



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education *CRJ*

DATE: October 11, 2023

SUBJECT: Conflict in the Middle East

The recent events in the Middle East and the escalating conflict between Israel and Hamas have dominated the news cycle since the attack by Hamas on October 7th. Images of the destruction via continuing coverage and other violence around the world, can affect each of us significantly and differently.

Even if occurring in other parts of the world, we know that such images and information from television reports and shared on social media can result in increased anxiety among our families, students, and educators. Some families in Connecticut also are likely to have direct ties to the areas of conflict and may be concerned about the welfare of family and friends in the region.

The well-being of our students, families, colleagues, and school community is of paramount importance. Therefore, we are sharing the following resources that may be helpful in having conversations with students, families, and staff.

[How to Talk to Your Children About Conflict and War](#): This publication from UNICEF offers specific tips for families to support and comfort their children.

[Resilience in a time of war: Tips for parents and teachers of elementary school children](#): This article from the American Psychological Association can help adults effectively navigate these issues with young children.

[Resilience in a time of war: Tips for parents and teachers of middle school children](#): The American Psychological Association provides tips and strategies for parents and teachers of middle school-aged children.

[Resources Addressing Trauma, Violence, and Grief in the Aftermath of a Mass Shooting](#): While many of the resources in this document are specific to mass shootings, it includes many excellent resources to address trauma, crises, and other disasters.

As a reminder, adult and child [Mobile Crisis Intervention Services](#) can be accessed by school staff and families by dialing the United Way 2-1-1 Infoline. Additionally, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) has recently launched [Urgent Crisis Centers](#) in four locations around Connecticut that are available for families whose children may need additional behavioral health supports.

For questions regarding trauma, crisis, and school safety, please contact CSDE's Chlo-Anne Bobrowski at chlo-anne.bobrowski@ct.gov.