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Dear Parent/Carer,

Unfortunately, you will have heard the devastating news regarding the death of Brianna Ghey following her fatal stabbing in Linear Park this weekend. We are sure you are with us in sharing our condolences with her family who must be struggling to come to terms with their loss.

It is likely that your child may have heard the news and we wanted to provide you with some tips for dealing with any questions your child may have. Here is some guidance from The National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

Whilst the media (television, radio, print, and the internet) can help inform and educate you and your children about the recent stabbing, media coverage unfortunately also has the potential to upset and confuse. As parents, you can protect your children by helping them understand media coverage while limiting their exposure to distressing images. The impact of media coverage will be different depending upon whether you are:

- A family who have loved ones in the affected area
- A family who has been affected by a violent event or trauma in the past
- A family not directly threatened who is viewing news about the impact of this event on others (individuals injured or suffering)

Understanding Media Exposure

- Media coverage can produce increased fears and anxiety in children and teens.
- The more time children/teens spend watching coverage of the tragic event, the more likely they are to have negative reactions.
- Graphic images and news stories of chaos and injury is especially upsetting to children.
- Very young children may not understand that the coverage and repetition of images of the events is a replay. They may think the event is continuing to happen or is happening again.

What Parents Can Do to Help



Limit Your Children's Exposure to Media Coverage

- The younger the child, the less exposure they should have.
- You may choose to eliminate all exposure for very young children.
- Play DVDs or videotapes of their favorite shows or movies instead.
- Consider family activities away from television, radio, or internet.

Watch and Discuss with Children/Teens

- Watch what they watch.
- Discuss the news stories with them, asking about their thoughts and feelings about what they saw, read, or heard and correct any misunderstandings or confusion.
- Ask older children and teens about what they have seen on the internet or what they have heard through social media technologies (text, Facebook, Twitter), in order to get a better sense of their thoughts, fears, concerns, and point-of-view.

Seize Opportunities for Communication

- Use newsbreaks that interrupt family viewing or newspaper/web images as opportunities to open conversation. Be available to talk about children's feelings, thoughts, and concerns, and reassure them of their safety and of plans to keep them safe.

Monitor Adult Conversations

- Be careful of what you and other adults say about the recent stabbing or the media coverage in front of the children; children often listen when adults are unaware and may misunderstand what they hear.

Let Your Children/Teen Know about Successful Community Efforts

- You may want to share positive media images, such as reports of individuals helping those in need.
- Reassure your children/teen that many people and organizations are working to help the people injured and affected. This will give them a sense that adults are actively taking steps to protect those that are currently suffering.

Educate Yourself

- Learn about children's/teen's reactions to traumatic events. For more information, see National Child Traumatic Stress Network (www.NCTSN.org).

In school, we will be discussing what a good neighbour is and how we can keep ourselves safe in the community. Responses to any questions children have will be appropriate to their age and be of a reassuring nature. Children in Year 5 and Year 6 will look at how to handle themselves should they be in a situation when they find that their peers carry a knife. This is taken from the Ben Kinsella Trust <https://benkinsella.org.uk/> which has written educational material to support children's understanding around knife crime.

If you require any support at all, as always, we are here for our families.



Head Teacher

