



## Trauma: Helping Families Cope

### What Can Parents and Caregivers Do and Say:

No one knows your family better than you do, here are Seven Things you can do and say to help your child:

- + **Remain calm and reassuring.**
- + **Keep as many everyday routines as possible.**
- + **Help your child feel in control.**
- + **Help your child feel connected with others.**
- + **Allow your child to talk about feelings, worries, if they want to.**
- + **Make time every day for stress-reducing activities.**
- + **Take time to deal with your own feelings.**

### Be Prepared

It is important to be informed and updated, but the way the information is presented on some media outlets, and the amount of it, can create an environment of hysteria, one we need to be able to step out of in order to provide effective care. What we can do is to help our children focus on where they do have control. Discuss with your child that they do have power over some things. There are things they can do. This most likely would be in the following areas such as schoolwork, chores, home environment and entertainment activities. It's okay to discuss with your child about their concerns. Answer their questions and limit the family's exposure to the news on television because that might exacerbate the situation.





# Trauma: Signs, Symptoms and How to Help

Age Group	Reactions	How to Help
<b>Preschool</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Fears being alone and will experience bad dreams, have increase in temper tantrums, whiny and clingy</li> <li>✚ Change in appetite, bladder and bowel control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Patience and tolerance</li> <li>✚ Provide reassurance by encouraging play and expressive storytelling</li> <li>✚ Allow short-term changes in sleep arrangements</li> </ul>
<b>Adolescent (6 – 12)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Increase in being irritable, complaining and aggressive</li> <li>✚ Possible changes in sleep and appetite</li> <li>✚ Increase in competition for attention being forgetful and withdrawal for peers and interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Patience, tolerance, and reassurance</li> <li>✚ Participate in structured household chores, co-create routines and structure and have gentle/firm limits</li> <li>✚ Stay in touch with friends, limit and allow video games and have physical activity at home</li> </ul>
<b>Teens (13 – 18)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Physical symptoms with possibility in changes in sleep and appetite</li> <li>✚ Take notice of increase in agitation and decrease in energy and personal hygiene</li> <li>✚ Isolating from peers and loved ones and avoiding completing online schooling</li> <li>✚ Concerns about injustices and stigma</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Patience, tolerance, and reassurance</li> <li>✚ Stay in touch with friends and family</li> <li>✚ Encourage routines, supporting younger siblings, and discussion of outbreak (but do not force)</li> <li>✚ Include in on Planning strategies for self-care and exercise at home</li> </ul>

ADAPTED AND REFERENCED FROM: CDC and HealthCare Toolbox and The National Child Traumatic Stress Network



*Linking Healthy Minds with a Positive Future*