

Tip Sheet for Youth Talking to Journalists about the Shooting

Students may find that talking to journalists helps them feel capable, helpful, and more in control. Some may believe talking to journalists is a civic duty that promotes accurate information, educates the public, and helps the community (e.g., change community policies, or raise awareness about prevention). Other students may find media attention intrusive, embarrassing, or overwhelming. **Each individual can decide whether to talk to a journalist or not!**

You Have the Right to:

- Choose whether or not to talk to a reporter!
- Ask the journalist what questions s/he will ask you *before* agreeing to an interview.
- Talk to one journalist and turn down another.
- Stop the interview at any point.
- Refuse to answer a question.
- Say no to any topic you don't wish to discuss, without justifying anything.
- Correct an interviewer if his/her assumption about the situation is wrong.
- Postpone talking to a journalist—say “Sorry, not now, but maybe in the future.”
- Be treated with respect.
- Ask to have a friend or parent with you
- Refuse to be filmed or photographed, even if you have agreed to an interview.
- Ask the reporter to read back your quotes to make sure they are accurate.

SIGNS OF A GOOD REPORTER

- Conveys dignity and respect.
- Asks permission.
- Discusses the rules of engagement and explains:
 - Why you have been approached.
 - That everything you say will not be used.
 - How long you might talk.
 - Limits of confidentiality.
- Accepts when you politely decline to answer a question.
- Takes accurate notes and concentrates on what you are saying.
- Thanks you for your input.
- Maintains professionalism—is not overwhelmed emotionally.