

# How to Move Forward After Traumatic Events

Resources for Advancing  
Mental Health in Pediatrics



Resilience, which is a person's ability to bounce back from traumatic experiences, is instrumental in helping a child or adolescent work through a stressful period.

Caregivers play an important role in helping children understand and cope with stressful experiences and build resilience.

Promote safety at home by identifying supportive people, places, and activities for your child and family.

## Ways caregivers can promote resiliency

1. **Maintain consistency with routines** as much as possible.
2. **Navigate your own emotions** and distress. Sharing some emotions from parents to youth can be positive, but prolonged expression of grief may not be helpful. You may want to work to find your own balance.
3. **Have an age appropriate conversation.** Find a time when your child wants to talk and make sure you listen first.
4. **Take "news/media" breaks** throughout the day. Consider finding time to get outside or be active with planned activity.
5. **Check in** more often for additional signs of distress and connect with a professional if additional help is needed.

## When to seek additional help?

- When your child's behaviors or feelings get in the way of day-to-day activities.
- When your child's behaviors affect them at home, school, and with their peers.
- When distressed behaviors last for at least one month.
- If your child expresses suicidal or homicidal thoughts or actions.
- If your child displays self-injurious behaviors or actions.

## How can a professional help?

Mental health providers can help families overcome traumatic stress through Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) or another trauma treatment model.

Trauma counseling is a mental health service that can help family members to:

- Feel safe
- Learn about trauma and its effects
- Cope with difficulties caused by the trauma
- Recognize and build on your family's strengths
- Talk about ways to get your family back on track



Scan code for more information.

For local resources, visit Lurie Children's Trauma Treatment Services website.