



MARIN COUNTY

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Response to Uvalde Texas Shooting

Parents, teachers and school staff everywhere stand with the people of Uvalde, and, most especially, with our colleagues at Robb Elementary School. Uvalde is almost 2000 miles away, but the raw and intense senselessness of the tragedy makes it feel like it happened in our own community.

We think about the children in our schools who will be impacted, yet again, by a senseless and horrific school shooting. We must wrap around them as parents, school staff and community members, even as we ourselves feel the oppressive weight of this tragedy.

We think about our teachers and school staff many of whom feel this tragedy as parents *and* as educators. They send their children to school each day with love and confidence they will be safe, and then they go to work to teach and keep safe the children of others.

We think about the families whose lives have changed in ways that they could never imagine. We send our prayers and support to those families and to the community of Uvalde. We acknowledge the grief that we all feel even as we must continue to move forward.

The Marin County Office of Education (MCOE) has been in consultation with the Marin County Sheriff. They and other law enforcement jurisdictions will be on heightened alert and increasing patrols near school sites during this next period of time.

Thanks to existing strong lines of communication between our schools and law enforcement through the Marin County School Law Enforcement Partnership and between schools and local police jurisdictions, our schools receive regular and ongoing support regarding security and safety. Our law enforcement partners have assured us that they stand ready to assist and support during this challenging time.

In addition, a focus is being placed on assisting parents and school staff with talking to our children about this tragedy. MCOE and public and private schools in Marin are making resources available to assist parents and school staff including the following guidance from the National Association of School Psychologists, Common Sense Media and other sources:

[Talking to Children about Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers](#) - National Association of School Psychologists

[How to Talk To Kids about School Shootings](#) – Common Sense Media

[Responding to School Violence - Tips for Administrators](#) - National Association of School Psychologists

[Anxiety Over School Shootings](#) - Child Mind Institute

[Helping Students Cope with a Violent World](#) – Edutopia

This past March, the Marin County Office of Education hosted a webinar in response to the war in Ukraine called [Empathizing with Tragedy - Helping Kids Cope](#). Experts in child psychology, wellness and the media shared resources and advice for parents on how to best guide their children through challenging and upsetting times. All of the insights and guidance from this webinar are directly applicable to the Texas tragedy. At times like these we often feel frustrated and helpless. There are, however, some local actions we can take:

- Support the Marin County Gun Buy Back program on Saturday, June 4, 2022 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Marin County Sheriff's Office, 1600 Los Gatos, San Rafael. This event will help reduce the risk of guns getting into the wrong hands and will offer cash as part of the buy-back program. If you do not have guns to turn in, please consider making a contribution to the buy-back fund. Fliers attached.
- Practice safe gun ownership and follow all laws regarding gun storage and safety. The [California Attorney General Gun Safety](#) site provides information on proper gun ownership, safety and storage. Free gun locks are available through the [Marin County District Attorney Gun Locks](#) program.
- Be observant. If you or your student observes anything concerning that may impact the safety of our school community, please alert school staff or police. Oftentimes, perpetrators of school shootings have provided some information or indication of intent prior to carrying out a violent act. In cases of concern where someone unstable may have access to a gun, California's [Gun Violence Restraining Order](#) allow for the temporary removal of guns and ammunition from those who are a danger to themselves or others.

Tragically, schools have become war zones while leaders who can make a difference refuse to act. As we speak with our children about this most recent shooting, the most challenging thing to explain is why we, as the adults, cannot make it stop.

As we work in schools to meet the needs of our students, families and staff, we also call on policy makers at every level of our government to have the courage, determination and common sense to prevent access to weapons that make a tragedy like possible. As well as, to provide additional resources for mental health and wellness that will allow our community to identify and assist troubled individual before tragedy strikes.



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