

February 11, 2026

Dear NVSD Families,

Our thoughts are with all those affected by the events that took place in Tumbler Ridge yesterday.

While this incident did not occur within the North Vancouver School District, we recognize that news of serious events in our province and around the world can be felt in many different ways across our school communities. Families and students may experience a range of emotions, including sadness, confusion, fear, or uncertainty.

The NVSD is committed to ensuring schools remain safe, caring, and supportive places for students. Principals, counsellors, and staff are aware of the tragedy in Tumbler Ridge, and are prepared to respond with support to students as needed. NVSD schools will continue to provide the stable and predictable learning environments that are so important for children and youth.

Given the constant nature of news and social media, some students may encounter information or images without context. Gentle, open conversations at home can help children make sense of what they are hearing and seeing. Listening calmly, answering questions honestly in age-appropriate ways, and reassuring children of their safety can make a meaningful difference.

As further information becomes available, I encourage you to make time to check in with yourself. Notice how you are feeling. Notice how those around you are doing. Each of us carries different histories and experiences; what feels distant to one person may feel very close to another. Below are helpful resources for your reference that offer guidance on supporting children, youth, and adults after violent or traumatic events:

- [Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Families and Educators](#)
- [Care for Caregivers: Tips for Families and Educators](#)
- [How to Talk with Kids About Violence, Crime, War, and Tragedy](#)
- [Explaining the News to Our Kids](#)

Please also find attached strategies and resources that aim to support families in navigating feelings following violent or traumatic events. If your child requires additional support, please reach out to your child's teacher, school counsellor(s), or principal. We are here to work alongside families to ensure students feel supported at school.

Thank you for the care and partnership you continue to show in supporting the well-being of our learning community.

Respectfully,



Dr. Pius Ryan
Superintendent of Schools

Strategies and Resources to help guide conversations following a violent or traumatic event

We are sharing below some strategies and resources to help guide conversations with children, with the understanding that responses will vary depending on age, development, and connection to this tragedy.

Limit exposure to news stories on traditional and social media channels

Consider how you access news and how that may impact children nearby. Young children may not know how to make sense of the news they are seeing and can quickly become overwhelmed. Encourage older children to rely on reputable news sources, and where possible limit their consumption and exposure to upsetting coverage.

It is important to have conversations, and model with your own behaviours, the additional traumatic impact for victims and families when upsetting images are re-circulated. We are respectfully suggesting that individuals do not watch, repost or share videos of the tragedy.

Acknowledge feelings

Our children and youth will look to us for cues on how to process this upsetting information. Acknowledging our own feelings gives children a model for how to express and process their strong emotions. It is normal to experience a range of emotions in response to such unsettling news.

Listen more than you speak

Listen to your child's concerns before offering any explanations. Give them an opportunity to voice their fears and ask age-appropriate open-ended questions. These conversations will help you understand if your child is coming from a place of curiosity, concern or fear, and will help you gain a sense of what your child may need from adults to feel safe and supported.

Provide facts

Tell the truth but do it gently. Give your child facts as long as it is consistent with their stage of development - keep conversations age appropriate. Children need to know their concerns and questions are being taken seriously by the adults around them and that they can trust their adults to be truthful with them. If you don't know the answer to a question, don't be afraid to say so.

Importance of Routine

Maintaining daily routines can provide a sense of stability and security for children and adults. It can also be important to give children permission to continue to find hope in their daily world.

Encourage empathy and compassion

Remind your child there may be others in their daily lives who may be impacted by this tragedy. Talk with your child about how we need to treat others with extra compassion and empathy during times like these. Tragedies and times of sadness and grief can serve as meaningful moments to teach compassion, which can help children feel empowered as they find additional ways to be kind and caring.

Resources

- [Canadian Mental Health Association](#)
- [ERASE](#)
- [Healthlinkbc: Helping Children with Grief](#)
- [Kelty Mental Health](#)
- [Learning through Loss](#)
- [Foundry Virtual BC - Foundry BC App](#)