

**Some things to think about and try to do or not do:**

**TRY TO** understand that memories and feelings may stay with you for a long time to come

**TRY TO** take time to sleep, to rest, to think, and be with those important to you

**TRY TO** keep your life as normal as possible

**TRY TO** say what you need clearly & honestly to family and friends and those offering help

**TRY TO** avoid alcohol and drugs

**TRY TO** learn to laugh again

**TRY TO** avoid repeatedly watching news programmes about what has happened

**TRY TO** be careful around the home and school/college

**TRY NOT TO** bottle up feelings. Express your emotions & let others share in the grief

**TRY NOT TO** avoid talking about what's happened

**TRY NOT TO** let your embarrassment stop you giving others the chance to talk

**TRY NOT TO** punish yourself for something you feel you should have done or not done

If you would like information about the Crisis Support Team for Essex, please access the website: [www.crisissupportessex.org](http://www.crisissupportessex.org)

In the event of a major emergency where lots of people are affected, a helpline will be set up.

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](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**Samaritans** 116 123 [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

**CRUSE** (Bereavment) 0844 477 9400 [www.rd4u.org.uk](http://www.rd4u.org.uk)

**SupportLine** 01708 765200 [www.supportline.org.uk](http://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.



**Coping with Crisis  
Young People**



**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

You, or a friend or relative, have just been through a traumatic experience and may be wondering what is happening to you.

When faced with an emergency or personal crisis, it is common to experience strong emotional & physical reactions. This is normal and is a way of dealing with what has happened. You may question a number of things that you previously believed about your own safety and the safety of your friends and family. This is normal too.

This leaflet has been designed by the Crisis Support Team for Essex. It is being given to you to help you understand what you are going through, & how you can help yourself.

Most people feel better given time, but talking about your experience & reactions can help. If you have gone through difficult experiences in the past, you may find some of the old feelings & reactions coming back. It helps to talk this through with someone.

Friends & family can help you but you may feel like you want to talk to someone who isn't 'involved'. If you do want some support, it isn't something to feel ashamed about & is not a sign of weakness. There are people available & keen to talk to you including teachers/lecturers, pastoral staff & counsellors, your family doctor, childline.

## Normal feelings you may experience

Each person'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 you 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
- you should have done something

### Shame

- about the way you feel
- needing support

### Anger

- of what happened
- 'Why me?', 'Why not me?'

### Memories

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

### Helplessness

- of being vulnerable
- feeling overwhelmed of what's happened

### Numbness

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

**WARNING – Accidents are more common after extreme stress**

## Normal physical reactions

You may find that:

- you feel tired
- you have difficulty sleeping or have nightmares
- you find it difficult to concentrate
- you have a choking feeling in the throat
- you feel your heart beating fast
- you have headaches; your muscles ache

These feelings and physical reactions are your body's way of protecting itself after a crisis. Over time, these will go. However, do ask for help if:

- you feel that you can't handle your feelings or physical reactions
- you continue to feel tense, confused, & empty
- you continue to have nightmares & can't sleep
- you have no-one to talk to
- your school/college work is suffering
- you are isolating yourself from your friends
- you are having thoughts of harming yourself or thinking that life is not worth living
- you are drinking or smoking too much, or using drugs to cope with your feelings
- you are doing things that are risky & dangerous