Help a Child

While we are committed to helping children cope with traumatic events they may have experienced, we recognize that friends and family are the most important sources of help and reassurance. Whether the trauma is from seeing a frightening event such as an accident in the neighborhood, or from living through abuse or neglect, every child will need some help with feelings of fear, sadness, or worry. Parents, grandparents, foster parents and other caretakers can all work together with our medical, mental health, and legal staff to support and comfort the child as much as possible.

Caretakers and loved ones can aid children in understanding and expressing their feelings. Simply acknowledging that these feelings are valid and real can be very comforting. Children often need help as they struggle with their worries and concerns. Letting them know what will happen next by answering common questions, such as where they will stay, and who will watch them, can relieve some of this stress. Children may also want to know whether a safety plan can be created to address potential future threats.

Most parents and caretakers also need support as they go through a difficult time with their child. Express your own feelings as calmly as possible, letting your child know that you also seek help from people you can trust. Getting help is a sign of strength, not of weakness.

Finally, healing from a traumatic event can be a long process, but it begins with a single step. Let your children know that there are people who care about them and are willing to work with them step by step.