

**Some things to consider:**

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

**TRY TO** be patient and support & assure them that their reactions are understandable

**TRY TO** watch for signs for drug/alcohol use

**TRY TO** allow your child to express their feelings; share yours, if & when appropriate

**TRY TO** reassure your child that they are safe & loved & appreciated

**TRY TO** understand that they may want to be with their friends rather than their family

**TRY TO** remember some teenagers talk better & share more when doing activities

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

**TRY NOT TO** forget the importance of touch & hugs

**TRY NOT TO** be judgmental & punitive

Statements of hopelessness and seeing no reason for living should be confronted in a caring, supportive discussion. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Also, take care of yourself so you can continue to help your child and be a healthy role model.

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](http://www.crisissupportessex.org)

In the event of a major incident, a helpline may 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](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**Samaritans** 116

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

**CRUSE** (Bereavement) 0844 477

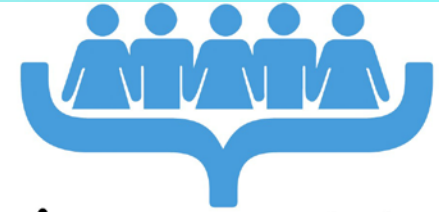
9400 [www.rd4u.org.uk](http://www.rd4u.org.uk)

**Victim Support** 08 08 16 89

111 [www.supportline.org.uk](http://www.supportline.org.uk)

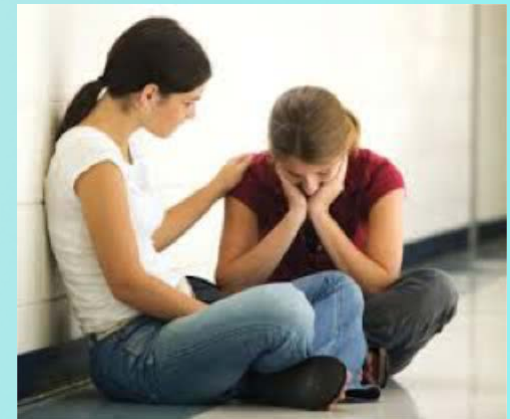
The above are free phone numbers except CRUSE which is 7p per min + phone providers charge, although a call back option is available.

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.



**crisis support team  
essex**

**Helping your child  
cope with crisis 14-  
18 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 and you may be wondering what is happening to them. Your child may seem very mature and adult but remember that they are still very young to experience crisis. They may require some support.

When faced with an emergency or personal crisis, it is common to experience strong emotional and physical reactions. This is normal and is a way of dealing with what has happened.

Your child's reaction will depend on many factors including: personal circumstances; whether they were directly affected by the emergency; their age; 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 emotional 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](http://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

#### Shame

- about their feelings
- 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 14 - 18 years

You may find that:

- there is a decrease in energy levels
- they have difficulty sleeping or have nightmares
- they lack concentration; are confused
- they avoid school/college; have school/college problems
- they exhibit aggression, rebellion
- they withdraw from peers & social activities
- they exhibit irresponsible or 'risk taking' behaviour

These feelings & physical reactions are your child'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 child's feelings or physical reactions
- you have no-one to talk to
- your child's reactions become more frequent & severe or worse than ever

Parents & other adults can help children cope. Take time to listen & don't pass judgement. Know that some teenagers may exhibit childish behaviours, regressing back to younger behaviour, then act mature & adult. They are both a child & adult after crisis. Ensure all caregivers in their life, such as teachers, friends & neighbours, are aware of the impact of the event on your child.