



Loreto Secondary School Clonmel

Coleville Road, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary

Saturday 26th August 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The school has experienced the sudden death in a tragic accident of our leaving certificate student Nicole Murphy. We are shocked and deeply saddened by this event and our thoughts are with the Murphy family.

At this time, you can help your child by taking time to listen and by encouraging them to express feelings. All young people are different and will communicate their feelings in different ways. It is not uncommon for young people to be fearful, anxious, or out of sorts. They may become withdrawn, cry, complain of physical aches and pains, have difficulty sleeping or have nightmares. Some may not want to eat. Over the course of the coming days, please keep an eye on your child and allow them to express their feelings.

We have attached on *page 2* some information from the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), which you may find useful in helping your child through this difficult time.

Young people frequently turn to social media to see what others are saying, or to find out more. We urge you to emphasise and reinforce the need to be extremely sensitive and careful about what they post online.

Members of our Student Support Team are available. If needed, please get in touch with us via the school office by email to reception@loretoclونmel.ie or phoning 052 6121402.

As a school community, we extend our sincere condolences to the Murphy family.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam dílis.

Yours faithfully,

Anne Mc Grath
Principal
Loreto Secondary School
Clonmel

HOW TO COPE WHEN SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENS

- Reach out – people do care
- Talk to your friends, family and teachers - talking is the most healing medicine
- Remember you are normal and having normal reactions – don't label yourself as crazy or mad
- It is acceptable to cry
- It is acceptable to smile
- If your feelings and reactions seem different from those of your friends, remember everyone reacts differently
- When the stress level is high there is a temptation to try to numb the feelings perhaps with alcohol and drugs, this complicates matters rather than bringing relief
- Some people find that writing or drawing is helpful. What about writing a note or letter to the family of the person who died or the person themselves?
- Spend time with people who have a positive influence on you
- Make as many daily decisions as possible. This will give you a feeling of control over your life, e.g. if someone asks you what you want to eat – answer them, even if you're not sure
- Recurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks are normal – don't try to fight them – they'll decrease over time and become less painful
- Make a special effort to take care of yourself during this time. Try to get some extra sleep, eat nutritious foods and get some exercise, even if it is just a walk
- Sticking to your "normal" routine helps. Structure your time – keep busy
- Take time out – go for a cycle or kick a football
- Provide some balance to the negative things that have gone on by doing something special or fun for yourself. Think about something that makes you feel good. Then make it happen – like going to the cinema, listening to music, calling a friend, etc. Laughter is good medicine. Watch a funny movie or play a silly game with younger children to lighten your spirits
- Use of social media can help but do not rely on it as your only source of support
- Useful websites: www.spunout.ie; www.youth.ie; www.reachout.com.au

Above all, realise that what you are experiencing is normal following a traumatic event. Be understanding of yourself and others.