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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Nightmare at the Movies: Handling Sad News Carefully With Your Kids

July 20th, Fort Worth – The horror of last night’s awful events in Aurora, CO may leave parents feeling fearful and uncertain about discussing difficult topics with children. First, know that your child will take on the fears they see you express, so it is best to remain calm and collected. Secondly, here are some guidelines for handling sad news events with your children. Questions or concerns may come up days, or even weeks, after an event has occurred.

- If your child is under the age of 8, he/she is too young to comprehend horrific events like murder, robberies, terrorism, and war. It is best to keep the news channels turned off so they are not hearing or seeing snippets of confusing information.
- For children 8-10 years, be open to discussing topics like death and murder. Children this age can empathize with victims, and they may feel saddened or fearful for their own safety. Reflect their feelings by saying, “You seem upset by this” and wait for them to share more. Help them learn about the ways your community promotes people’s safety. Taking action in a positive way often restores a sense of security and power over their negative feelings.
- Pre-Teens/Teens, whether directly impacted or not, may have strong reactions to these events. It is a good opportunity to discuss their feelings and values and may even spur them to give back to the community in some way.

The Parenting Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with a mission of *providing families the tools to succeed*. If you have any specific questions on how to talk to your child about this tragedy, our **Parenting Advice Line is here to help: call 817-332-6399**. Our lines are open Monday through Friday from 12 p.m.-3 p.m.

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