



Building your family's resilience through a natural disaster

After an emergency or extreme weather event, children or teenagers may show signs of emotional upheaval or distress. Parents may be unsure how to help. The following information and tips are from Disaster Recovery Triple P (part of the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program®).

Around the world, children and teenagers have similar reactions to this type of event. Problems include trouble getting to sleep, having nightmares, and acting younger than their age. Some parents report their children become hyper-alert for signs of danger and are more anxious, irritable or sad.

Key things to remember:

- Try to limit exposure to media coverage.
- Re-establish as many of your family's routines as possible.
- Children look to their parents for clues about how to react. It can be tough to keep your emotions in check if you're feeling anxious and upset. However, remember your child looks up to you as a role model. Get some help and support for yourself – it can help the whole family.
- Remind yourself and your child that you are safe, that people are resilient, and that you can all handle difficult situations.
- Listen to your child and acknowledge their feelings. Encourage and allow them to express themselves. But if the topic of the disaster is being brought up constantly, it might be necessary to set some boundaries.
- Make sure your children know the family has a plan for future emergency events.
- While some children may need specific post-trauma therapy, most children – and adults – will recover naturally, given time.

Consider attending a free Disaster Recovery Seminar to gain other valuable knowledge and skills

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