

Some things to consider:

TRY TO listen to your child but don't force them to share; let it come naturally

TRY TO reassure your child that their feelings are normal

TRY TO keep their life as normal as possible. Try to maintain a routine

TRY TO allow your child to express their feelings and share yours with them if and when appropriate

TRY TO reassure your child that they are safe and loved; that people are doing everything possible to make this a safer world

TRY TO address issues of death openly and honestly

TRY TO let children talk about their emotions & express themselves in games/ drawings

TRY TO spend extra time with your child, doing something fun and relaxing

TRY TO remember the importance of touch and hugs

TRY TO limit your child's exposure to media coverage of the event

TRY NOT TO make promises you can't keep

TRY NOT TO transfer your own fears to your child

If you would like information about the Crisis Support Team for Essex, please visit the website. It identifies sources of help with some useful links.

www.crisissupportessex.org

In the event of a major emergency where lots of people are affected, a helpline will be set up. The number will be publicised via the media or the above website.

Keep this leaflet safe - it may be useful now or in the future. Use this space to write down some useful names and telephone numbers.

Name	Tel Number

Other help available- National Organisations

Childline 0800

1111 www.childline.org.uk

Samaritans 116

123 www.samaritans.org

CRUSE (Bereavement) 0844 477

9400 www.rd4u.org.uk

Victim Support 08 08 16 89

111 www.supportline.org.uk

The above are free phone numbers except CRUSE which is 7p per min + phone providers charge, although a call back option is available.

We can provide the text in this leaflet in a form which may better suit your needs. Please contact us on 03330 132587 and let us know.



**crisis support team
essex**

**Helping your child
cope with crisis
5-11 years**



This leaflet has been produced by the Crisis Support Team for Essex, which provides a multi-agency support service to people affected by emergencies in Essex, or residents of Essex affected by an emergency that occurs abroad or in another area of the UK.

Coping with Crisis

Your child has just been through a traumatic experience & you may be wondering what is happening to them.

When faced with an emergency or personal crisis, it is common for a child to experience strong emotional and physical reactions. This is normal and is a way of dealing with what has happened. Never assume a child is too young to be affected by an emergency.

Your child's reaction will depend on many factors including whether they were directly affected by the emergency, particularly death of a parent or relative; age of the child; whether they have experienced crisis or loss in the past, and how much of a traumatic incident they have witnessed directly, or via the media.

This leaflet has been designed by the Crisis Support Team for Essex. It is being given to you to help you understand what your child is going through, and how you can help them.

Friends & family can help you but you may feel emotionally & physically exhausted, or just want someone who isn't 'involved' to talk to. Agencies can provide support to people, like you, who have been affected by an emergency and the telephone numbers are available on this leaflet.

There are other leaflets available to you including: supporting yourself; family and friends; survivors accessible on our website www.crisissupportessex.org

Normal feelings your child may experience

Each child's response to a crisis is different and feelings may vary in intensity and last for different amounts of time. The following are just some of the reactions they may be experiencing:-

Fear & Anxiety

- of effects on oneself & others
- of a similar event happening again
- of being alone, or having to leave loved ones

Guilt

- for being alive
- that in some way, it is their fault

Shame

- about crying
- needing support

Anger

- of what happened

Memories

- of people they knew and loved
- 'flashbacks' of the event

Helplessness

- of being vulnerable

Numbness

- event may seem unreal
- can't take everything in

WARNING - Accidents are more common after severe stress

Typical Reactions of Children between 5-11 years

You may find that:

- they fear being separated from a parent
- they have difficulty sleeping or have nightmares
- they find it difficult to concentrate
- they fear the dark
- they don't want to go to school
- they exhibit aggression
- they return to younger behaviour such as bed wetting, thumb sucking

These feelings and physical reactions are your child's way of protecting itself after a crisis. Do ask for help, especially if:

- you feel that you can't handle your child's feelings or physical reactions
- you have no-one to talk to
- your child's reactions become more frequent and severe, or worse than ever

Parents and other adults can help children cope. Take time to listen and not pass judgement. Let them know that it is okay to cry and be sad and be sure they know they do not have to be 'tough'. Make sure all caregivers in the child's life, such as teachers, babysitters, daycare providers, are aware of the impact of the event on your child.