



GIRLS ATHLETIC LEADERSHIP SCHOOLS DENVER

Hello GALS Community,

As many of you know, there was a school shooting in Florida last week which took the lives of 17 school community members.

Our counseling team has a few words for us as a community. First, these events remind us that in a time like this, both physical safety and emotional safety are at risk. As a parent, please know that GALS and BOYS takes great care in training on drills that ensure student and staff safety. We regularly conduct drills on Lockouts, Lockdowns, and Fire Emergencies. If you would like more information on this, please contact Dolores Schaack, Director of Operations, at Dolores.schaack@galsdenver.org.

Emotional safety may be a broader spectrum for us. We have asked staff to pay attention to student needs to discuss this or any like event, especially in the High School or older grades. We will keep routines normal, and encourage community members to seek emotional support in the ways they know how to (what are their coping strategies?), not over expose themselves to media coverage, and seek adult support if emotions become unmanageable. We also may feel moved to action of some kind, so follow those instincts, whether that is a call to a loved one or a call to your elected officials.

In addition, below is the letter from Tom Boasberg that has been sent to all DPS Schools (of which we are one). In it, you can find **talking points and resources** for discussion with students. Depending on age of students, it is often best to let the students drive the discussion.

Please let us know if you are in need of some kind, we are here to support you.

Warmly,
The GALS and BOYS Teams

Feb. 14, 2018

Dear DPS Community,

Today, we received news about another horrific shooting in our public schools, this time at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., northwest of Miami. Our hearts and our thoughts go out to the victims and their families, and we stand united with the Broward County Public Schools community. Already, school districts across the country, including DPS, have rallied to offer support.

Media coverage of this tragedy may prompt questions and concerns from your children, and we want to provide resources that may help during these difficult conversations. According to the National Association of School Psychologists, high-profile acts of violence in schools can confuse and frighten students who may feel they, their friends or their loved ones are in danger. They will look to adults for guidance about how to react, and adults can help by talking with them about their fears.

For help with these conversations, please visit this online resource: "[Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers](#)." This printable handout is available in 10 languages. We also encourage you to talk with your school counselors if you need support or see any signs of distress or concerning behavior. In addition, we encourage you to reach out to the Family and Community Engagement (FACE) helpline at [720-423-3054](tel:720-423-3054).

The safety and well-being of our students and staff is our top priority. Our trained and professional Safety Team works directly with Denver Police to ensure coordinated approaches to school safety, and all schools are required to have emergency action plans. To learn more about how our Safety Team and our schools prepare for emergencies, please visit safety.dpsk12.org and click on Emergency Management Resources. There, you will find our emergency information guide for parents in 10 languages.

Finally, it's important to remind your children that "see something, say something." Research shows warning signs occur in more than 80% of violent incidents. [Colorado's Safe2Tell hotline](#) at [1-877-542-7233](tel:1-877-542-7233) allows students, parents, educators and community members to report concerns anonymously. Keeping our kids, teachers and schools safe is the responsibility of everyone in our community.

Please keep the families affected by today's school shooting in your thoughts and prayers.

Best,
Tom