



Helping Children Cope with Crisis

Quick Tips for PARENTS

Adapted from www.redcross.org

TIP #1

Routines

Children of all ages can benefit from keeping their usual routines—meals, activities, and bedtimes—as close to normal as possible, allowing them to feel more secure and in control.

TIP #2

Special Needs

Accept the special needs of children by allowing them to be more dependent on you for a period of time. Give more hugs if they need them.

TIP #3

Media Coverage

Anyone who watches the disaster coverage on TV can become what is called a "secondary victim" and can suffer emotional and physical problems. It is best to limit children's exposure to repeated news coverage of the disaster.

TIP #4

Feelings and Reactions

Children express their feelings and reactions in different ways. Keep in mind that not everyone has immediate reactions. Some children have delayed reactions that show up days, weeks, or even months later, and some may never have a reaction.

TIP #5

Talking About What Happened

Listen to and accept children's feelings. Give honest, simple, brief answers to their questions. Even if you feel the world is an unsafe place, you can reassure your child by saying, "The event is over. Now we'll do everything possible to stay safe, and together we can help get through this situation."

TIP #6

When to Seek Professional Help

Children are amazingly flexible, even though they can be deeply affected by trauma or losses. Getting professional help is a good idea if a child shows any significant changes for longer than three months following the trauma.