

Pictures were humanity's first cross-cultural communications, and it was through "picture power" that people first began sharing thoughts, ideas, and experiences across space and time. Fast-forward to today, and students are overwhelmed daily by visual images that require constructive visual interpretation. They have become audiences, both in the classroom and out.

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Mass shootings. Bombings. Natural disasters. All these things and more are reported all around us, on television and radio, in print and online. Such events can be scary enough for adults—but they can be especially frightening for kids. So how can parents and educators help their students understand while protecting them from the world's harsher realities? Here are some tips to help kids cope:

- **Turn it off.** This may seem obvious, but many homes and public places operate with a continuous stream of news coverage on television or via the internet (including devices). Turn off news reports of terrifying events. Hide newspapers or magazines if they contain inappropriately frightening images

or headlines. Create a safe space for learning and living.

- **Don't panic.** It's the obligation of adults to reassure the kids in their care. If possible, get your own fear and negative reactions under control before you talk to kids about scary events.
- **Reassure them.** Younger kids, especially, are prone to fears about their survival and safety. Make sure kids know, by your actions and words, that they are safe, and that the adults around them will protect them.
- **Keep it age-appropriate.** Explain to your students what's going on, but in a limited and age-appropriate way. A high-schooler can handle more facts than a kindergartner, but neither needs to hear every gory detail.
- **Keep listening.** Let kids talk about scary events, but don't push them. Be aware, however, that questions and concerns may arise in the future—possibly even days or weeks later—as kids are able to process what has happened. Deal with questions and observations as they come up, with compassion and age-appropriate information.

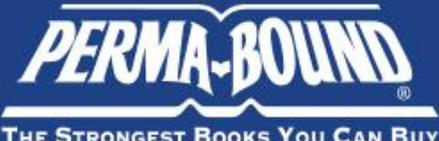
We offer a variety of titles for all levels that explore the subject of facing fears. You can view them [here](#).



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