

Tips for Parents During Times of Trauma



Parents as Teachers®

- > Children's basic needs remain the same, especially during times of crisis. Remember the importance of routines – try to keep regular mealtimes and bedtime. Spend quiet time reading each night to create calm.
- > Turn off the TV and radio when children are around. You control the information they need to have and how it is presented. Young children need to know only a few details about traumatic events and do not need to hear details repeated over and over.
- > Answer questions in an age-appropriate way and reassure children. What they need to hear most is that the adults around them will take care of and protect them.
- > Try to stay as calm as possible around children. It is appropriate for children to see adults showing emotion, but it frightens them when their parents lose control. If you feel emotional, try to remove yourself briefly until you can calm down.
- > Children can be very resilient – if they feel listened to, supported and taken care of by parents and caretakers. They are not little adults. They need to be in a caring environment that fits their developmental needs, even in times of crises.
- > Take care of yourself and address your own needs. This allows you to take care of your child.
- > Do not be afraid to seek help for yourself or your child if reactions or coping become difficult to manage. These are unusual circumstances. It is normal not to have all the answers.

Selected Resources

Helpful websites

- <http://childtrauma.org/cta-library/>
Tips for teachers and schools to help children cope with tragic events
- <http://families.naeyc.org/learning-and-development/child-development-view>
Coping with trauma, from the National Association for the Education of Young Children
- <http://www.pbs.org/parents/rogers/special/scarynews.html>
Mister Rogers' Neighborhood: Helping Children Deal with Scary News

