



## Dealing with the Aftermath of September 11

Dear Parents,

Tragic acts of terrorism are unprecedented for all Americans, and our lives have changed, as a result of September 11. Although time has passed since these tragedies, some may still have unsettled feelings about these events and the recent deaths caused by the spread of anthrax. Children look to adults for information and guidance on how to react as they take their emotional cues from the significant adults in their lives. It is important for every parent and every teacher to model to every child how to remain calm in the face of danger. We should tell children that we love them and that together we will get through any crisis. Try to help your child understand what has happened, keeping in mind their age and level of understanding.

Conroe ISD is aware of the responsibility in helping children feel they are safe in school by assuring them that the schools are well prepared to take care of them in the event of a crisis. CISD, as well as each campus, has developed an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that can be used to keep the students and adults as safe as possible. These proactive plans address activities to prevent, intervene, or respond to situations involving the security of students and those who work with the students. Staff training and practice drills, which occur periodically, are very important in the implementation of these activities. Each EOP contains details on how to respond to different types of emergency situations that affect the campus. Because of this recent national tragedy, CISD and campuses are addressing how to respond to a national crisis if it were to happen again. To implement these plans, it must be a cooperative effort between the schools, parents, and community members. Parents are encouraged to also have a family plan of action in the event of a tragedy that strikes our area. It is also very important for parents or guardians to be sure that emergency information listed with your children's schools is up-to-date. If you have had recent changes, please notify your children's campus.

Many campuses have programs and activities to support good citizenship, anti victimization strategies, conflict management, peer mediation, anti-bullying, and refusal skills. As part of CISD's planning for the safety of students, a 24-hour anonymous phone-in tip hotline is also available. Known as Kid Chat (1-888-Kid Chat or 1-888-543-2428), it offers our community an excellent venue for reporting suspicious or unlawful acts. School violence can be prevented when students, parents, or citizens come forward and share information with school police and school officials.

In closing, we hope that we never need to engage these strategies, but we will continue to prepare for such a tragedy. Be assured, we value the trust you have placed in us to teach your children and will do our best to provide them a safe, secure, and stable learning environment.

Sincerely,

William J. Harness  
*Chief of Police*