



Behavioral Research and Training Institute  
Traumatic Loss Coalitions for Youth

151 Centennial Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854  
732-235-2810

August 30, 2011

Dear Educator:

We are coming up to a new school year and also the 10th Commemoration of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in New York, Washington DC, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Some of the youth in the classrooms around the state will be old enough to remember the attacks, some will have been personally affected by losing family members and family friends, and others will not have yet been born when the attacks occurred. There will be faculty and other school personnel who will have varying degrees of personal experience with the events of 9/11 and some may have been deeply affected as well. The commemoration will bring with it a flurry of media activity, some will be positive and healing, some highly evocative and disturbing.

In addition to being New Jersey's primary suicide prevention program, the Traumatic Loss Coalitions for Youth Program (TLC) is also concerned with assisting schools in providing a collaborative, coordinated mental health response following traumatic losses and critical incidents affecting school-aged youth. It is this dual mission that prompts me to write this letter and provide you with information that can be helpful to your educators, crisis team members and other school personnel. As you begin this new school year, your staff will be faced with educating your students about 9/11 and also helping them navigate through the shoals of remembering the fallen and honoring the brave who were integral to our country's response after the attacks.

I am attaching three documents that contain related resources for your review, dissemination and discussion with your faculty and other relevant school personnel. These resources were written by Donna Gaffney, DNSc, a former TLC Coordinator and a founding member of the Advisory Board, Families of September 11. Dr. Gaffney is also the co-founder of the **4 Action Initiative**, which created a **K-12 curriculum entitled, *Learning from the Challenges of Our Times: Global Security, Terrorism, and 9/11 in the Classroom.*** This curriculum was written with the help of New Jersey teachers and launched nationally on July 14, 2011 at the Liberty Science Center. Requests for the curriculum have been forthcoming from schools throughout the country as well as internationally. You can find this curriculum on the 4 Action web site.

It is our hope that these resources will provide you with practical information for school personnel as well as parents. Please feel free to share them with your local administrators and anyone else who would benefit.

Please accept my best wishes for a successful school year. The TLC continues to stand ready to support you in your efforts to ensure the academic, social, emotional, and physical health of New Jersey's youth.

Respectfully,  
Donna Amundson, LCSW, Program Manager