

Children's reaction to "going to war"

It was suggested to me that it might be helpful to all of us to have some guidelines for responding to our students questions and stresses over going to war.

The following suggestions are offered in order to reduce stress and help students focus on classroom learning.

- The consequences of going to war are discussed constantly in the media and children are bombarded with information. It is important that our students get the opportunity to discuss their concerns with a trusted adult. If one of your students seems to have this need, please find time for them to share either with yourself or another available adult.
- The best we can offer is reassurance that we will always do our best to help our children feel safe in the classroom and in school.
- We need to try to answer questions honestly and factually without spending a lot of time on our opinions. We need to keep in mind the developmental level of our students. Our good listening will guide us in deciding what our students really want to know.
- Children do best in stressful times when they have a routine and keep to it. Remind them that their job is to go to school and do their school work to the best of their ability.
- Remember that you have lots of support and resources. We all know what our own stress does to us. We need to seek the support of other teachers, the Principal, or the School Counselor. We can help our students best if we are honest about our own reactions to going to war.
- If you have other ideas about supporting our students and each other, please share them with me and I will pass them on.

Thanks
Tom