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Colorado Information Analysis Center

RESOURCE BULLETIN

HELPING YOUR COMMUNITY TO FEEL SAFE

(U) The Colorado Information Analysis Center (CIAC), in collaboration with the School Safety Resource Center, is disseminating this resource bulletin based on the recent elementary school massacre in Newton, Connecticut.

(U) Helping Children Feel Safe

(U) Home and school environments provide important normalizing experiences for children and adolescents. The magnitude of death and destruction in traumatic events require special attention and communication with children. The following suggestions may help children feel safe:

- **Limit exposure to television and other sources of information about the disaster and its victims, especially for children.**
- Understand that every child has a different way of responding to traumatic events. Listen to their stories and be tolerant.
- Be alert to changes in a child's usual behavior - drop in grades, loss of interest, not doing homework, increased sleepiness or distraction, isolating themselves and weight changes.
- Maintain daily routines to the extent possible. Familiar schedules can be reassuring.
- Remind students that they are safe at school and at home.
- Increase students' sense of control and mastery at school. Let students plan a special activity.
- An adult's response to a disaster will affect the student's response; it is helpful to discuss reactions with other adults and teachers before talking with children.
- Provide structured time to discuss the event.
- Encourage school faculty and staff to discuss and plan classroom interventions together and review emergency procedures.
- Be available to meet individually with children.
- Discuss the event in an open honest manner with students.
- Children, like adults, often want to help in times of crises. Finding a way to support the victims and their families through the appropriate agencies can be beneficial to children's healing.

(U) Law Enforcement can help their communities to feel safer by providing extra patrol and visibility in and around educational institutions. Officers can make their presence known in and around the schools where they patrol. Officers can stop by the schools and introduce themselves to the administrative staff and choose a school parking lot to write reports to help maintain a safe environment.

(U) Resources

Colorado School Safety Resource Center: http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDPS-SafeSchools/CBON/1251621089752

Colorado School Safety Resource Center (Recovery): http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDPS-SafeSchools/CBON/1251622852906

For further information concerning this Threat Review please contact the
Colorado Information Analysis Center at **877-509-2422** or at **ciac@ciac.co.gov**
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