

== AFTER VIOLENCE ==

SUPPORTING CHILDREN WHO HAVE FACED TRAUMA

INFANTS AND TODDLERS, 0-2 YEARS OLD,

cannot understand that a trauma is happening, but they know when their caregiver is upset. They may start to show the same emotions as their caregivers, or they may act differently, like crying for no reason, withdrawing from people, and not playing with their toys.



CHILDREN, 3-5 YEARS OLD,

can understand the effects of trauma. They may have trouble adjusting to change and loss. They may depend on the adults around them to help them feel better.



SUPPORTING CHILDREN



- Keep routines normal** and continue favorite rituals or activities
- Maintain a "peaceful" atmosphere
- Make sure children are eating **regular, healthy meals**
- Always **reassure children** that you will do whatever you can to keep them safe
- Limit exposure to the media** and adult conversations about the disaster
- Answer any questions** children have. Be honest without giving a lot of detail
- Talk about the event** when children bring it up - don't try to change the subject. Correct any "false" ideas young children may have about what happened. The language you use and information you give should always be age-appropriate.

<p>Help children feel in control by</p> <p>allowing them to have choices. Choices give them a voice and allow them to be responsible for their actions or decisions. Ex: Giving a 4 yr. old a choice of playing with blocks or an art activity.</p>	<p>Teach children ways to calm themselves</p> <p>like dancing to music, breathing deeply, or doing art activities.</p>	<p>Give opportunities for emotional expression</p> <p>through activities like playing with Playdough, drawing, building, and dramatic play.</p>
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