

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 supportive. Assure them that their reactions are understandable

TRY TO watch for signs of drug/alcohol abuse

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 and appreciated

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

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

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

TRY NOT TO forget the importance of touch and hugs

TRY NOT TO be judgemental and 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

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 11-
14 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.

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.

Your child's reaction will depend on many factors including: personal circumstances; 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 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

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 aged 11 and 14 years

You may find that:

- there is a change in appetite
- they have difficulty sleeping or have nightmares
- they find it difficult to concentrate
- they avoid school or have school problems
- they exhibit aggression, rebellion
- they withdraw from peers and social activities

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. Know that some teenagers may exhibit childish behaviour, then act mature and adult. They are both a child and adult after crisis. Make sure all caregivers in the child's life, such as teachers, friends and neighbours, are aware of the impact of the event on your child.