

## **A Statement from UP's CEO on the Deadly Uvalde, Texas School Shooting on May 24th**

Dear members of the UP community,

As you likely know, a horrific shooting took place yesterday at the Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas that left 19 children and 2 adults dead. There are no words to capture the magnitude of this loss, which comes as we continue to grieve the victims of racist shootings in Buffalo and Laguna Woods, and a wave of shootings across the country.

I'm angered, frustrated, grieving for the families, and like so many of you, desperately want to see change and action from the leaders in our country when it comes to protecting our most vulnerable. The students who lost their lives yesterday were the same ages as many of our students and the brave staff members who also lost lives were simply going to work that day hoping to teach and inspire our next generation. I can only imagine and empathize with the loss felt by the families who have lost a child or relative.

Throughout the years, we've become desensitized to such violent acts, having witnessed them repeat again and again. There has to be change, substantial and systemic change, that not only protects students, educators and people of color from such tragedies and gun violence at large, but also ensures that every single school across the country is a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment for all. That's what we strive to create at UP. That's the community we've built together.

We will likely all experience waves of anxiety, unease and grief today, and in the coming days. I also recognize that our students and their families are feeling the pain from these tragedies as well. These painful moments reignite trauma, bear new trauma, and surface anxiety. And I know that in spite of feeling so much of this yourselves, you will show up for your students as steady and loving. Thank you. If I can be a source of support, please know that I am here.

I want to remind you about UP's partnership with Uwill, an on-demand telehealth counseling service. You can register and book your first session in just minutes by clicking [here](#). If you need any assistance, you can refer to the Uwill [FAQ](#) and [User Guide](#) or reach out directly to UWill at 1-833-99-Uwill or [support@uwill.com](mailto:support@uwill.com).

I also want to share the following resources that may be helpful to you and your students:

- [American Psychological Association: Helping your children manage distress in the aftermath of a shooting](#)

- [Child Mind Institute: Helping Children Cope After a Traumatic Event](#)
- [National Association of School Psychologists: Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers](#)

Take care of yourselves and each other.

In partnership,

Veronica Conforme

CEO, UP Education Network