



## Parenting Tips to Help Kids Cope After a Crisis or Tragedy

Kids often have many questions and concerns following a tragedy or community violence. How parents respond to such incidents can greatly impact how children cope with the aftermath.

Here are some parenting tips:

1. Given that every child is a unique creation of God, parents should adjust their responses given each child's age and developmental level.
2. Keep discussions of the details of the tragedy or violence to a minimum. Emphasize the measures taken to restore safety.
3. If your child has questions about the event, answer them honestly, but briefly.
4. Pay attention to your child's feeling in response to the incident. Children, like adults, may feel sad, mad, worried, or confused. Validate these emotions, as they are all appropriate under the circumstances.
5. Encourage positive coping skills such as talking, writing, drawing, praying, playing and exercising for example.
6. Younger children often benefit most from reassurance that parents and other adults such as police officers and fire fighters are going to do everything possible to keep them safe.
7. Older children might want to offer to help. Channel their energy in positive ways, such as praying for victims and their families, sending cards of encouragement to those impacted, or donating a portion of their allowance.
8. Spend time reflecting on Scripture that reassures us that God is still in control, and has good plans for us. For example, Jeremiah 29:11, John 16:33, Psalm 23:4, or Isaiah 41:13.

For more information, or to schedule an appointment with a counselor, please call Christian Family Counseling at 800.438.1772.

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