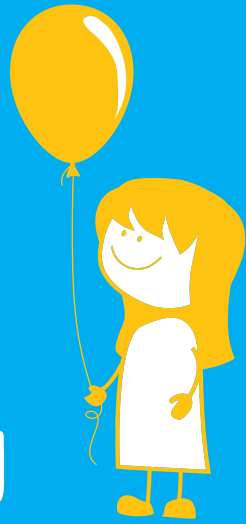




HOW TO SUPPORT CHILDREN COPE WITH THE CURRENT SITUATION



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After traumatizing event, everyone's feeling of safety is undermined and children, being the most vulnerable and in need of support, will show stress in a different way. Children's reactions will defer from one another depending on their experience of the event, their age, parental support, their understanding of what happened, the degree of change and loss and their exposure to media. They are also strongly influenced by how their parents, relatives, and friends cope as they often turn to them for information, comfort, and help.

1. TRY TO FIND A SAFE AND SECURE SPACE FOR YOUR CHILD AWAY FROM REMINDERS OF THE EVENT; IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE TRY AND CREATE A SAFE SPACE WHERE YOU ARE FOR HIM/HER.
2. ENCOURAGE PHYSICAL RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES IF POSSIBLE, SUCH AS DRAWING, AND PLAYING, WHICH WILL POSITIVELY INFLUENCE ANXIETY. TRY TO RE-ESTABLISH DAILY ROUTINES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THIS WILL HELP THEM FEEL SAFE AND SECURED. IF POSSIBLE, ENCOURAGE THEM TO SOCIALIZE WITH OTHER CHILDREN.
3. TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT HOW YOU FEEL OR FELT AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO EXPRESS THEIR FEELINGS. FOR EXAMPLE, 'YES, I WAS REALLY SCARED WHEN I HEARD THE EXPLOSION, BUT WE'RE SAFE NOW. WHAT ABOUT YOU?' CHECK THAT THEY UNDERSTAND ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO ASK QUESTIONS AND SPEAK ABOUT THEIR FEELINGS. SPEAK TO CHILDREN IN A CHILD FRIENDLY MANNER, USING SIMPLE WORDS THAT THEY UNDERSTAND. EXPLAIN TO CHILDREN WHAT HAPPENED SO THAT THEY MAKE SENSE OF IT AND ALLOW THEM TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IS GOING ON.
4. CHILDREN MIGHT BE AFRAID TO SLEEP ALONE AT NIGHT AND MIGHT EXPERIENCE NIGHTMARES AND POST TRAUMATIC SYMPTOMS SUCH AS CONSTANT FEAR, FLASHBACKS OF THE EVENT AND ISOLATION. MAKE SURE TO ASSIST TO THE NEEDS OF YOUR CHILD EVEN IF IT REQUIRED YOUR PRESENCE NEXT TO THEM DURING THE NIGHT AND HELP THEM EXPRESS THEIR FEELINGS, AND SEEK HELP WHEN THESE SIGNS ARE RECURRENT. (PROVISION OF HOTLINE PER AREA).
5. PROVIDE YOUR CHILD WITH AFFIRMATION ON WHAT HE/SHE IS FEELING. ACCEPT THEIR FEELINGS AND TELL THEM IT IS OKAY TO FEEL SAD, UPSET, STRESSED. CRYING IS OFTEN A WAY TO RELIEVE STRESS AND GRIEF.
6. LET YOUR CHILD EXPRESS THEIR FEELINGS AND FIND WORDS FOR THEIR EMOTIONS. GIVE CHILDREN PHYSICAL CONTACT LIKE HUGS. IF THEY ARE UNUSUALLY CLINGY, LET THEM BE. KEEP THEM CLOSE TO YOU AS MUCH AS YOU CAN. THIS WILL GIVE THE CHILD A FEELING OF SAFETY. CRYING AND/OR FEELING SAD IS NORMAL AND IS NOT ONLY ACCEPTABLE FOR GIRLS. BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS HAVE THE RIGHT TO FEEL SAD, UPSET AND CRY



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7. FATHERS, IF PRESENT, IN ADDITION TO MOTHERS AND THE EXTENDED FAMILY HAVE A CRUCIAL ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE CHILD DURING DIFFICULT TIMES. THE CHILD NEEDS THE PRESENCE AND THE EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT OF THE FATHER, THE MOTHER AND EXTENDED FAMILY, IF PRESENT.
8. IF POSSIBLE, TRY TO LIMIT EXPOSURE TO WATCHING THE NEWS AND SOCIAL MEDIA. EXPLAIN TO YOUR CHILD THEM THAT WATCHING THE NEWS MIGHT MAKE THEM FEEL STRESSED OR UPSET AND THAT YOU WILL LET THEM KNOW IF THERE'S ANYTHING IMPORTANT THEY MIGHT NEED TO KNOW. LIMIT YOUR OWN USE ALSO WHEN NOT NECESSARY, AS YOUR BEHAVIOR IS A MODEL FOR
9. ALLOW CHILDREN TO ASK QUESTIONS. SHARE TRUE FACTS ABOUT QUESTIONS THEY ASK AND/OR THE SITUATION. BE HONEST, BUT PROVIDE EXPLANATIONS IN A WAY NOT TO WORRY THEM ABOUT THEMSELVES OR PEOPLE THEY LOVE. CORRECT MISINFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT.
10. IF A FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND IS INJURED, HAS DIED OR IS MISSING, TALK WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT IT. TRY TO EXPLAIN IT IN AN AGE APPROPRIATE MANNER AND USING SIMPLE SENTENCES STATING THE TRUTH AND WITHOUT SCARING THEM.
FOR EXAMPLE, 'UNCLE JAD HAS GONE TO THE HOSPITAL IN THE AMBULANCE. THE DOCTORS ARE USING SPECIAL EQUIPMENT TO HELP HIM RIGHT NOW'.
11. REPEAT TO YOUR CHILD THAT THIS IS NOT A NORMAL SITUATION, AND THAT IF HE FEELS SAD, ANGRY, SCARED ETC IT IS OK.
12. IT IS OKAY TO SHOW EMOTIONS TO YOUR CHILDREN. DON'T FEEL PRESSURED TO HIDE THAT YOU ARE CRYING IN FRONT OF YOUR CHILDREN, BUT TRY NOT TO SHOW INTENSE EMOTIONS SUCH AS KICKING OR HITTING FURNITURE. VIOLENCE CAN FRIGHTEN CHILDREN AND LEAD TO MORE TRAUMA. DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP. THERE ARE AGENCIES AVAILABLE AND READY TO SUPPORT YOU.
13. SEEK SERVICES. CHILDREN WITH EMOTIONAL OR BEHAVIORAL DIFFICULTIES, AND THOSE WITH DISABILITIES COULD REQUIRE ADDITIONAL SHORT TERM OR LONG - TERM SUPPORT. IF YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION, ASK FOR HELP AND ASSISTANCE.
14. GIVE IT TIME, IT TAKES A WHILE TO PROCESS AND HEAL.

If your child is distressed, this is something from which they will likely recover in time with the right support from family/friends/school. However, If you notice that your child is experiencing nightmares, bed-wetting, anxiety or panic attacks over a prolonged period of time, and if you think that you need further support to address these difficulties, please do not hesitate to reach out to the following numbers: