

WHAT TO SAY TO STUDENTS DURING A TRAGEDY

FOCUS ON THIS



LISTENING

It's easy to feel pressure to have all the right things to say in a tragedy, but often the most helpful thing you can do is listen. Listen to stories. Listen to feelings. Just listen.



FEELING

Ask how each student is feeling. Every tragedy is unique and every student will experience it differently. Help them manage those emotions by learning to voice them.



REMEMBERING

When dealing with death, remembering is a great way to grieve. Ask students to tell you their favorite stories about the person who passed. Or ask them what they liked about that person.



SAY SOMETHING LIKE THIS

I'm so sorry for your loss.

I hate that you're going through this.

I know this is really hard.

Tell me a story about this person.

We're going to walk through this together.



LET US KNOW HOW
WE CAN HELP.

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WHAT NOT TO SAY TO STUDENTS DURING A TRAGEDY

AVOID THIS



CLICHES

We say them when we don't know what else to say. We say them because someone said them to us in a tough time. But they aren't helpful. Avoid clichés like the plague. (Get it?)



ANSWERS

Let's be honest. Most of the time you don't have all the answers. And even if you did, it may not help. Avoid trying to give answers to the "why" questions of tragedy and focus on the "how" to get through it.



TIMELINES

There's no right amount of time for mourning. So, be sensitive when making statements about "moving on" or "getting over". Each person will grieve at their own pace.

DON'T SAY THIS

Just because it's

true

doesn't mean it's

helpful

Everything happens for a reason.

How are you?

You'll get over this.

At least you have your mom/dad/friends/etc.

God just needed another angel.

Don't cry.



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