



IRC Healing Classrooms Initiative
Student Well-being

In Discussion of Crises with Children

In discussion of crises with children, teachers should:

- Refrain from asking students to tell their individual stories. Recounting distressing events is usually beneficial to the speaker only if this is done spontaneously, within an environment where the child feels emotionally secure and adults are professionally trained to support the child.
- Ask whether students have questions, listen carefully, and give honest replies.
- Admit when they don't have specific answers and when they are unsure themselves.
- Tell students that it is okay to feel afraid, confused, angry, and guilty. These are all normal responses to a very abnormal crisis or tragedy.

Teachers should emphasize that:

- Each student is valued and will be supported in this time of strife.
- School is safe and central to the community.
- Different reactions and uncertainties are okay.