

## **Parent Tips: Discussing Civil Unrest with Students**

Civil unrest in the St. Louis community causes anxiety for people of all ages. It is highly likely students will have opinions about the events that have taken place and continue to unfold. Also, it is likely students may ask questions as they seek to understand what is happening in the community around them.

The Ritenour School District is working to be proactive and help our students in taking a calm, rational approach to the situation. We have services and supports available to students who need to process their feelings in our schools. Counselors in our buildings are available to help students. If your child would like to speak to someone at school about his or her feelings, concerns or fears, please let us know or encourage him or her to reach out to a trusted adult. It is critical that our students feel safe at school so they are free to learn.

Civil unrest and acts of violence are complicated issues to discuss among adults, even more so with children. Some tips to encourage a healthy dialogue with children and young adults include:

- Developing open communication with encouragement, support and positive reinforcement.
- Encourage students to talk out their feelings.
- Acknowledge fears and reassure them of their safety.

Two websites that offer additional tips are:

- [Coping with Violence/NAEYC](#)
- [Managing Strong Emotional Reactions/NASP](#)