

# Child Psychologist Coaches Parents on the News of Osama bin Laden's Death

NEW YORK CITY, N.Y., May 3, 2011 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – Osama bin Laden's death can present challenges to parents who might not know what to make of their own mixed feelings. Dr. Peter Favaro, child psychologist and parenting expert, offers advice to parents who want to know how to help children cope with information and images they might encounter on television, on the streets and playgrounds and in the classroom.

Favaro offers, "For adults, it's easier to understand why people would be happy over the killing of another human being, because even though people look happy, the emotion itself is mixed – we are relieved that a person with such evil intent and such a devious mind is off the list of things to worry about."

Favaro cautions, however, "Kids – under ten or so – can be more concrete in their understanding and that can create challenges for parents. For instance, we don't want to send kids the message that murder is acceptable if it is motivation for revenge."

Favaro adds, "What makes it especially problematic is that killing him for revenge is indeed justifiable in many adult minds."

Favaro points out that the killing of bin Laden creates a topic that represents a very difficult moral dilemma that parents might not be ready to discuss with their kids. Regardless of the moral aspects surrounding the killing, you can be rest assured that kids will be bombarded by messages from the media, as well as the "buzz" they will encounter amongst themselves even at ages of five or six.

Favaro advises, "It is important for parents to consider taking the following actions in helping children navigate the difficult conversations surrounding bin Laden's death."

- (1) For children under six, limit, when possible exposure to prolonged news broadcasts, especially those that broadcast sensationalistic images;
- (2) Give children under ten the information they ask for and not much more.
- (3) Emphasize that the President of the United States has to make some very difficult choices and that it is hard to know all of the reasons why he makes those decisions. Finish with the explanation that the decisions that the president makes are meant to keep the people in the United States safe and that is what our president was trying to do.
- (4) Avoid modeling angry responses and statements (especially around teens) that center on revenge-motivated reasons for the events.
- (5) Always emphasize the differences between events that have impact on the

world as opposed to things that happen in the family, with friends or in the school yard.

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Original Story ID: 2011-05-0503-001 (6920) :: 2011-05-0503-001-Peter-Favaro

Original Keywords: Peter J. Favaro, PhD, Osama bin Laden death, parenting, parenting advice, teens, child psychology, New York News Peter J. Favaro, Ph.D New York City New York NEW YORK CITY, N.Y.

Alternate Headline: Child Psychologist Peter J. Favaro Coaches Parents on the News of Osama bin Laden's Death

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