

On Saturday, October 8, three Auburn-Washburn elementary students passed away in an automobile accident. These students include a Jay Shideler Elementary third grader along with two Farley Elementary fourth graders.

Response teams are currently in place at each of these two buildings. Counseling and support is being provided for all students and staff as long as needed. The district is providing updates to parents via email when necessary.

Information for Parents:

As children become aware of this, they may respond to this situation in a variety of ways. They may become more clinging, unhappy and needy of parental attention and comfort. Feelings of irritability, anger, sadness or guilt may often emerge. Complaints about things such as headaches, stomach aches or sweating are not unusual. Some loss of interest in school and poor concentration are some other common reactions.

The following are some tips on helping your children cope with this situation:

1. Reassure children that they are safe and so are the important people in their lives.
2. Let children know that it is okay to feel upset. Explain that all feelings are okay when a tragedy like this occurs. It is normal to feel sad or unsure when someone dies. Let children talk about their feelings and help put them into perspective.
3. Maintain a normal routine and spend time with your children.

The following online resources may be helpful:

[Bereavement for Children](#)

[What to Tell Children](#)

If you have questions or concerns about your children, please feel free to contact their school. For additional support, you can contact Family Service and Guidance Center at 785-232-5005 or Midland Grief Counseling Center at 785-232-2044.