



South Park School District  
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## South Park School District

October 29, 2018

South Park School District Families:

The senseless tragedy at Tree of Life Synagogue in Squirrel Hill on Saturday has impacted all of us. This act of violence is devastating for the Pittsburgh area, our country, and our world. As we deal with our grief, we must remember that this tragedy also can be difficult for our students.

Please be assured of our commitment to fostering a safe and inclusive school environment where compassion, generosity, and respect are valued and promoted. Hate and violence have no place in our schools, communities, and world.

An act of violence like the one in Squirrel Hill can affect our students in a number of ways. It is important that children are given the opportunity to ask questions and share their feelings. Our school guidance counselors are available to talk with students. If you believe your child would benefit from talking with a guidance counselor, please call your school office.

The National Association of School Psychologists has provided guidance for parents when talking to children about violence. This resource, which includes suggested points to emphasize to your child, can be found by [clicking here](#). The advice includes:

- Reassure children that they are safe
- Make time to talk
- Keep your explanations developmentally appropriate
- Review safety procedures
- Observe children's emotional state
- Limit television viewing of these events
- Maintain a normal routine

UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh also has compiled resources for parents when responding to children when tragedy occurs. This resource is available by [clicking here](#).

We send our deepest sympathies to those impacted by this tragedy. Together, let us work to dispel hate and violence and stand for love, kindness, and acceptance.

Should you have questions or need additional resources, please contact me or our school principals.

Sincerely,

Wayne P. Gdovic  
Superintendent of Schools  
South Park School District