



Hoax Threats in Utah Schools:

Parent/Guardian Guide

Hoax threats can be an unsettling and disruptive experience for schools and their community. It can affect how our students feel, how they think, and how they act. It is okay for students to feel sad or scared after a hoax threat. Even though the threat was a hoax, the reaction and feelings of those involved are real.

Pay special attention to your and your child(ren)'s behavior. Your child may demonstrate out of control or disruptive behavior, which could mean they are experiencing reminders and hardships from the event.

Students may act out, be anxious, irritable, and/or seclude themselves.

Common Reactions

- Being tired/irritated, getting into fights
- Headaches or stomachaches
- A fast heart beat
- Feeling jumpy or scared
- Having trouble sleeping, eating, or completing day-to-day activities

- Trouble concentrating
- Avoiding friends or family
- Not wanting to talk
- Not wanting to be around things that are reminders of what happened



Thoughts That May Arise:

- Believing something bad is going to happen or it will happen again
- Images or reenactments of the event
- Nightmares

Families can reestablish safety by engaging in normal routines, such as meal time, encouraging discussion and understanding, exercising patience, and being tolerant of the different reactions resulting from the event.

Other helpful activities may include, listening, comforting, playing a game, going to a movie, and doing thoughtful things for each other.



Additional Supports

Flashbacks happening constantly or consistently

Loss of interest in activities

Feeling “on edge” or “on the lookout” for danger, startling easily or being jumpy

Difficulty sleeping, problems concentrating or paying attention

Detachment from others, social withdrawal

Resources

- SafeUT
- 9-8-8
- Religious Leaders or other special persons of trust
- School social worker or school psychologist
- Accessing community mental health supports