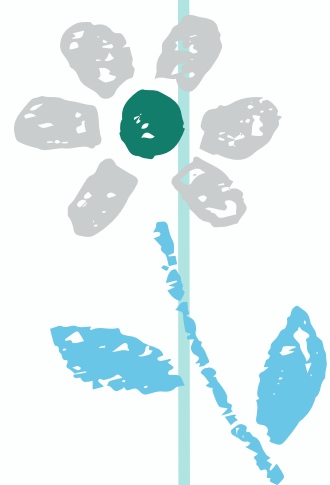


Common Reactions by Children (Ages 6 to 11) to Trauma and How a Parent Can Provide Support



Symptoms of Distress Following Trauma:

- Concern about personal responsibility for trauma.
- Complaints about bodily aches, pains, or illness with no medical explanation.
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities.
- Visual images and unpleasant memories that will invade the child's thoughts and interfere with ability to concentrate.
- Withdrawal and quieting or aggressive behavior and attempts to test limits.
- Repetitive retelling of the event; fear of the trauma happening again.
- Bedwetting or other toileting accidents.
- Disruptions in sleep patterns; nightmares, sleepwalking, etc.
- Easily distracted, behavior, personality, or mood changes.



How You Can Help:

- Reassure the older child that fear or behaviors that feel out of control or “babyish” (bedwetting, desire to sleep with more lights on, etc.) are normal after a scary experience, and that with time, the child will feel like his or her normal self again.



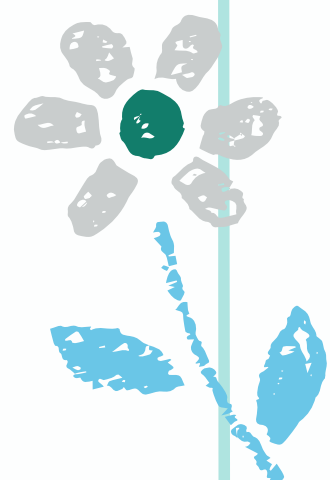
Courtesy of The Counseling Place
counselingplace.org – 469-283-0242
Modified from Children and Trauma: A Guide for Parents and Professionals by Cynthia Mohahon. 1993.



Common Reactions by Children (Ages 6 to 11) to Trauma and How a Parent Can Provide Support



- Pay closer attention to the child's play and set limits on scary or hurtful play. (Sometimes the child's play might include reenactments of the trauma.)
- Be patient and listen to the child's retelling of the event.
- Provide extra nighttime comforts when possible: stuffed animals, nightlights, and physical comforting after nightmares. Allow the child to try new ways to cope with fear at bedtime: extra reading time, leaving a light or radio on.
- Avoid exposing the child to things that will remind him or her of the trauma (movies/stories, physical locations that resemble the place where trauma occurred).
- Be open to the idea of seeking professional help for the child.
- Communicate with school counselors about the event so that he/she can offer support at school.



As parents, we can feel helpless and confused at times to know how to best support our kids through trauma. Here is a space for you to reflect and take notes.

Things I've noticed: _____

Things I've done to help: _____



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