances that their school and homes are safe and that adults are there to protect them. Give simple examples of school safety like reminding children about exterior doors being locked, child monitoring efforts on the playground, and emergency drills practiced during the school day.
- **Upper elementary and early middle school children** will be more vocal in asking questions about whether they truly are safe and what is being done at their school. They may need assistance processing the incident. Discuss efforts of school and community leaders to ensure their safety.
- **Upper middle school and high school students** will have strong and varying opinions about the causes of violence in society. They will share concrete suggestions about how to prevent tragedies in society. Emphasize the role that students have in maintaining safe communities and schools, communicating any personal safety concerns to school administrators and parents/guardians, and accessing support for emotional needs.

Mental Health First Aid

- Monitor and assess impact: Students and colleagues will be affected in different ways. We do not know how this event has affected people – directly and/or indirectly. Continue to assess impact of the event on those around you.
- Be mindful of self-regulation to assist youth in maintaining a level of safety and connection.
- If you are an educator in need of additional support, The FrontLine WarmLine is also available from 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week by calling 207-221-8196 or texting 898-211.
- If you or someone you know is in crisis, call 988.

Additional Resources

National Child Traumatic Stress Network offers [Talking to Children about the Shooting \(nctsn.org\)](https://www.nctsn.org). Shootings such as this tragedy evokes many emotions—sadness, grief, helplessness, anxiety, and anger. Children and adults are likely struggling with their thoughts and feelings about the stories and images of the shooting may turn to trusted adults for help and guidance.

Resources for educators and parents to support children of different age levels manage feelings of anxiety and helplessness following a tragedy: [Helping Children Cope With Tragedy Related Anxiety | Mental Health America \(mhanational.org\)](https://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/helping-children-cope-with-tragedy-related-anxiety)

US Department of Health and Human Services Tips for Talking to Children and Youth After Traumatic Events: <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/tips-talking-to-children-after-traumatic-event.pdf>

Sent October 25, 2023



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