

Trauma

FAMILY CRISIS EDUCATION SERVICES



Ways to Support Your Child

Educate yourself about trauma and its psychological impacts on a child's well-being. Learn about the signs and symptoms of trauma and what Club and community resources are available to resolving your child's concerns.

Remind your child they are safe. Explore your child's big emotions and come up with coping skills to manage their distress. Create structure and routine in your child's day to establish safety and a sense of normalcy. Be sure to create moments of connection and love with them each day.

What is trauma?

Trauma is an reaction to a scary, upsetting, or difficult event or experience that can make you feel overwhelmed and unable to cope. Trauma can have significant impacts on your feelings, thoughts, and physical body. Examples of trauma include:

1. Accidents, violence, or medical procedures
2. Abuse, neglect, or sudden loss of a loved one.
3. Homelessness

Child sometimes develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) after witnessing a traumatic event. This causes them to relive the event in their minds over and over again without feeling relief. It's very important to seek professional help for a child to work through and heal from their trauma.

Seeking Professional Support

A child's mental health concerns can be a stressful and overwhelming experience for parents and caregivers. The first step is talking to your child about what happened. Then, seeking professional help can provide support, guidance, and resources for managing the crisis and helping your child recover.

Signs and Symptoms

After experiencing a traumatic event, some youth may exhibit some of the following signs:

1. Aggressive or impulsive behaviors
2. Afraid to go to sleep or bedwetting
3. Sudden withdrawal from others or avoidance of certain people or places
4. Stomachaches, headaches, or other physical complaints
5. Having trouble at school
6. Refusing to go to school

Coping Skills for PTSD:

- **Focus on your breathing.** When you are frightened, you might stop breathing normally. This increases feelings of fear and panic, so it can help to concentrate on breathing slowly in and out while counting to five.
- **Carry an object that reminds you of the present.** Some people find it helpful to touch or look at a particular object during a flashback. This might be something you decide to carry in your pocket or bag, or something that you have with you anyway, such as a keyring or a piece of jewelry.
- **Tell yourself that you are safe.** It may help to tell yourself that the trauma is over and you are safe now. It can be hard to think in this way during a flashback, so it could help to write down or record some useful phrases at a time when you're feeling better.
- **Comfort yourself.** For example, you could curl up in a blanket, cuddle a pet, listen to soothing music or watch a favorite film.
- **Keep a diary.** Making a note of what happens when you have a flashback could help you spot patterns in what triggers these experiences for you. You might also learn to notice early signs that they are beginning to happen.
- **Try grounding techniques.** Grounding techniques can keep you connected to the present and help you cope with flashbacks or intrusive thoughts. For example, you could describe your surroundings out loud or count objects of a particular type or color.