

Helping Children Cope with Loss



Children are resilient by nature, and within supportive family and community they successfully negotiate all types of challenging situations. However, we all experience circumstances in our lives that are overwhelming, situations when we could use some additional support and resources to help us through the difficult times. The following are suggestions to help children going through experiences of trauma, grief, loss, and/or transition.

Children do about as well as the grown-ups in their lives. Therefore, the first and most important factor is to consistently take care of yourself (on all levels) so you may serve as a role model, and truly be available to your child(ren) during the difficult times. Both you and your children should:

- Get plenty of rest;
- Eat regular, nutritious meals;
- Drink water, water, and more water;
- Exercise, play, and have fun together regularly;
- Surround yourself with good friends, good music, good stories;
- Regularly do things that are fun, healthy, relaxing, and pleasurable;
- Draw from your faith, traditions, and culture;
- Limit your exposure to “bad news” – **turn OFF the TV;**
- Keep routines, but remain flexible as different needs arise;
- Focus on what you can do – things within your control – and take care of them;
- Keep your sense of humor...

Honestly and directly address concerns of children. Do you want them to get the information from overheard telephone conversations, from the media, or from other kids on the playground? You are their greatest resource:

- Listen. Listen. Listen some more.
- Answer the questions they ask, even the difficult ones.
- Never lie to a child.
- Go at their pace and use language that they will understand.
- Offer multiple ways for them to express their experience. Talking, writing, drawing, music, movement, play, interacting with peers, time spent with friends, family, and pets as well as “alone time” are all modes of healing.
- Physical activities help them relieve stress. For children, Play = Healing.
- Children of different ages and development stages will respond differently. Expect and accept a wide range of common reactions.
- Bedtime, school time, and other times of separation may be difficult. Make a plan together to best address these situations.
- Routines can be especially stabilizing, yet be open to necessary changes in responsibilities during times of transition.
- Reassure and actively show them that they are loved and that they will be taken care of. Physical contact is often comforting for a child.
- If it is not too big for you, it will not be too big for them...

Additional Plans/Referrals/Resources: _____

CHIRON CENTER, INC.’S CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM (CRT)

9903 Santa Monica Boulevard, #383 ~ Beverly Hills, CA 90212
(855) 343-6012 www.ChironCenter.org www.theCRT.org ChironCenter@gmail.com