When Tragedy Strikes

By Lylas Anderson

When tragedy strikes, it becomes extremely important for us to step out of our comfort zone and help each other. As a teacher I have noticed when stress increases, communication can be difficult. For example, at times a student can be so confused he or she does not even know the questions to ask. During those times, educators must take an intrusive approach meaning you take a step back and place yourself in the mindset of the student guiding them to find the words to voice their questions. We all must do this now…with our peers, our children, and others. We should not wait for them to begin the conversation or to come to us. We must give information to them that they can have and use when they feel the need. David has a list of resources that can be found in our area for you and your children to use and Pat has explained the effects of PTS. The military has found that waiting for servicemen in crisis to seek help is a failed approach. They now encourage supervisors to initiate mental health questions seeking to draw out unspoken stresses. Keep communication open with your loved ones …. listen and talk. It will help to minimize the trauma. And help you to know what others are feeling, what they are dealing with and how you can be there for them or guide them to the right resource for help. Also remember, next July 4th the trauma WILL reappear, so this is not a one and done issue. You personally may also feel very overwhelmed… Be kind to yourself, your family, your peers and be patient… seek the resources available and take it one day at a time. Give yourself time and know there might be setbacks. The resources are there and will be for a while. They are here waiting and willing to help.